



WONGA PARK & MERNDA REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER



27 September 2026

This Week's Service:

Preacher:

Chris Pretorius

Elder on duty:

Peter Williams

Prayer Leader:

Peter Williams

Bible text:

Acts 2:41-47

Sermon Topic:

What the Lord does
with a Spirit-
Empowered Church

Bible Reader:

Nelleke

Children's Talk:

Nicky Bester

Coffee:

Roger & Janette
Fernando

Giving

Today's
Second Offering:

RTC

August Budgeted

giving:

\$17,610

Actual Giving:

\$18,895

THANK YOU!

Changing How We Organise Our Church Leadership

This week, I would like to take the opportunity to communicate a change in the way we are organising the church internally within the Wonga Park and Mernda communities. At present, many different matters come to the same monthly Session meeting. In a single evening, the elders may need to discuss pastoral care, finances, building maintenance, worship services, administration, outreach and long-term ministry planning. This means our meetings cover a very broad range of subjects. Urgent practical matters can consume time that might otherwise be spent on pastoral care, prayer, mission and the spiritual direction of the church.

At present, our deacons have also carried a mixture of practical-care and property-maintenance responsibilities. While both kinds of work are important, routine maintenance can distract the deacons from their particular calling to works of mercy and caring for people in need. Now with the new church plant and as our ministry develops across both Wonga Park and Mernda we believe it is time to reshape some of how the church is organised to help us serve God and his people in our churches.

Firstly: What Will Stay the Same?

We are not changing our ecclesiology or our understanding of how God has ordained church leadership to work. So the church council, or session as we also call it, will continue to provide the church's collective spiritual oversight. The elders will remain responsible for doctrine, policy, accountability, pastoral oversight and major decisions. The proposed change does not reduce Session's responsibility or transfer the church's governance to committees. Instead, we hope that this change will help us by creating a few smaller, focused groups that can do the detailed work within clearly defined areas and remain accountable to Session.

(Continued on the next page)

Changing How We Organise Our Church Leadership (continued)

So What Will Actually Change?

Rather than bringing almost every matter to one broad monthly meeting, our work will be organised into three main areas.

Assets & Enablement (Places)

This group will oversee the practical resources that support the church's ministry, including finance, buildings and grounds, maintenance, venue matters, administration and resources. An elder will provide oversight and maintain the connection with Session. Church members with suitable experience in areas such as finance, property, administration or project management will also be able to participate. This group will generally meet monthly or when current projects require it. Routine decisions and updates may also be handled between meetings. Crucially this will free up our deacons from the facilities responsibility to allow them to focus on the second area.

Care & Community (People)

This group will focus on the spiritual and practical care of people at both Wonga Park and Mernda. Its responsibilities will include pastoral care, growth groups, welcoming and following up visitors, prayer, visits, meals and the wider community life of the church. This group will be made up of the pastor and some elders, along with those that are gifted in helping connect people, pray for people, and pastorally care for people. The deacons will become part of this broader care ministry, concentrating on works of mercy and practical assistance. Because pastoral needs require regular attention, the Care & Community group will ordinarily meet each month.

Teaching, Training & Mission (Planning)

This group will focus on the church's longer-term ministry direction. It will oversee teaching and preaching, worship services, training and equipping members, evangelism, mission and outreach. The pastor and elders will be the people who make up this team with input from the ministry co-ordinators where they wish to contribute. This group will not necessarily need to meet every month. It is likely to meet every two or three months, approximately once a quarter, with additional meetings when a significant initiative requires attention. This will allow us to think strategically about training and equipping our members for works of service across the year and across both locations.

So Why Are We Making This Change?

There are three big reasons why we think this is the right move for us to make. Firstly, with the move to two locations, we need a new structure to help us serve both churches' needs effectively. At the moment, we recognise that we can do things better and we believe that this new structure will give us the foundation to do that well. Secondly, we want to strengthen our sense of community and pastoral care across both congregations. Our current structure does not serve us well in this way, and we believe that this will help us make sure our people are better looked after, and that our community can be supported more effectively. And thirdly we believe that this will give our church members more opportunities to serve according to their gifts, whether that is in physically looking after the buildings, prayerfully upholding members up to the Lord in prayer, or pastorally caring for people. Under the new structure, someone will not need to become an elder or deacon before contributing to the church's leadership and ministry. Members may serve within one of these groups, help with a particular area or join a short-term project according to their gifts and availability.

What Happens Next?

Session has agreed to develop this proposal, but the details have not yet been finalised. We are now seeking feedback from the congregation before confirming the membership of each group and implementing the structure. We want to invite you to consider whether the proposed changes are clear, whether any responsibilities have been overlooked, and whether there is an area in which you might be willing to serve.

Please speak with Chris or one of the elders with your questions, suggestions or concerns. Most importantly, please pray that God will give us wisdom and use these changes to strengthen his church, care for his people and advance the gospel in Wonga Park and Mernda.

THINGS TO PUT IN YOUR CALENDAR



Dates for upcoming services:

27 September:
4:00pm - Worship Service

11 October:
4:00pm - Worship Service

BOTH CHURCHES

3 October: Working Bee

6 October: Prayer meeting 7:30pm

10 October: Christian Reformed Churches
Ladies day @ Wonga Park

18 October: The Lord's Supper

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.



The Convention fundraiser (Trivia Night) raised \$5,054, excluding cash given on the night. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported it.

UPCOMING

Events

SEPTEMBER



9

Young Adults Bible
Study

7:30-9:30PM



23

Young Adults Bible
Study

7:30-9:30PM

OCTOBER



7

Young Adults Bible
Study

7:30-9:30PM



18

After Church Social

12:00-1:00PM



21

Young Adults Bible
Study

7:30-9:30PM

NEW RELEASE

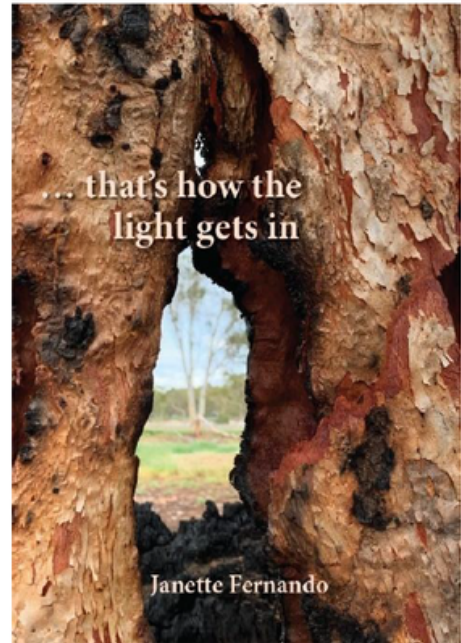


POETICA CHRISTI PRESS
invites you to the launch
of

... that's how the light gets in
a collection of poems and prayers
by
Janette Fernando

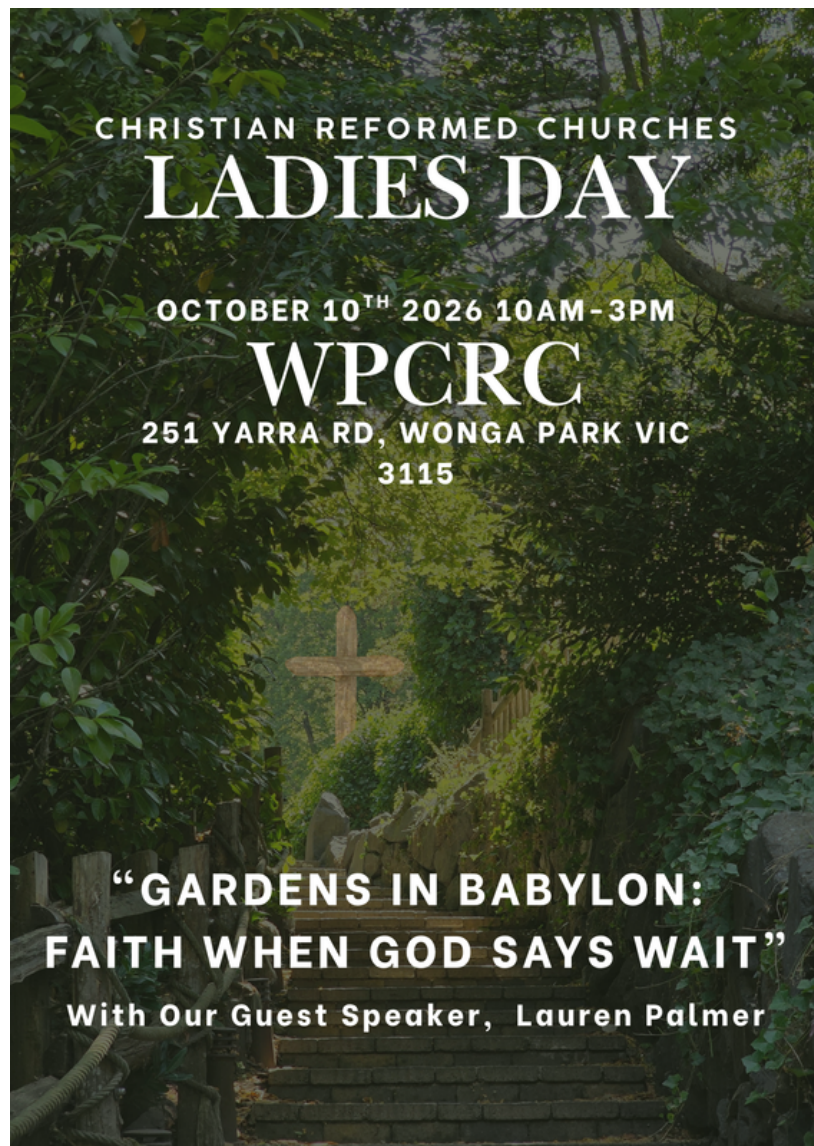
to be launched by Julien Winspear

on **Sunday, October 4th** at **2.30 pm**
at Montrose Church of Christ
7 Leith Rd, Montrose
(entrance via carpark in Walker Rd.)



RSVP by September 30th to 0422 887 228.

If you can't attend, but would like to buy a copy @ \$20, see Janette or email poetica@iprimus.com.au



CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

LADIES DAY

OCTOBER 10TH 2026 10AM-3PM

Wonga Park Christian Reformed Church

4 Gatters Road, Wonga Park, VIC, 3115

Please join us and our special guest speakers Lauren Palmer and Nichole Kelly, for the CRCA Ladies Day "Gardens in Babylon". Lauren will be sharing some of her journey and speaking to us about what faith looks like when God tells us to wait. In the afternoon we will hear from Nichole about the work and ministry of Benwerren.

There will be morning tea, lunch and activities.

Be sure to bring items for the trading table – all funds raised will go towards the Solomon Island Work Group. Please bring some cash to buy items and/or make a donation.

Please register (free of charge) here by 5 Oct 2026:



<https://wpcrc.churchcenter.com/registrations/signups/3902461>

CRC Ladies Day – Bring a Plate

Saturday 10 October 2026, 10am – 3pm, at Wonga Park

Dear Ladies

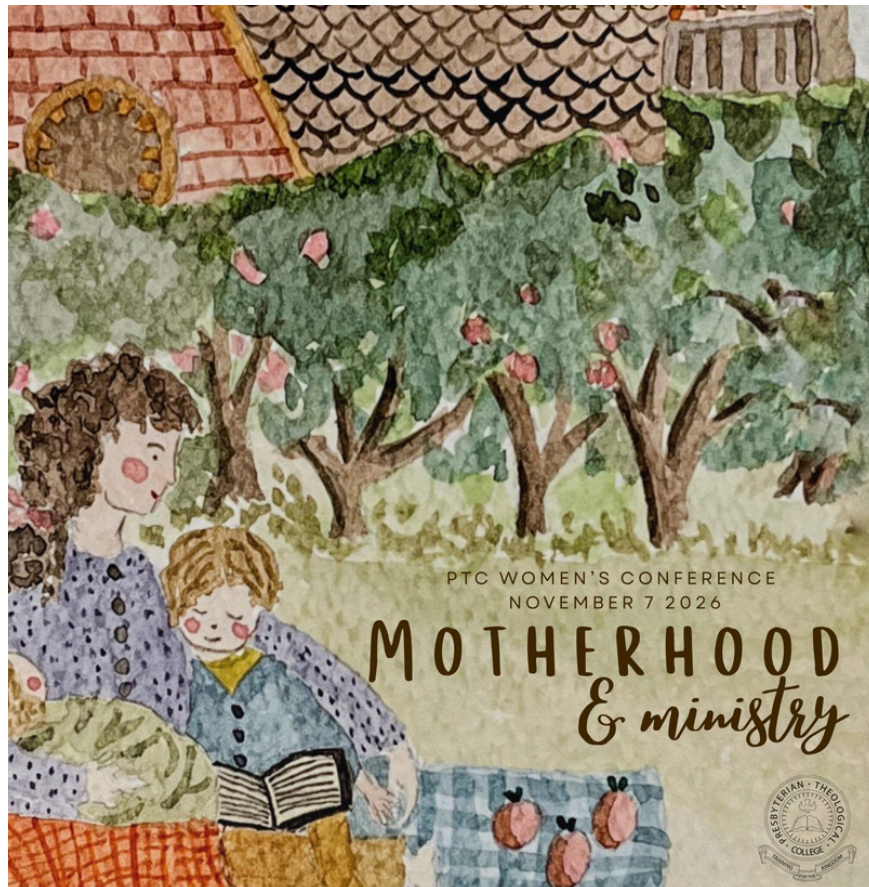
As you may be aware, we are hosting the annual CRC Ladies Day at Wonga Park this year on the 10th of October 2026.

As hosts we are responsible to supply morning tea and lunch. We have a generous donation that fully caters for lunch. However, we need your support in supplying a plate (sweet or savoury) for morning tea. We're expecting around 100 people.

You are welcome to coordinate amongst yourselves on what you'll be supplying to have a good balanced selection of sweet and savoury items.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to speak to Joy, Wendy, Jo or Brendina.

Yours in Christ
Joy, Wendy, Jo and Brendina



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

PTC Women's Conference is back! It is a great opportunity to learn, fellowship and encourage each other as women.

TOPIC: Motherhood and Ministry

SPEAKER: Jocelyn Loane (Chaplain at Moore College)

WHEN: Saturday 7th November from 10:00am

WHERE: 684 Elgar Rd, Box Hill North, VIC 3129

TICKETS:

Early Bird – \$45 (until 3 October)

Standard – \$55

Late registration – \$65

Group of 5 – \$200

Group of 10 – \$350

REGISTER HERE

www.ptc.edu.au/event/ptc-womens-conference-2026/

PRAYER POINTS

Personal prayer points

Dear Lord we humbly lay our prayers and petitions at your feet, please accept them.

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

That we will never take our eyes off, nor cease to give thanks to the Lord our God who, in his grace and mercy, grants us blessings beyond number.

To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until he has mercy upon us. (Psalm 123:1-2 NRSV)

Give thanks and praise to the Lord our God who, through his great mercy sacrificed his own dear Son for us.

Congregational prayer points

Please continue to pray for Steve and Maralin Miller, pray that the Lord will have mercy and grant them the healing they require from their respective illnesses.

Please continue to pray for Lorensz and Sandra Stork as well as Anne and Bryce Keegel as they are going through the stress of moving house to a much smaller home. Pray that the Lord will grant them peace and strength and that all will go according to plan.

Please pray for our church that we will become a truly praying church spending time with our Lord and Master seeking his will and direction for this congregation.

International prayer points

Please continue to pray for our nation especially as things become more difficult for many people that they may turn to Jesus who has promised to carry our burdens.

Please pray for the world leaders as they meet that they will be moved by the Holy Spirit to seek that which is best for all according to God's word.

Please pray for God's church in Somalia.

Please pray for God's church in Somalia.

The Faith of Omar
Written by Dr. Howie Shute
The Somali Church – Becoming a Global Influence for Christ

I believe that Omar would be another candidate for the Somali Faith Hall of Fame. Omar had been studying the Qur'an in pursuit of his father's desire for him to get the best Islamic education possible. His father, Ali, was a leading tribal elder, who was passionate about spreading Islam. He was a very influential leader in Somalia, having great influence in his community and the full support from the military. Ali wanted his son, Omar, to succeed him as tribal leader. Thus, he pushed his son to study the Qur'an diligently. As Omar studied the Qur'an, he was impressed with the many favourable references to Jesus. He then began to read the Bible, so that he could learn more about Jesus. He became fascinated with Jesus and his teachings.

As he gained more and more knowledge of Jesus, he talked with his father about some of his misgivings about Islam and how he was considering to follow Jesus Christ. His father was not happy. In fact, he threatened to kill him, if he continued to pursue this radical departure from his religion and culture. This did not keep Omar from his thirst for more of the Bible and his great desire to know more of Jesus Christ. Eventually, Omar gave his heart to Jesus and became a follower of Ciise.

Omar had discovered a Christian Radio Broadcast that had helped him to come to a place of decision. This broadcast also became a place for his spiritual nurture after that decision. He grew in his knowledge and experience with Jesus. He also grew in desire to share Jesus with his family. As he shared Jesus with his mother, he was labelled a rebellious son. Then he was declared insane by the whole family as he shared Jesus with other family members. Eventually he was asked to leave home.

He was disowned by family and clan. "In his culture, identity and self-worth were derived from family, and now he was no longer Ali's and Afeefa's son. Omar had completely forfeited the acceptance and the protection of his clan. His inheritance was completely nullified. He was persona non grata in a country that would never accept his faith in Jesus the Messiah."

His shortwave radio served as both his church and pastor for seven years. "He had not met one Christian during that time." At the end of those seven years he finally met Ibraahim, an underground Christian like himself. The two of them began an underground church, which eventually grew to fourteen members.

This was a great blessing to Omar, since he had previously had no Christian fellowship. However, this blessing did not last long. His underground church was discovered and execution orders went out for all fourteen members, including Omar himself. One by one they were hunted down and eliminated. Ibraahim was the first martyr for Christ in their fourteen-member underground church. Omar left Somalia and came to Addis Ababa, where he came into contact with our ministry. In the end twelve were murdered in cold blood.

Mahdi, another believer, has since died of natural causes, leaving Omar as the only survivor of that underground Mogadishu church. We sponsored Omar in a Bible College in Addis Ababa, where he earned a Bachelor of Theology Degree. While attending college, he made a visit to Somalia and planted an underground church.

He became our Somali Ministry leader and over a period of five years this one underground church became a network of twenty-five churches. Today it is estimated that there are approximately two hundred house-churches, fellowships or Bible study groups in the Somali peninsula, all operating underground. Omar attended a seminary in the USA, where he earned a Master of Divinity Degree.

During the years working on his Master's, he ministered to the Somalis in America. Even here in the United States Somalis are persecuted for faith in Christ, especially when news of this reaches their families back in Somalia. Today, Omar is serving as a Global Missionary, "where his influence and ministry has resulted in house churches all over the world, even in nations that are closed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ." He has also been used in the planting, development, and oversight of above ground churches in another country in Africa. By faith Omar left family and clan to become a global influence for Christ.

The next prayer meeting will be held on Tuesday the 6th of October at 7.30pm.

SERMON NOTES

Bible passage:

Date:



Something
that shines
from the
passage



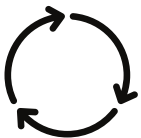
Anything
hard to
understand
or any
questions



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?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Acts 2:41-47

1. Verse 41 says they “accepted” Peter’s message, which means they welcomed it the way you would welcome a guest. What does it look like to welcome God’s word in an ordinary week?
2. In v42 they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers. Which of these comes most naturally to you, and which do you drift from most easily?
3. Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 103 says God wants us to “attend the assembly of God’s people to learn what God’s Word teaches, to participate in the sacraments, to pray to God publicly, and to bring Christian offerings for the poor.” How closely does that match v42? How closely does it match your Sundays?
4. “Awe came over everyone” (v43). When did you last feel a sense of awe at God’s nearness? What tends to dull it?
5. The word for “fellowship” in v42 shares a root with “in common” in v44. How does that stretch your idea of what fellowship is?
6. Heidelberg Q&A 55 says each member should use their gifts “readily and joyfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.” What has God given you that others in our church need? What stops us from sharing it?
7. They met in the temple courts and in their homes (v46). Why does a church need both the large gathering and the household table?
8. They ate “with joyful and sincere hearts” (v46). What makes it hard for us to share life with a glad and open heart?
9. After Peter declares Jesus “Lord” (v36), Luke says “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (v47). Heidelberg Q&A 54 says the Son of God “gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a community.” Why does it matter that Jesus is the one building his church?
10. Within a few chapters this church faced deceit (5:1-11) and complaints (6:1). Why is that good news for a church like ours?

HELPING HANDS

	27 September	4 October	11 October
Preacher	Chris Pretorius	Harry Berends	Chris Pretorius
Elder on Duty	Peter W	Martin	Peter W
Prayer Leader	Peter W	Inge	Herman D
Music Leader	Nelleke	Brendina	Mia
Children's Talk	Nicky	Roger	Sarah
Bible Reader	Nelleke	Karien	Marlene
Welcoming	Anne	Marlene	Jenna
Sound	Nicolas	Justin	Justin
Visuals	Isaac	Ené	Salme
Broadcasting	James	Michael	Christo
Coffee	Roger & Janette Fernando	Christina & Jacob du Toit	Michael Hayes & Ka- men Kam



BIRTHDAYS

Inge Theron	27 Sep
Phillip Nel	30 Sep
Brady Miller	1 Oct
Kasha Schubert	4 Oct



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