



WONGA PARK & MERNDA REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER



4 October 2026

This Week's Service:

Preacher:

Harry Berends

Elder on duty:

Martin van der
Merwe

Prayer Leader:

Inge Theron

Bible text:

Philippians 3:1-4:1
(Text: Philippians
3:13-14)

Sermon Topic:

Are you happy?

Bible Reader:

Karien

Children's Talk:

Roger

Coffee:

Christina & Jacob
du Toit

Giving

Today's Second Offering:

IndiWay

August Budgeted

giving:

\$17,610

Actual Giving:

\$18,895

THANK YOU!

Changing How We Organise Our Church Leadership

We are running this article for a second week because it is so important for the life of our church. If you haven't yet had a chance, please read it prayerfully and share your thoughts, questions and suggestions with Chris or one of the elders. We would really value your input.

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:

11 October:
4:00pm - Worship Service

25 October:
4:00pm - Worship Service

BOTH CHURCHES

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.

Deacon Nominations

We are extremely grateful to put the following Deacon nominees forward:

Jo Reed
Brendina Saul
Jenna Miller

Please join us in praying for these nominees that have accepted the invitation to join the Deaconate. May the Lord bless their willing hearts and hands for the work set before them.

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

TERM 4 2026 SUPERDASH



BIBLE STUDY

Juniors: Bible Timeline

Seniors: QA Discussion with Chris

7:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC



Sunday*

STATE YOUTH SERVICE

4 PM @ Geelong



NO SUPERDASH

DUE TO MELB CUP HOLIDAY (3rd of NOV)



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



SOCIAL NIGHT

Seniors: Church Sleepover

7:30 PM @ Wonga Park CRC

FOR MORE INFORMATION SPEAK TO YOUR YOUTH LEADERS

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

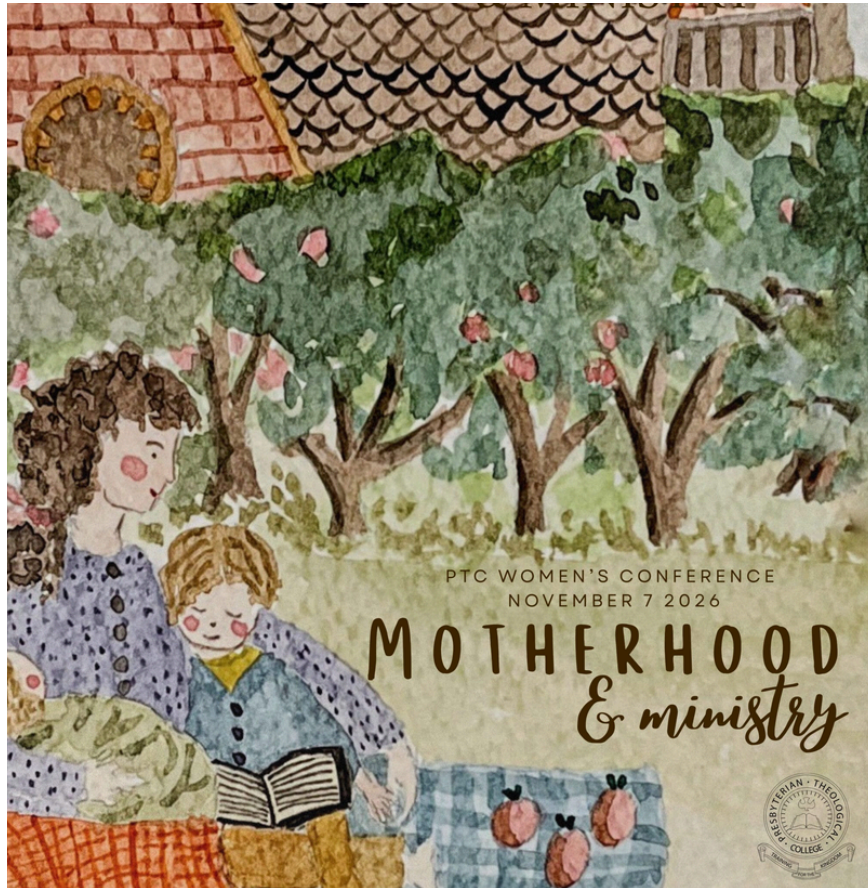
As you may be aware, we are hosting the annual CRC Ladies Day at Wonga Park this year on the 10th of October 2026.

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

Heavenly Father we humbly ask that our prayers will be received by you with mercy and grace.

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

That the Lord will graciously help us to follow his example and in humility seek to serve him
always as he served the Father.

Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever
serves me, the Father will honor. (John 12:26 NRSV)

Give glory to God our Heavenly Father for his willingness to stoop down to us through Jesus in
order to lift us up to himself.

Congregational prayer points

Please pray for Anne and Bryce Keegel as they work through all that is required to move to
a new but much smaller home, pray that they will know the peace of God at every stage.

Please continue to pray for all the elderly among us that as they become more frail that the
Lord will uphold them and be their comfort.

Please continue to pray for both the Wonga Park and Mernda congregations that the Lord
will continue to bless us so that we will both be mighty witnesses for him in our respective
communities.

International prayer points

Please continue to pray for our governments as the rulers and leaders of our nation that
the Lord will move mightily among them so that his will will be done and not theirs.

Please continue to pray for world leaders that they will earnestly seek peace and the
welfare of all humanity.

Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Myanmar.

Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Myanmar.

Myanmar's military junta has shot and killed a Baptist pastor in the Christian-majority Chin state, the third killing of a pastor there in about three and a half months, according to a religious freedom group that is pressing the U.S. government to act. Soldiers opened fire on the Rev. Dal Thawn Tuang, 49, who served as assistant pastor at Lamzang Baptist Church, hitting him three times close to the Kapte bridge as he made his way home from religious duties in a neighbouring village on Monday, the U.S.-based persecution watchdog International Christian Concern (ICC) reports. The bullets hit his chest, abdomen and thigh. Tuang, who spent 22 years at the church, leaves behind his wife and two children. His funeral took place in Lamzang Village, roughly 5.5 miles from Tiddim town. The Tiddim Baptist Convention sent a condolence letter honouring him as "a faithful servant of God."

A physical examination found bullet wounds in three places on Tuang's body, pointing to a deliberate killing rather than an accident, according to the Burma Research Institute (BRI). A separate, conflicting account from The Irrawaddy's Burmese-language edition said that escaped prisoners of war from the Tiddim area were behind the fatal shooting. Last Sunday night, roughly 80 military prisoners broke out of custody kept by People's Defence Force-Zoland, a resistance group, setting off clashes between the two sides, it said. ICC President Shawn Wright said the killing followed "the recent murder of Pastor William and our brother Nam Ceu," calling it "a concerning trend," and asking Christians in the West to pray for the grieving families and for the Burmese church. "Our staff is praying for Pastor Tuang's family and his church," Wright said. "We ask Christians in the West to lift up these grieving families in prayer and pray for the Burmese Church to be united and encouraged during the ongoing violence."

BRI board chair Rev. Robin Stoops, a former associate general secretary at American Baptist Churches USA, called the killing part of "an escalating war against Christians." BRI President Zo Tum Hmung said the killings amount to "crimes against humanity and war crimes" that U.S. President Donald Trump should formally recognize and called on the White House to press the junta to free detained pastors and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Soldiers killed the Rev. William, who served as pastor of Chungcung Baptist Church for more than 25 years, and a fellow Chin Christian, Nam Ceu, after holding the pair since their arrest in May. Sources told BRI the two were killed over alleged ties to the Hakha Chinland Defence Force, a local militia fighting the junta. Chungcung village has come under repeated attack since the 2021 coup, and its Baptist church was looted and destroyed that October.

More than 340 churches and Christian-owned properties have suffered damage or destruction since the coup, and 149 Christians were killed and 218 imprisoned between 2022 and 2025, according to Open Doors. A BRI report from January found a sustained assault on the Thantlang area that destroyed 21 of the town's 22 churches and displaced its entire population. Violence against Christians, churches and civilians has intensified since junta chief Min Aung Hlaing took office as president on April 10, after a junta-controlled parliament elected him the previous week. The Chin, an overwhelmingly Baptist ethnic group in Myanmar's Christian-majority state, face persecution tied to their ethnicity and faith, and many pastors have been arrested or tortured, or have fled to Mizoram state in India. Rights advocates have called on the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to factor religious persecution into their engagement with the junta. The larger fighting has triggered airstrikes, shelling, mass displacement and disrupted aid to Kachin, Chin, Karen, Kayah and parts of Shan states, home to roughly 2 million Christians. The military controls about 14% of the country's territory.

Source: Christian Post

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

SERMON NOTES

Bible passage:

Date:



Something
that shines
from the
passage



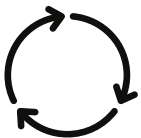
Anything
hard to
understand
or any
questions



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?

INDIWAY UPDATE

A Message from Your Ministry Partner: Ramesh Chandra Ahari

I am Ramesh Chandra Ahari from Udaipur district of Rajasthan State. I belong to the Bhil community and am working among the Bhil community people. My wife's name is Nirma Devi. We are blessed with four children. Our elder son Praveen is 14 years old and studying in 9th standard; second is our daughter Asha, she is 11 years old and studying in 6th standard; third is my son Deepak, he is 10 years old and studying in 5th standard; fourth is my daughter Payal, she is 6 years old and currently in 2nd standard.

Thank God for the 13 new believers added to our congregations. I lead two worship groups in Leeladi and Kakad Mala villages, where more than 95 believers gather for Sunday worship service in both places. Also, I oversee two prayer groups in the villages of Sagwada and Tumdar. I have also shared the good news through outreach in four villages: Mota, Mangra, Sigri and Mada.

The Field: Udaipur Cluster, Rajasthan

Udaipur is a tribal region in the state of Rajasthan. Most of its villages are situated in hilly and forest areas, making them remote and difficult to access. Most of the people living in the Udaipur field belong to the Bhil and Garasiya tribal communities, with the Bhil community forming the majority of the population. The people mainly speak the Vaghari language. Agriculture is the primary source of income, and many families also depend on animal husbandry by raising cows, buffaloes, goats, and other livestock for their livelihood. Farming is mostly rain-fed, so many families face financial hardship when the monsoon rainfall is insufficient.

Looking Ahead: Plan & Prayer for 2026

- I have a plan to begin holding fasting prayer twice a month for spiritual growth at Sagwada village.
- I have a goal to share the good news with 50 people, with the hope of leading at least 25 of them to faith.
- I have a plan for our congregation to organise a women's meeting, youth and family seminar for the spiritual growth of my believers.

An Opportunity to Serve Global Missions: Treasurer for IndiWay and World Transform

At Synod 2027 Ferdie De Haan, the long-serving treasurer of both World Transform and IndiWay, will be stepping down from his role. Expressions of interest are invited from across the CRCA for someone to continue his good work and serve as treasurer for both IndiWay and World Transform (this is a voluntary position). Some basic accounting skills would be helpful, but much of the work is straightforward financial administration. You don't need to be an accounting expert: a willingness to serve, attention to detail, some simple technical understanding and confidence working with numbers would be a great starting point. Please prayerfully consider whether you might be suited to this role. If you are interested, or would like to find out more, contact World Transform at worldtransform@crca.org.au.

HELPING HANDS

	4 October	11 October	18 October
Preacher	Harry Berends	Chris Pretorius	Chris Pretorius
Elder on Duty	Martin	Peter W	Kasha
Prayer Leader	Inge	Herman D	Kasha
Music Leader	Brendina	Mia	Neil
Children's Talk	Roger	Sarah	Janette
Bible Reader	Karien	Marlene	Salme
Welcoming	Marlene	Jenna	Joy
Sound	Justin	Justin	Nicolas
Visuals	Ené	Salme	Isaac
Broadcasting	Michael	Christo	James
Coffee	Christina & Jacob du Toit	Michael Hayes & Ka-men Kam	Herman & Lynette Dyer



BIRTHDAYS

Kasha Schubert - 4 Oct
Michael van der Merwe - 8 Oct
Peter Williams - 15 Oct
Ava Corney - 20 Oct
Adri Bennie - 22 Oct
Elize Bezuidenhout - 23 Oct
Teddy Pretorius - 24 Oct
Lariza Bergh - 25 Oct
Retha van Staden - 26 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

