



WONGA PARK & MERNDA REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER



6 September 2026

This Week's Service:

Preacher:

Neil Bester

Elder on duty:

Peter W

Prayer Leader:

Peter W

Bible text:

Matt 17:22-23 &
Matt 18:1-6

Sermon Topic:

Who is the Greatest
in the Kingdom of
Heaven?

Bible Reader:

Danika

Children's Talk:

Janette

Coffee:

Danie & Grietjie
Uys

Giving

Today's Second Offering:

Candidacy
Committee

Year to June Budgeted
giving:
\$216,310
Actual (June):
\$218,410

Joy is often confused with happiness, but they are not the same thing. Happiness usually depends on what is happening but Joy runs deeper. Happiness rises and falls with circumstances. Joy is rooted in the presence and promises of God. That is why a person can have tears in their eyes and still have joy in their soul.

The fruit of joy is not pretending everything is fine. It is not fake smiling through pain. Biblical joy is the quiet confidence that God is still good, still present, still working, and still faithful. It is the strength that comes from knowing the story is not over because God is still writing it.

This is where a biblical blessing becomes powerful. A blessing can call joy out of someone before they fully feel it. Not in a shallow way. Not by saying, 'Cheer up,' when their heart is hurting. That usually helps nobody and can sound like spiritual duct tape. Instead, blessing speaks deeper truth: 'You are not alone. God is with you. Your life still carries purpose. Joy can rise again.'

Children and adults alike need people who can bless them with joy. They need people who remind them that their worth is not tied to a win, a grade, a paycheck, a relationship status, or a season of disappointment. They need voices that say, 'There is still goodness ahead of you. There is still laughter in your future. God has not finished His work in you.'

Joy grows when we remember who God is. It grows when we celebrate small signs of grace. It grows when we speak life instead of rehearsing despair. In a world that trains people to expect the worst, blessing becomes a holy interruption. It reminds the heart to look up.

Today, become a carrier of joy. Speak joy over someone who has forgotten how to hope.

Your words may become the spark that helps them breathe again.

THINGS TO PUT IN YOUR CALENDAR



Dates for upcoming services:

13 September:

4:00pm - Worship Service

27 September:

4:00pm - Worship Service

BOTH CHURCHES

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.

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

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

May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, Lord, our rock and our Redeemer.

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

To the One who holds us in the palm of his hand and who has promised to be with us to the very end of the age.

May the Lord answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you. May he send you help from the sanctuary and grant you support from Zion. (Psalm 20:1-2 NIV)

Give praise and thanks to the Lord our God who is always ready to help us through our troubles.

Congregational prayer points

Please continue to pray for all those among us suffering from age related illnesses and disabilities, pray that the Lord will carry them through this trying period of their lives and that he will grant healing in accordance with his will and relief from suffering.

Please continue to pray for those of us who have aging and/or ailing family members far away such as South Africa or China, pray that they will experience God's peace in their circumstances.

Please pray for the marriage relationships in our congregation, pray that God will keep them strong.

International prayer points

Please pray for God's church throughout our nation and the world that we will continue to uphold his word and be a light to the lost.

Please continue to pray for our governments that they will honestly seek the welfare of our nation and its people before themselves.

Continue to pray for all those affected by the natural disaster in Nepal and Tibet, pray that God's light will shine in this situation and that many will be drawn to Jesus.

Please pray for God's people in Tajikistan

By Jane / August 31, 2026

Daniel hated Christians, because in Tajikistan he was raised to believe Christianity was evil. It was during the years of civil war, following the independence from the Soviet Union, that Daniel learned that his brother-in-law had become a Christian. He contemplated to murder his brother-in-law, but the darkness inside Daniel proved to be no match to the light that had begun to shine on his family members. In the years that followed, several other in-laws became Christians. They talked to him about it and explained the gospel.

But Daniel could not accept that Jesus could be more than a prophet. One day as he was walking out in the country by himself, he heard a voice calling his name, three times over. Then the voice said, "Why don't you want me as your Lord?" Daniel asked, "Are you Jesus?" The voice said, "I am Jesus Christ." Daniel did not see anybody but asked a question in the hope the voice would answer. "You are a man, why do they call you God?"

For more than half an hour as he walked, he heard the voice of Jesus answer his questions. At the end, Daniel knelt down, convinced that Jesus was indeed Lord, and dedicated his life to Christ. It was the beginning of a new life, but also the beginning of much suffering. He began to tell others about Jesus. His wife became a believer a year after him. When his parents heard about this, they were livid. They kicked Daniel and his wife and two small children out of their house in the middle of the night. With no place to go, they decided to go to the small house church to pray.

As they were praying for hours, the pastor came to ask what the problem was. They did not want to tell him, however, because they wanted to hear from God and see how he would take care of them. So, they told the pastor all was well. Later, because they were still praying, the pastor came again and suggested they stay in a little room in the church to get some sleep. This room became their home for the next three years.

It was still war, but God called Daniel to become an evangelist. Everyone knew he was a Christian by now. He lived in the church along with his family and a group of 15 war orphans, whom the church was taking care of. One day, an armed group of Islamic rebels came to the church and shouted that Daniel had to come outside or he would be killed. Instead, Daniel instructed the children to kneel together and pray that God would save them. The children prayed loudly, so the rebels could hear them. They prayed God would let his church grow and the war stop.

One of the rebels jumped inside, started beating Daniel and screamed that he had to stop praying. Daniel told him "I forgive you, because God also forgave me. Even if you kill me, God still loves you."

This made him even more angry, and he put the gun to Daniel's head and pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. He pulled the trigger a second and third time, but the gun refused. As he threw his gun on the ground, it started firing. At this, the rebels became terrified and ran away. Together with the orphans they thanked God for saving their lives.

Later when they were outside, another group of Islamic fighters came to the church. They had Kalashnikovs and machetes. They took the Christians and made them lay in the mud. They beat them and threatened them, but as they did so, Daniel did not stop telling them about Jesus and assuring them that God loved them. Then he was told "If you are not gone before Sunday, we will kill you!" Every day they came back to beat him, and everyday Daniel kept telling his persecutors about the love of God. The other Christians left the church, but Daniel stayed. He felt that he had to preach the gospel to these warriors, because he had been just like them one time, filled with hate and rage. If Jesus had not spoken to him, he would still be like them.

One day, Daniel was the only one left. One of the warriors suggested they should give him another good beating, but the other one said, "if we do that, he will just keep saying God loves us. Let's come back on Sunday to kill him."

On Sunday night at 2 AM, a group of eight armed guys came to the church. As he saw them approach, he told his wife to go to sleep, as there were 'some friends to see him'. He went outside. The warriors took him and told him, "If you mention Jesus again, we will behead you and show your head everywhere as a warning." They dragged him to a rubbish dump outside the town. They gave him a shovel and told him to dig his grave. When he finished digging, he kneeled down. They held him by his hair, while another pointed the gun. A religious leader read an Islamic prayer. After that he was given one more chance to deny Jesus and pledge allegiance to Islam.

Daniel answered "I was a Muslim like you, and a tough guy and I could have killed at least two of you with that shovel before you had the chance to kill me. But I didn't do it. Because Jesus tells me to love my enemies. So, I don't want to fight. But please let me pray before you kill me."

As they gave him permission to pray, Daniel asked God that he would find the words that would touch their hearts. He wanted to share the gospel one last time. So, he started to pray. "Lord, people make religion, but you are the true and living Word. I did not know you, but you gave me life. I pray for blessing and protection for my friends here. Please do not hold them responsible for my blood."

They stopped him and asked "Are you crazy? We are here to kill you. Why do you bless us?" Daniel told them "I see no enemies when I look at you, but fellow Tajik. God can change your life like he changed mine." At this, they pulled him up and brought him home. From that moment, this armed group protected the church.

Daniel went on to become a pastor and even do missionary work in Afghanistan for several years. "When my parents kicked me out, I felt so lost", he said. "But now I realise I wasn't kicked out, but sent out by God, into this ministry work." "Suffering is necessary," Daniel and his wife both affirm. But as a result of these sacrifices, an indigenous church is being born among former Muslim Tajik. The first fruits of the harvest are being gathered in. May many more become followers of Jesus.

SERMON NOTES

Bible passage:

Date:



Something
that shines
from the
passage



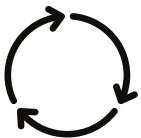
Anything
hard to
understand
or any
questions



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?

HELPING HANDS

	6 September	13 September	20 September
Preacher	Neil Bester	Chris Pretorius	Chris Pretorius
Elder on Duty	Peter W	Martin	Kasha
Prayer Leader	Janette	Martin	Herman L
Music Leader	Neil	Inge	Brendina
Children's Talk	Janette	Joseph	Inge
Bible Reader	Danika	Lorensz	Roger
Welcoming	Wendy	Joy	Ina
Sound	Nicolas	Justin	Nina
Visuals	Isaac	Isaac	Salme
Broadcasting	James	Michael	Christo
Coffee	Danie & Grietjie Uys	Neil & Nicky Bester	Mahdi, Justin, Kasha



BIRTHDAYS

Johan Schachtner	4 Sep
Adriaan van Gent	5 Sep
Riaan Bergh	7 Sep
Danielle Bezuidenhout	7 Sep
Heman Dyer	10 Sep
Cassie van Veen	12 Sep
Alister Bennie	13 Sep
Luke Corney	14 Sep
Ina du Plessis	14 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