



WONGA PARK & MERNDA REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER



30 August 2026

This Week's Service:

Preacher:

Chris Pretorius

Elder on duty:

Peter W

Prayer Leader:

Peter W

Bible text:

Acts 1:12 -26

Sermon Topic:

The spread of God's
Kingdom cannot be
stopped by human
failure

Bible Reader:

Sally

Children's Talk:

Sarah

Coffee:

Alister & Adri
Bennie

Giving

Today's

Second Offering:

Missionaries:

Sebastian & Betty Kurz

Year to June Budgeted
giving:

\$216,310

Actual (June):

\$218,410

This week I spent Wednesday, Thursday and Friday with our denomination's Candidacy Committee. It is a committee charged with a fairly significant responsibility: helping shepherd those who are studying to become pastors through their journey toward ordained ministry. That means everything from organising pastoral psychological assessments, to developing ministry sustainability strategies, to examining whether the training our students receive is actually equipping them for the realities of pastoral ministry. In some ways it is a monumental task, because we are talking about preparing people who may go on to shepherd Christ's church for decades.

On the one hand, I feel enormously privileged to be part of it. It is encouraging to sit around a table with people from across the country who care deeply about the church and about raising up the next generation of pastors. On the other hand, I sometimes find myself wondering whether we can make the process too complicated. Jesus, after all, took twelve fairly ordinary men. They were not exactly an impressive collection of perfectly formed ministry candidates. One of them ultimately betrayed him. Peter denied him. The others regularly misunderstood what Jesus was teaching them. And yet Jesus trained them largely through what we might today call a ministry internship: they lived alongside him, watched him minister, were sent out to have a go themselves, got things wrong, learned, and kept going.

Then Jesus gave them the Holy Spirit and, in a sense, let them loose on the world. Now, I certainly don't mean that training and screening are unnecessary. There is real danger in putting ill-equipped or unsuitable men into positions of spiritual leadership. Pastors carry enormous responsibility, and churches can be deeply hurt when that responsibility is handled badly. But I do sometimes wonder whether we can become so determined to eliminate every possible risk that we forget that God has always delighted in using ordinary, imperfect people who are dependent upon him.

That makes me wonder: what about you? God may not be calling you to become a pastor. But perhaps there is some further training, equipping or ministry experience that would help you serve Christ more effectively. Maybe it is theological study. Maybe it is learning to teach the Bible. Maybe it is pastoral care, evangelism, leadership or some other area of ministry. The church does not only need well-equipped pastors. It needs people increasingly equipped to serve Christ with the gifts he has given them. What step can you take today?

~ Pastor Chris

THINGS TO PUT IN YOUR CALENDAR



Dates for upcoming services:

30 Aug:
4:00pm - Worship Service

13 September:
4:00pm - Worship Service

27 September:
4:00pm - Worship Service

BOTH CHURCHES

29 August: Trivia Night 5:30pm

1 September: Prayer night 7:30pm

20 September: The Lord's Supper

3 October: Working Bee

10 October: Christian Reformed Churches
Ladies day @ Wonga Park

VISITING OR NEW TO WONGA PARK OR MERNDA REFORMED CHURCH?

Jenna, our community engagement worker, would love to meet you and answer any questions you have about our Wonga Park church community.

Feel free to contact her on
0403650398.



UPCOMING *Events* JULY



15

**Young Adults Bible
Study**

7:30-9:30PM



29

**Young Adults Bible
Study**

7:30-9:30PM

AUGUST



9

After Church Social

12:00-1:00PM



12

**Young Adults Bible
Study**

7:30-9:30PM



26

**Young Adults Bible
Study**

7:30-9:30PM

If you would like to join please contact Inge on 0478001052 or enquire after the service.

TERM 3

SUPERDASH

2026



STATE YOUTH CAMP



Sunday*

STATE YOUTH SERVICE

4 PM @ Location TBC



BIBLE STUDY

Juniors: Bible Timeline

Seniors: Book of Acts

7:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC



BIBLE STUDY

Juniors: Bible Timeline

Seniors: Book of Acts

7:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC



Saturday*

CONVENTION FUNDRAISER TRIVIA NIGHT

5:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC



BIBLE STUDY

Juniors: Bible Timeline

Seniors: Book of Acts

7:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC



BIBLE STUDY

Juniors: Bible Timeline

Seniors: Book of Acts

7:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC

FOR MORE INFORMATION SPEAK TO YOUR YOUTH LEADERS

KIDS HOPE MENTORS NEEDED

As most of you know, our church has been partnering with Kids Hope and Yarra Road Primary School for 20 years! That is 20 years of helping and supporting kids who, for various reasons, need a little extra support and love from a caring adult. That is 20 years of showing our community the love of Jesus...

The school has recently asked if we would be able to supply a few more mentors. There are so many kids who will benefit from a caring and supporting adult in their lives. They have seen the difference the Kids Hope mentors make in the lives of these kids, and they'd love to be able to offer it to more children.

No prior experience needed, all we ask is that you can spare 1 hour per week during school terms, for a minimum period of 1 year. You will be paired with a single child that you see each week. Mentoring hours are not scripted. You and the child can decide how you want to spend that hour. You can read, talk, play outside, do crafts, paint, play basketball, bake cupcakes, build lego - really anything. The Kids Hope website and previous volunteers can also help you if you get stuck.

Please prayerfully consider if you can spare an hour a week, and would like to give Kids Hope a try. The rewards are numerous - not only for the child, but also for the mentor. If you would like to talk or have any questions, please reach out to Nicky Bester (0439 084 987).

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

There is a special invite to join these lovely women here at church on Thursdays 10:00am for a weekly bible study.

Feel free to come along!





3 OCTOBER

WORKING BEE @ WPCRC

MANY HANDS

make light work!

Come along and help us care
for our church building & grounds.

INSIDE & OUTSIDE
plenty of jobs for everyone!



3 OCTOBER ♥ WPCRC

ALL WILLING HANDS WELCOME!

We'd love to have you join us!



CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
LADIES DAY

OCTOBER 10TH 2026 10AM-3PM

WPCRC

251 YARRA RD, WONGA PARK VIC
3115

**“GARDENS IN BABYLON:
FAITH WHEN GOD SAYS WAIT”**

With Our Guest Speaker, Lauren Palmer

PRAYER POINTS

Personal prayer points

Dear Lord Jesus, we praise you and honour you in our prayers for sacrificing yourself so that we may be saved.

As we go into the coming week let us daily pray;

Extolling our Lord and King, the great I AM who was and is and is to come, the Almighty One, the Eternal One, the Loving One, the Patient One, the Gracious One, the Merciful One, the Forgiving One, the Compassionate One.

I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.
Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever. (Psalm 145:1-2 NRSV)

Praise the Lord our God for who he is.

Congregational prayer points

Please continue to pray for Steve and Maralin Miller, uphold them before the Lord and seek healing for them.

Pray for our children and young people that the Lord will keep them firmly grounded on the rock of their salvation in an ever more troublesome world.

Pray for Christian schools that the Lord will protect them, teaching staff, ancillary staff and students that they may continue to be a light to the world.

Please pray for our nation that the Lord will reclaim it and make it into a truly Christian nation that honors the triune God.

International prayer points

Please pray for all those affected by natural disasters including fires, earthquakes, floods, landslides, drought etc. pray that God will use these events to bring many more into his kingdom.

Continue to pray for those caught up in wars and conflicts, pray that those with power will actively seek genuine peace.

Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Vietnam.

An ethnic-minority pastor from Vietnam's Central Highlands has been sentenced to seven years and six months' imprisonment on charges of "undermining the policy of national unity". The People's Court of Dak Lak province sentenced Pastor Y Nuen Ayun, 59, on 5 August. Pastor Nuen belongs to the Ede ethnic group, of which around 30-40% are Christians. Nuen Ayun's lawyer, Ha Huy Son, reported that the pastor's wife and children attended the trial, which lasted just over two hours.



Pastor Nuen Ayun before the authorities after his arrest [Image credit: VietNam Net]

Son asserted that the court failed to establish that any acts committed by his client constituted a crime. In addition to the prison term, the court ordered Nuen Ayun to serve four years of probation after his release. After Nuen Ayun was arrested at his home on 7 October 2025, the authorities accused him of using the Central Highlands Protestant Church of Christ as a cover for activities that violated national security. Prosecutors alleged that he received financial support from Pastor A Ga, the church's founder, now exiled in the United States, to support the organisation. The intention, the prosecution alleged, was to set up a separate religious entity for ethnic minorities that would operate outside government control and ultimately create a "separate state". Dak Lak authorities prosecuted A Ga in absentia in 2023 on the same charge of "undermining the policy of national unity".

Son contested the allegations against Nuen Ayun, asserting that the indictment identified no specific actions that sought to divide people from the government, armed forces or political and social organisations, as required under Article 116 of Vietnam's Criminal Code. "The defendant participated in the Central Highlands Protestant Church of Christ without the motive or purpose of opposing the government," the lawyer wrote on Facebook following the trial. Son argued that establishing and leading a church, preaching, helping followers to develop spiritually, and organising worship online and at meeting places, do not indicate any plan to oppose the government.

The church commented that Nuen Ayun's imprisonment was designed to intimidate its members and compel them to abandon their faith. It said members have faced police harassment and questioning since the church was founded and their only intention is to practise their faith under Vietnam's Constitution and Law on Belief and Religion.

How you can pray

Pray for Pastor Nuen Ayun as he begins this long sentence for faithfully serving God's people. Ask that He will know the Lord's strength and presence in the challenging days ahead and pray that his family will receive support to sustain them. Pray that the church will draw renewed resolve from the Holy Spirit to grow in faith and enable God's work in Vietnam to advance mightily. Pray that any means possible will be used to overturn this unjust judgement. Barnabas Aid

Our next prayer meeting will be held on Tuesday the 1st of September at 7.30pm.

SERMON NOTES

Bible passage:

Date:



Something
that shines
from the
passage



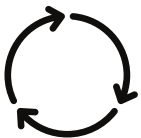
Anything
hard to
understand
or any
questions



Personal
application
for your life



Theme of
passage



How does it
fit with other
passages in
the Bible



Who will you
tell about
what you have
learnt?

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

- Read Acts 1:12-14. What do the disciples do after Jesus ascends, and how does this show that they are taking Jesus' instructions in Acts 1:4 seriously?
- Why do you think Luke emphasises that the believers were "continually united in prayer"? What does their prayer reveal about how they understood their dependence upon God?
- Where are we most tempted to rely on our own planning, ability, resources or leadership rather than on God? What would greater dependence on God in prayer look like in those areas?
- Read Acts 1:15-20. How does Peter interpret Judas' betrayal? What does the phrase "it was necessary that the Scripture be fulfilled" teach us about God's sovereignty over even sinful human actions?
- How can Judas be genuinely responsible for his betrayal while God is still sovereignly working out his purposes through what happened? Why is it important to hold both truths together?
- Think about a time when the failure of a Christian leader, church, parent or other believer has shaken people's confidence. How does this passage help us distinguish between confidence in Jesus and confidence in his servants?
- What is the difference between saying, "My sin does not matter because God is sovereign," and saying, "Even my sin and failure cannot ultimately frustrate God's sovereign purposes"? How should God's sovereignty lead us toward repentance rather than complacency?
- Read Acts 1:21-26. Why was it important that Judas be replaced and that the number of apostles return to twelve? What connection might there be between the twelve apostles and the twelve tribes of Israel?
- Notice the prayer in verse 24: "You, Lord, know everyone's hearts; show which of these two you have chosen." What does this tell us about who ultimately directs and builds Christ's church? How should that shape the way churches make decisions today?
- Looking at the whole passage, what encouragement does Acts 1:12-26 give us when God's mission seems too big, Christian leaders fail, or our own failures discourage us? How might the truth that "the servants may fail, but the King does not" change the way you pray, repent and serve this week?

HELPING HANDS

	30 Aug	6 Sept	13 Sept
Preacher	Chris Pretorius	Neil Bester	Chris Pretorius
Elder on Duty	Peter W	Peter W	Martin
Prayer Leader	Peter W	Janette	Martin
Music Leader	Mia	Neil	Inge
Children's Talk	Sarah	Janette	Joseph
Bible Reader	Sally	Danika	Lorensz
Welcoming	Marlene	Wendy	Joy
Sound	Nina	Nicolas	Justin
Visuals	Salme	Isaac	Isaac
Broadcasting	Christo	James	Michael
Coffee	Alister & Adri Bennie	Danie & Grietjie Uys	Neil & Nicky Bester



BIRTHDAYS

Alexandre Theron	2 Sep
Jenna Miller	3 Sep
Johan Schachtner	4 Sep
Adriaan van Gent	5 Sep
Riaan Bergh	7 Sep
Danielle Bezuidenhout	7 Sep
Heman Dyer	10 Sep



Who Should I Contact?

Pastor:	Chris Pretorius	pastor@wpcrc.org.au
Chairman of Session:	Peter Williams	session@wpcrc.org.au
Community Engagement:	Jenna Miller	jenna@wpcrc.org.au
Church Administration:	Chris Pretorius	admin@wpcrc.org.au
Deacons:	Leana van Gent	deacons@wpcrc.org.au
Music Ministry:	Mia van Wyk	miavwyk@gmail.com
Sound & Visuals:	Michael van der Merwe	vdmichael02@gmail.com
Children's Talk:	Janette Fernando	janettefernando@iprimus.com.au
Sunday School:	Ilze Kellerman	admin@wpcrc.org.au
Youth Group:	Kasha Schubert	youth@wpcrc.org.au
Young Adults:	Michael van der Merwe	vdmichael02@gmail.com
Growth Groups:	Chris Pretorius	pastor@wpcrc.org.au
Prayer Chain:	Herman Linde	herman.linde@live.com.au
Facilities & Maintenance:		deacons@wpcrc.org.au
Newsletter:	Leana van Gent	newsletter@wpcrc.org.au

* To contact telephonically please refer to the directory in the Church app