



# Penrith Presbyterian Church

9 Doonmore Street,  
Penrith NSW 2750

Focus for 2024  
"God's Love in Our Mess"

## Worship Services

are held each Sunday at...

**9.00am, 10.30am, 5.00pm**

Kids' Church is part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> service.

Ministers: **Steve Mannyx, Hugh Prattis**

[penrithpresbyterian.com](http://penrithpresbyterian.com)



## Our Purpose Statement

*“Growing Together in Christ, Upward and Outward”*

This statement describes who we are as a community of God’s people.

## Our Vision

*“To be a loving and worshipping community of God's people that builds His kingdom in the power of the Spirit by training, equipping and mobilising its members to be disciples of Jesus who make disciples.”*



*A lot of us find visuals very useful as a way of more easily understanding how to implement a strategy or an idea. This visual has been put together to help us.*

*It is understood by moving from the centre outwards.*

1. Christ stands at the centre of who we are and everything we do.
2. Our devotion to Christ and the way we share in his mission are expressed through worship and discipleship (key ideas expressed in Scripture and in the Vision Statement).
3. What we are called together to do as a church is driven by these two things.

*We worship God and disciple others:*

- as we pray;
- as we go and tell others about him;
- as we learn from his word and from the proclamation of the gospel; and,
- as we gather together as God’s people on Sundays and in all that we do throughout the week.

## Our Focus Theme for 2024

*“God’s Love in Our Mess”*

# Welcome to Penrith Presbyterian Church!

(1853-2024)

## Who are we?

Central to who we are is **Jesus Christ**. As a community, we believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who entered the world to save us from our rebellion against God. He did this by dying on a cross and rising from the dead, defeating sin and death. It is Jesus who brings us together as God's people, and so we aim to tell all people the good news of the Lord Jesus.

We are a community that looks **upward**, worshiping God. God has spoken to us in his word, the Bible. It is important, as God's people, to hear what God says to us in his word and so we spend time hearing from the Bible in our Sunday worship services, during Bible studies and other activities during the week. We respond to God by trusting his word and putting it into practice. In our Sunday worship this includes prayer and singing his praises.

We are a community that looks **outward**, serving others. God has served us, by rescuing us in Jesus. We now serve one another, by helping each other in our needs and caring for the poor, the weak and the vulnerable. We also aim to serve the local Penrith area and those in other places within Australia and around the world. As God has loved us, so we strive to love others.

***Growing together in Christ, Upward and Outward***

# Ministers and Elders... The Session



**Minister:**

**Steve Mannyx**



**Minister:**

**Hugh Prattis**



**Elder (Session Clerk)**

**John Pickering, JP**



**Elder:**

**Neil Sperinck**



**Elder:**

**Geoff Westcott**



**Elder:**

**Lewis Burrough**

“If we can encourage others, we should encourage them.  
If we can give, we should be generous.  
If we are leaders, we should do our best.  
If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.”

*[Romans 12:8]*

## **SESSION REVIEW – 2023**

*“Growing Together in Christ. Upward and Outward.”*

When we pause to reflect upon the year that has been, we need to give all praise and thanks to our great God who, despite some ongoing distractions which, at times, diverted our focus from the main task of supporting and building up our church family members in Christ, continued to bless us across our wide range of ministry programs:

- a gradual, but significant increase in the number of visitors seeking to join us at regular worship services – a trend that commenced during the previous year or so;
- an increase in the number of children involved in Kids’ Church classes each Sunday;
- a growing number of people visiting the Community Pantry each Sunday afternoon;
- an increased number of ladies have been welcomed into both of our PWA groups;
- a consistent number of young people participating in the Youth Group and attending its activities, with a substantial increase at the very beginning of 2024;
- following quite a few years of reaching out and seeking additional men to join our Session, we rejoice at one new elder, Lewis Burrough, joining the team in 2023, and new members of our church family have attended the Eldership Training; and the classes held to prepare for Communicant Membership of our church.

In spite of a few years of interruptions to our weekly services, and other ministry programs, the average attendance at Sunday Worship Services during 2023, reveals some very positive (and perhaps surprising for some?) results: 9 am – 43 adults + 15 online connections; 10.30am – 39 adults + 4 online connections); 5.00pm – 16 adults + 1 online. When compared to attendances in 2019 (pre-covid and no online access), we find that (on average) there are 15 extra people attending our services each week. Praise God!

A welcome leadership initiative from Steve in 2023 involved the development of a yearly calendar that highlighted one important focus area

for each month of the year. Focus themes such as The Gospel, Prayer, The Bible, Hospitality, Sharing Jesus, Mercy and Justice (and more) were then supported by a range of 'connected' activities - as a means of everyone supporting a common focus area - for prayer and fellowship events.

A particular highlight was the recognition (and a \$5,000 reward) received as part of the Penrith Local Hero awards for our Community Pantry program that was introduced by Nicole the previous year. As a result of the Nicole's leadership and foresight, this program is a valuable community outreach area of ministry that helps to address some of the material needs of those in our wider community who are struggling, with some great opportunities to share the gospel message of Jesus and demonstrate God's love.

Thanks to those in our church family who continue to support this program in prayer, or with donations of food or money, as well as those who are committed to serving as a member of the "CP" team.

Thank you to those who have responded to the 2023 CHURCH SERVING SURVEY by offering to serve on church rosters in one or more of the many areas available. It was also quite encouraging to see 'newcomers' keen and seeking to serve on our rosters. Some key areas in which there is a need for more people serving are: Kids' Church, school scripture (SRE), STAKZ weekly kids' club, youth group and church cleaning. Please prayerfully consider assisting (as a leader, teacher or helper – on a rostered basis) in these areas of need and become an active part of a team that supports our church family and our ministry programs.

Once again in 2023, I never cease to be amazed at the extremely generous financial donations provided by members of our church family to support a whole range of different and important worthwhile causes: Bibles for the Persecuted, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Samaritan's Purse Christmas Boxes, TEAR fund and their Useful Gifts Catalogue, Penrith Community Kitchen, needy families in and around Mildura, as well as our regular missionaries, including Colin and Alison Morrow, Rick and Kaylene Manton, Andrew and Michelle Blumer and Jericho Road.

At the same time, on behalf of our church and its members, I also say a very big 'Thank You' to those who have been able to make a number of substantial donations to help boost our general church funds.

*“God gives seed to farmers and provides everyone with food. He will increase what you have, so you can give even more to those in need. You will be blessed in every way, and you will be able to keep on being generous...”. [2 Corinthians 9:10-11 CEV]*

An important item on our Session agenda at each meeting is Elder Development and in this part of the meeting, there is an opportunity for building up members of Session in Christ by exploring and discussing issues or policy that focus upon significant areas of our role, and the role of Session as part of the church. In 2023, there was a particular focus upon the overall topic of Leading the Church, Effective Oversight, the Importance of Teamwork and Hospitality.

Throughout the year, Session members regularly supported and participated in the full range of ministry events and activities such as: PWA Morning Teas, Luncheons, Congregational Picnic, Songs of Praise afternoon; Men’s Breakfasts; the Spring Fair; plus VIP events, Samaritan’s Purse Christmas Boxes, Kids’ Church, the Bush Dance, Newcomers’ Luncheons, Kids’ Holiday Club, Youth Group and Stakz activities.

It's also been really encouraging to receive positive feedback about the weekly Encouragement letters that, long after the Covid restrictions have been lifted, still continue to be emailed or delivered to all members of our church family. The general consensus seems to be that many of our church family members continue to find them encouraging in their walk with Jesus as well as providing a great reminder about church matters and events.

Let me conclude with these very wise words from Paul (found in Romans 12:8) ... “If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.”

May our great God continue to richly bless you, each one, and fill your hearts with joy as you reflect upon the wonderful hope we have in Jesus.

*~ John Pickering (Session Clerk)*

## ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PENRITH ANNUAL REPORT of the COMMITTEE of MANAGEMENT 2023

2023 saw us back to fully functional activity level and meeting together in person for most meetings and studies group, except for COM which continues to meet online.

We thank our Lord God for the wisdom of our treasurer, Andrew Mercer who once again carefully prepared the budget for Penrith Presbyterian Church in 2023. Our financial position at the end of 2023 showed our total income at \$246,688, under budget by \$10,519 and our general expenses at \$246,710 under budget by \$10,499. All this leaves us with surplus to budget of -\$19. Don't we all wish we could budget our finances with a difference of \$20 for the full year. The Lord's provision in 2023 sees this church physically and financially well looked after. Trusting in God's provision whether for His House or our own gives us the opportunity to focus on him and put him first.

*Proverbs 16:9 – "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps."*

### **Committee Meetings**

At the Annual Congregational meeting in March 2023, Mike Jackson, Andrew Mercer, Robert Milligan, Michelle Parker, Kelly Sheldon and David Woodruff were elected to the committee. As this was less than the usual number of ten elected members, the committee was empowered to co-opt additional members during the year. No prospective additional members were approached. Members of the Session regularly exercised their right to attend committee meetings which ensured a quorum at each meeting.

The 2023 COM meetings we held online via *Kerusso* as this is more practical with members widespread. The meetings were held monthly, except for January. The average attendance at committee meetings was 5 members. At its March meeting the committee elected the following office-bearers – Chairman – David Woodruff, Treasurer – Andrew Mercer, Secretary – Michelle Parker, Fete Convenor – Phillip Isaac. Mike Jackson agreed to continue to assist Michelle Parker in co-ordinating maintenance. The Session and the Committee of Management did not meet together this year for general discussion and planning.



## **Finance**

Andrew Mercer continued as our treasurer in 2023 and we thank him for the fantastic job he does managing God's money received through your generous giving. It is the committee's responsibility to be good stewards of the funds provided by our congregation and we thank Andrew for his informed insight and his Godly and Biblically-driven direction, to both the committee and the congregation, which ensures our financial decisions honour God. Andrew's formulation of the budget each year is really an indication of our likely income and costs for the year ahead, based on our financial history from previous years and his educated assumptions on the likely increases etc. It is not possible to foretell every possibility. Our wonderful God who knows all our needs provides for even our unbudgeted costs as they come to light. If you've kept a copy of the annual reports for the past 5 years, I encourage you to look back and compare the actual to the budgeted and really see and understand how God has provided for our church. Every year is different, some years there was more money than budgeted when there were unexpected costs, other years our income was well under budget but so too were our costs and then in that 5-year period there was also Covid 19. No one planned for it and who could manage the financial fall out?

Who could cope with our costs, that didn't reduce to match our giving, giving that reduced to a figure well under budget. God knows our needs, and even in that situation he provided all we needed. He continues to do so, and 2023 sees God's generosity through our congregation ensuring our needs are supplied which includes the continued employment of our 2 ministers into 2024. More details of the 2023 Financial Report and the 2024 Budget will be included with reports in the February Contact. The church accounts for 2023 have been audited with the "F" Form completed and submitted. The committee wish to thank Duncan Stewart for his services in performing the financial audit of the church accounts.

## **Outreach & Missions**

The mission areas supported by our church through the Mission Envelopes in 2023 were - Jericho Road, Colin and Alison Morrow of PIM (Presbyterian Inland Mission), the Mantons (Koori Indigenous Congregation in Mt. Druitt) and the Blumers (in Austria). Our church also continued to support - Hospital Chaplaincy, Christian Education Board and SRE Expenses (Special Religious Education - School Scripture), Bible League, the Bible Society, MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) and Tear Fund. Our congregation also contributed generously to Samaritans Purse through the

giving to boxes as well as the considerable financial contribution to transport them. Your generosity also continued to the Community Pantry and the pre-Christmas supply of Grocery Gift Cards via Colin and Alison Morrow when they call on country people in need when out on the Mungo Patrol route.

### **Maintenance**

Our buildings – The Manse, Church, Church Hall and Education Block and their surroundings continually require effective maintenance of both a major and minor nature. Our wonderful maintenance team of Charlie Toland, David Dixon, David Moore, Mike Jackson, Robert Milligan, Phil Hall, Kevin O'Hallaran and Frank Willett continued to ensure general maintenance was attended to. Our Fire Safety Equipment was serviced, and our Fire Safety Compliance Statement lodged with council. The lawns and gardens of the church property are maintained by volunteers from our congregation. Some are on rosters for lawn mowing, others just see that weeding and pruning need doing and get the job done. The committee thank you all.

David Woodruff's expertise and Charlie Toland's electrical skills continue to ensure our electronic, computer and electrical equipment is maintained and upgraded when it is needed, and we thank them for his service in this area. John Pickering continues to maintain our website and keep it up to date, thank you so very much. The committee thanks Kelly Sheldon for maintaining our church property bookings, ensuring the activities of the 2 congregations and any other usage don't overlap or become double-booked.

### **Rosters**

A great deal of work is carried out by members of the congregation who make themselves available on various rosters. The committee are very thankful for all those who are willing to give their time and skills so generously. We really do need as many as possible of every age to participate on the rosters so the tasks are spread across many infrequently, instead of a few often/frequently. We welcome and encourage everyone to participate on the rosters in any way possible. Practical physical service is part of Christ's example; please seriously consider how you might share the joy of working with other members of the congregation to keep your church and church family served. If you don't know who to approach or how you can help; ask the ministers, elders, committee members or particularly Charlie and Ann Toland. We are extremely thankful for the

work of Charlie and Ann who prepare the rosters and participate in the work on nearly all of them.

### **Sharing Facilities**

We are pleased to have our property used as much as possible and the Penrith Chinese Presbyterian Congregation continue to share our property with us in 2023. We have enjoyed occasions to worship and socialise together in the past and hope that this will continue to increase into 2024. It is a great joy to be able to share the considerable resource God has provided. We do thank the Chinese Congregation for their regular contribution to our income but particularly for their participation.

### **Insurance, Licences and Compliance**

The committee holds a number of insurance policies including building and contents insurance, public liability insurance, sickness and accident insurance which provides protection for the congregation in the event of untoward incidents. These insurances are blanket policies arranged by the central office of the church to provide maximum value for money. Insurance values are regularly updated and in 2023 the committee lodged no claims against insurance

The committee also holds several licences which enable us legally to use copyright material such as songs, music, the playing of CD's and DVD's as part of worship services or other church activities.

Annually, as required, we complete a statement to the Australian Charities and Non-Profit Commission. This is completed each year after our Annual Congregational Meeting in March.

Annually, as required, we provide a Fire Safety Statement issued by a licensed service provider to the Penrith City Council. This year this was completed in November.

The members of the committee acknowledge the confidence you have shown in them by electing them to serve Our God and you, the congregation. We continue to endeavour to wisely manage the temporal affairs of the parish; and we acknowledge the privilege of serving our Sovereign God in this role.

*~ Michelle Parker, Committee of Management Secretary*

## **Kids' Church (Sunday School) 2023**

On behalf of Kids Church, we thank you for your commitment to bring up your children in the love and knowledge of Christ. We can't begin to describe the joy and honour that it is to see your children excited to hear God's word, especially to witness moments when deep truth about God started to make sense for them. I personally wanted to thank all the leaders and helpers of Kids' Church who faithfully serve week in week out, often alongside many different roles outside of Kids Church. I thank all the leaders who had taken up more capacity at Kids' Church when I was pregnant and after Hope's birth. 2023 was a great year for Kids Church as we saw some new families come from both our English congregation and the Chinese congregation.

Our Pre-school class has 12 children on the roll with Heather and Sarah Woodruff and Sarah Lin teaching and helping the class. Our pre-schoolers began the year learning about God's wonderful creation. After the Easter story we continued in Genesis learning about people who trusted God. We focused on prayer and talking to God in term 3.

Then by using stories from the Gospels we learned JESUS is God's son and he teaches us that the best treasure is God's Kingdom. For our Infants class we had 16 children on the roll with Louise Smith, Ruth Woodruff and Lesley Westcott teaching and helping the whole year with Michelle Parker joining their team in 4th term. The infants learnt about who is Jesus from John's gospel in first term, followed by the Early Church from the book of Acts. In second semester they learnt about how God rescues His people from the book of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, and they continued on learning about God's faithfulness from the stories of Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah.

## **Encouragement Letters**

Encouragement Letters have continued to be published each week throughout 2023. At the end of March, we will have done this for four years with 208 letters sent out. Many members in the congregation continue to gain much encouragement through these letters.

There continues to be faithful people who help to deliver these letters to those who do not have access to technology. I give thanks for their behind-the-scenes service to help our community. Praise God for good news of Christ that is sustenance for weary souls, strength for the weak, joy for those who mourn and hope for his people in a broken world.

## **Weekly Prayer Group 2023**

The Prayer Group has continued to meet in 2023, at 9:00am each Wednesday at the manse in Stafford Street. We have 6 regular members and the average number at our meeting is 5. We spend time in praising God.

We pray for:

1. Members of our church and their needs.
2. Church groups.
3. Local and international needs

The meeting finishes at 10:00am. At the end of the meeting those who wish to, join together at a coffee shop for morning tea and further fellowship. We would always welcome new members to the group as we grow God's Church together. Why not come along and join us?

## **Bible Studies 2023**

The purpose of our Bible study ministry is to grow the members of Penrith Presbyterian Church in knowledge of the Bible and God and equip them to live for him in all of life. Most our Bible Studies meet in person at church or in homes, whilst two groups are meeting online, as it enables people who otherwise would not be able to attend a group in person, to meet with others and be fed God's word.

There are eleven Bible Study groups at Penrith Presbyterian Church with about 70 people participating each week. About half the studies use the KYB resource materials. Other groups have been using different materials including bible studies such as those provided by the Goodbook company and Matthias Media. Other groups engage with the Bible passages in a way that not only explores the Scripture but teaches a method of studying the Bible that can be applied all Bible passages.

There is also a young adults Bible Study group – and one for mums. A new Bible Study group, that meets in Glenmore Park every second Thursday evening, was established in 2023. If you are interested in joining a Bible Study group, please let Steve Mannyx know.

Thank God that we are able to meet together on a regular basis to study his word, encourage each other in Christ, and pray together as his people.

## **STAKZ Weekly Kids' Club 2023**

The purpose of STAKZ (our weekly kids' club ministry) is to proclaim Christ to kids and their families and to train young people to present Christ. STAKZ has continued to see children hearing about Jesus and all God has done for us in him.

A little under 20 kids have been coming to STAKZ, and a few STAKZ kids came to Kids' Holiday Club. Many of the kids look forward to STAKZ each Friday and enjoy learning about Jesus. There is a mixture of kids from church and outside of church.

There have also been opportunities to build relationships with some of the parents who bring their kids too. STAKZ also is an opportunity for teenagers and young adults to be trained to serve and lead. Liam Mannyx, Toby Mannyx and Liana Hall have helped out.

Those who have helped this year are as follows: Co-ordinator: Steve Mannyx; Teaching in the K-2 group: Steve Mannyx, David Crawford, and Toby Mannyx; Teaching in the 3-6 group: John Pickering, Lyndall Pickering and Liam Mannyx

Preparing and Serving Afternoon Tea: Violet Wilson, Bronwyn Kelly, Helen Weir and Lyndall Pickering. We also grateful that Bronwyn, Violet and Lyndall, as well as other church family members, have also helped out when regular team members have been away or sick.

## **Kids' Holiday Club 2023**

The annual Kids' Holiday Club program was introduced about 15 years ago – as an opportunity to reach out to children with gospel message of Jesus and always includes a mixture of participants (Years K to 6) from our regular weekly Kids' Club, as well as children from the wider community.

The program runs for one week in the June/July school holiday break, from 9.00 am until 12.30, involving about twenty volunteers from our church family who are leaders or helpers for the different age-groups and deliver the different parts of the program – Kids' talks and songs; Bible teaching; craft activities; and missions, with a morning tea provided each day.

Parents are invited to join the children for a barbecue on the last day and are also encouraged to join us for a special church service on the Sunday.

## **Men's Breakfasts 2023**

Our first breakfast for 2023 was held in February and our guest speaker was Mark Bonnici. He spoke on the topic of "Fear or Faith" and by using the story of Jesus being asleep in the boat during a storm, and being awoken by men full of fear, Mark showed us that belief in Jesus quietens our fears and strengthens our faith.

At our second breakfast in May our speaker was James Hill who spoke to us about "Noah and the Flood - Connection to Jesus". The flood was sent to remove all the sin on the earth. When God sent his Son Jesus to earth, He died in our place to take away the sin of mankind once and for all.

Our third breakfast was held in August. Our guest speaker was Peter Graham, Chairman of the Panthers Group. He spoke to the men about, "The Importance of Confidence". As Christians we have a confidence in a God who guides us in all circumstances. Peter Graham showed us that even in management positions you can be confident in expressing your belief in Jesus.

Our fourth breakfast was in November and our guest speaker was Paul Burke, speaking about, "Mental Health". Paul Burke showed how mental health issues in his own family led him to start an organization called, "The Resilience Project", to help people who have depression, breakdowns, etc.

All the breakfasts were well attended and numbers varied from the low 40's to the mid 50s. There is always lots of chatter and fellowship amongst the blokes which is very encouraging.

## **VIP Seniors 2023**

This ministry initiative developed about ten years ago as a daytime program designed to cater for the older/more senior members of our church family who were often reluctant/unable to attend evening events.

Each VIP event includes a Bible devotion, fun quizzes and games, as well as a delicious morning tea or luncheon and most years there are four of these events – fully catered and organised by volunteers from our church family who are generally a little younger than our special guests. No lower, nor upper, age restriction applies and everyone who considers themselves a 'senior' is welcome to come along.

## **Community Pantry 2023**

Since moving to weekly in 2023, the pantry has increased its impact in the community. We usually have around 10-12 people coming along each week, with a number of 'regulars'. Amongst those who come regularly, a good sense of community has developed. People usually stay for at least half an hour, often longer, and chat to volunteers and each other. Some have even begun to donate things, sharing clothing and books with each other.

One lady regularly stays for the Revive afternoon service and we have had lots of good conversations with her about the difference between what we believe and the Catholicism she has been raised in.

Four people from the pantry came along to our Christmas Carols service and two came to Christmas lunch at the manse, which was a wonderful opportunity to share the Gospel. One man, having developed a good relationship with Steve and I through the pantry, came to us in a time of significant crisis and bereavement last year and we were able to walk with him through that.

Another lady began meeting with me regularly to read the Bible and pray half way through last year and this year has joined a Bible study. It is so encouraging to see that way that God is working there.

A significant event for the pantry last year was being a finalist in the Westfield Local Heroes programme. This resulted in us receiving \$5000 for the pantry and was also a great opportunity to raise our profile in the local area. I'm very grateful to God and Westfield for this generous gift which will help to continue providing groceries and also some improved storage options.

We have also had a number of new people come on the roster this year, which has been very helpful, including some of our youth. Thank you to all who have volunteered their time and also donated goods.

Anything we are short of, I post in our Presbyterian Church community group page on Facebook each week, but if you would like to donate, things we often run out of are: coffee, Long Life milk (full cream and light), cereal, sweet biscuits, laundry detergent, deodorant, meal bases (eg. chicken tonight style jars), general purpose cleaning spray and dishwashing liquid.





**Please join us in thanking God for the things he's doing in our youth group (named PC youth by our group).**

• 2023 saw an average of seven youth attending YG each week. That's a good steady group of people to run a program and Bible study with.

During 2023, we had one of our youth graduate and two move away, but welcomed two Year 6's, one former member who came back again, and one new person joined our group. We are excited that 2024 has commenced with 11 youth attending.

- About half our group has no church background. We praise God for the evangelistic opportunity we have every Friday night.
- Our leadership team consisted of Philip Isaac, Cassie and Jaydon Sperinck, Emily McDonald, and myself with Sam Taylor as a 'leader in training. We were very sad to see Jaydon and Cassie leave us to move to Dubbo. We thank them for their huge effort with the youth group over a number of years.
- We also thank others who stepped in when normal leaders were away. Ideally, we'd like one more female leader. Please speak to me if God's put that on your heart.
- We continued to developed the skills of our leaders with NextGen training over January, Saturday day training and PY 'Encourage Express' nights.
- In 2023 we studied: Mark, Exodus, 1 Thessalonians, and the character of God. We learned memory verses to go along with these, and explored a range of Christian songs.
- We continued our range of fun and exciting events including on and off-site activities. As part of our program, we try and include acts of service and connection. Last year we spent time cleaning the church and visiting the elderly.

## **Ladies' PWA Groups at Penrith 2023**

Two groups meet monthly at our church, one with a Wednesday meeting and the other meeting in the evening. Members from both groups are actively involved in a wide range of our church ministry programs, as well as organising other morning teas and luncheons with guest speakers and/or a 'missions' focus.

### **DAY PWA 2023**

For a number of years now, meetings are held every second month, with a social activity/outing held in the 'in between' months to which church family members are invited and this strategy has proved to be very popular.

One of the main changes to our programme for 2023 was that we decided to hold "A Joyful Afternoon of Praise" instead of our Cabaret and Singalong. Other events in 2023 included: morning teas at The Royce, Flower Power Café and White Water Stadium, as well as a very successful breakfast event open to all the congregation. Some of our members were also able to attend the Presbytery Rally at Tregear.

### **EVENING PWA 2023**

Our first event was the 'Rocky Road' fundraiser, with all funds donated to Jericho Road (our church social services group), to support their significant services provided to congregations and individuals each year.

Our group maintains a strong connection with Operation Christmas Child as a major project each year – and one that is very well supported each year by individuals and families across our whole congregation, with more than four hundred Christmas Shoeboxes prepared for distribution to children overseas via church groups and/or missionary team members – a special opportunity for outreach with the gospel message of Jesus.

Additionally, our church fete in October was again supported by the ladies of the PWA, with members involved in providing home-made goods, and 'goodies', and working on various stalls.

Other events/activities included: Gingerbread House making, Sewing 101, and Cuppa 'n' Craft afternoons. Many of our ladies also attended the Craft Camp in October.

We were also delighted to welcome new babies to our church family, with nine special baskets of 'new-born goodies' presented to families in our church during 2023.

## **Child Protection/Breaking the Silence**

In 1994, the Wood Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service was given a specific reference to investigate and report on paedophilia and pederasty in New South Wales. The Presbyterian Church of New South Wales was commended for the policy already in place, known as Breaking the Silence.

Breaking the Silence was adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales in 1997, with revisions adopted the following year. This represented a very significant step towards understanding and dealing with the problem of abuse within the Presbyterian church, with many other States subsequently adopting and adapting these editions of Breaking the Silence.

In 2003, it was decided that the CPU would be established. At this point, it was called the Child Protection Unit. Since then, there have been significant developments in legislation and our understanding of church issues. In 2011, the name Conduct Protocol Unit was introduced, indicating the broadening of the scope of Breaking the Silence to cover abuse towards people of any age within our church communities.

Further developments in child protection legislation, mandatory and voluntary reporting procedures arose in subsequent years, including the participation of offices such as the Office of the Children's Guardian in monitoring investigations of allegations, the involvement of government departments responsible for caring for children, and the development of Commissions for Children and Young people in various States and Territories.

The Royal Commission's report brought about a number of recommendations aimed at making organisations safer for children. The Presbyterian Church has taken a number of steps to ensure we have taken these on board. In 2019, the General Assembly of Australia adopted the National Safe Ministry Framework (NSMF) to establish a uniform and consistent approach to the protection of children within the Presbyterian Church of Australia. This was adopted by the NSW General Assembly in 2020.

Breaking the Silence in its present form is intended to address these issues and provide all congregations, Presbyteries, organisations, and committees within the church with a comprehensive tool to meet our legislated obligations and the requirements of the Presbyterian Church of Australia's Code of Discipline.

We do this, not just in response to legal and societal expectations, but more importantly, to ensure the safety of our ministry activities for all and to attain justice for those who have been harmed.

## **REGULAR MINISTRY ACTIVITIES**

### **SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**

9.00am, 10.30am, 5.00pm (Also ONLINE)

### **KIDS CHURCH (Sunday School)**

10.30am each Sunday

### **YOUTH GROUP**

Fridays at 7.30pm

### **COMMUNITY PANTRY**

Sundays from 3.30-4.30pm

### **WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING**

Wednesdays from 9 – 10am

### **STAKZ WEEKLY KIDS CLUB**

Fridays from 3.30 – 5.30pm

### **DAY PWA MEETINGS**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month

### **EVENING PWA MEETINGS**

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month

### **BIBLE STUDY GROUPS**

*(held weekly during school terms)*

MONDAYS: 10.30am / 6.30pm / 7.30pm

TUESDAYS: 9.45 and 10.00am

TUESDAYS: 7.30pm

WEDNESDAYS: 7.30pm

THURSDAYS: 7.30pm (3 groups)

FRIDAYS: at 6.00pm

*\*Speak to Steve or Hugh if interested in joining a group.*

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### **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEETINGS**

2<sup>nd</sup> TUES of Month at 7.45pm

### **SESSION MEETINGS**

4<sup>th</sup> WED of Month at 7.00pm

**SEWING 101 CLASS** (9am-12)

**Plus CUPPA AND CRAFT** (1-3pm)

Held ONE SATURDAY each term

### **VIP SENIORS LUNCHEONS**

(Quarterly as advertised)

**MEN'S BREAKFASTS** (Quarterly)

Saturdays @ 8am (as advertised)

**"ENGAGING with GOD"**

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month @ 7pm

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