



# **Penrith Presbyterian Church**

**9 Doonmore Street,  
Penrith NSW 2750**

*Focus for 2025*

**"Growing together in Christ, upward and outward."**

## **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.

# Welcome to Penrith Presbyterian Church!

(1853-2025)

## 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 ANNUAL REVIEW for 2024

*"Growing Together in Christ, Upward and Outward"*

In another year that has been pretty busy, we must praise our great God who has provided us with an additional member of the Session – Lewis Burrough, a younger person with a heart for the gospel, a person who is keen to serve as an elder and use his God-given gifts as an Elder in our Session. We also welcome his wife, Ruth, and their young family to our church at Penrith. At the same time, in 2024, we rejoice that the Lord placed in our midst Ben Pratt, wife Thea and family, who are regular members of our congregation ... with Ben very keen to share his theological training and personal skills by leading and preaching at worship services.

In the past year, we continue to be blessed with an ongoing trend that, in fact, began during Covid-19 times – with a steady number of visitors being welcomed into our church family throughout the year. At the same time, it has been really encouraging to see a similar trend developing in a number of other ministry areas, as well as welcoming a number of young people who seek to support our programs by being involved, officially, as Young Helpers.

We certainly give thanks for that opportunity to provide them with guidance and mentoring so that they can gain practical experience and develop their skills.

Communicants' classes and an eldership development program have also been offered during the year, encouraging members of our church family to develop a closer relationship with Jesus and live a Christ-centred life as they serve our God and our people at Penrith. In 2024, these two training opportunities were complemented by the monthly seminars/discussion nights called, "Engaging with God" (led by Steve) that provided much food for thought and a basis for personal spiritual development by an average of 11 people who attended on each occasion.

It's always interesting, and encouraging (at the dedication service in February each year) to see how many people, across all three services, are actively involved in serving on rosters – as well as many others who are quietly 'filling in the gaps' and completing much-needed other tasks in the background, too. Thank you to all those who are currently 'serving', and thank you also to a great number who have served for many years but now find that, due to the frailties of senior years and health issues, they are no longer able to continue. May our Heavenly Father richly bless you all!

Sadly, two such very senior members of our church (Jean Ferrington and Dorothy Shinn), who have worked tirelessly for the Lord, our church (especially as part of the DAY PWA group) and served in a huge variety of roles over many, many years have recently been faced with taking the decision to close our DAY PWA group – but with a plan to continue meeting up regularly for fellowship together. It is important that we acknowledge the tremendous service they've given (in company with many other long-serving members) over the past 60 years, at both our local level and to State Committees of our church in NSW. ***"Well done, good and faithful servants!"***

A particular focus in the 'Elder Development' agenda item at our Session meetings last year has been devoted to looking at our Session and our church, by reviewing present directions and establishing what needs to be done to improve and develop our church

life and ministry programs. To this end, Session has been guided by ideas presented in a book called “Mission Minded” by Peter Bolt and discussing results of a SWOT analysis. Our three regular Session retreats have provided great ideas for discussion, and also developing the SNAPSHOT SURVEY.

Thank you for those who completed this survey, and provided additional comments and suggestions, so that the information can be used as a basis for forward planning, and positive change and development that will be of benefit to **you – the church!**

*“May our great God richly bless you and fill your hearts with joy, and hope!”*

*~ John Pickering*

## **COMMUNITY PANTRY ANNUAL REPORT for 2024**

The pantry has continued to be a significant outreach ministry for our church. We have 17 regular attendees, with an average attendance of around 10. At Christmas, we partnered with Jericho Road to distribute 19 hampers.

A real sense of community has developed. Most people stay for at least half an hour, enjoying afternoon tea and a chat (Jeanette’s scones are always popular!). If someone is away people will be asking after them – I often get phone calls to check if I have called someone to follow up. People often donate food or clothing they don’t need, visit each other in hospital and even helped someone move house this year. One person now regularly helps serve and pack the groceries.

There have been many opportunities for Gospel conversations. Over the past year, three regular attendees of the pantry have attended church (one regularly, two semi-regularly), several have attended VIP events and one has continued attending a Bible study. The pantry is also a great opportunity for church members to serve together and has enabled people from different congregations to get to know one another as they minister alongside one another.

We have now used up our \$5000 Westfield grant. It took almost exactly a year to run out, so that gives an indication of what we usually spend on groceries. We are now completely reliant on donations, so if you are able to, please consider buying goods for the pantry or donating money through the church offertory, marked for the pantry.

Many people from the pantry have expressed how helpful and important it has been to them, not just in terms of helping with the grocery bills, but also in terms of relieving loneliness and feeling cared for. I will leave you with the words of one of our regulars, a mum of two whose budget has been very tight since her husband stopped work due to injury: “Every moment is a worry, but this takes some of that worry away – I can sleep better at night”.

*~ Nicole*

**ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PENRITH**  
**COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

COM has continued to meet online 2024 and will probably do so on going as it is extremely convenient and practical. We again thank God for the wisdom of our treasurer, Andrew Mercer who once again carefully prepared the budget for Penrith Presbyterian Church in 2024.

Once more (as if there was any doubt) the Lord's provision in 2024 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. Our financial position at the end of 2024 showed our total income at \$267,821, under budget by \$465 and our general expenses at \$267,103 under budget by \$1,150. All this leaves us with surplus to budget of \$685.

*"For we aim at what is honourable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man."*

2 Corinthians 8:21

**Committee Meetings**

At the Annual Congregational meeting in March 2024, 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. Two prospective additional members were approached but chose not to join the committee. Members of the Session regularly exercised their right to attend committee meetings which ensured a quorum at each meeting.

Ten committee meetings were held online via Kerusso in 2024. The average attendance at committee meetings was 6 members. At its March meeting the committee elected the following office-bearers – Chairman – David Woodruff, Treasurer – Andrew Mercer and Secretary – Michelle Parker. 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.

**Finances**

Andrew Mercer continued as our treasurer in 2024 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. I see the number of areas that we were underspent on as a key indicator of the committee's commitment to their duty but the controlling and minimising of our costs would not be possible if we had to pay tradespeople to do the maintenance and jobs that are needed by our properties.

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.

Every year God provides what we need but how he provides differs every year. Last year our income was more than \$10,000 below budget and that was balanced by our costs also being under budget by almost exactly the same amount. This year our income is almost on budget and we have spent much closer to our budgeted expenses.

#### **Finances cont.**

God continues to provide through the generosity of our congregation which means the continued employment of our 2 ministers. More details of the 2024 Financial Report and the 2025 Budget will be included with the Annual Reports in the February Contact. The church accounts for 2024 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 (Kouri 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.

**We have in previous years given to our 4 nominated missions from the proceeds of the annual fair. Now that we no longer hold this fair COM will be proposing at the ACM that the congregation approve the addition of \$2,000 to the budget for giving to mission with the intention that this amount be divided equally between our 4 nominated missions at the end of the year 2025.**

## **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 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 skill continues 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 uses doesn'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 & Ann Toland and Neil & Lisa Sperinck. We are extremely thankful for the work they all do in preparing the rosters and participate in the work where possible.

## **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 2024.

We have enjoyed occasions to worship and socialise together in the past and hope that this will continue to increase into 2025. 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 church 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 Presbyterian Church in NSW to provide maximum value for money. Insurance values are regularly updated and in 2024 the committee lodged no claims against insurance.

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

Annually, as required, we complete a statement to the ACNC (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 early December.

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  
Honorary Secretary for  
Committee of Management  
Penrith Presbyterian Church

February 2025

# KIDS CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT for 2024

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On behalf of Kids' Church, we thank you for your prayers and partnership in this ministry. We can't begin to describe the joy and honour that it is to see your children's 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 of many different roles outside of Kids' Church. 2024 had been a wonderful year of growth of our Kids' Church, so much so that we are outgrowing our space.

The preschool class had 12 beautiful children ranging from 0 – 4 years old. The children learnt about what Jesus teaches about God's kingdom in term 1, the book of John in term 2 and Acts in term 3. Lastly, the children had fun learning about Moses from the book of Exodus in the last part of the year. Heather Shaw, Sarah Woodruff and Cynthia Prattis are the teachers for this class with Yani Shan, Sarah Lin, and Lisa Wang helping from the Chinese Church.

The infants had 17 children in the roll who are in kindergarten – year 2, with Lesley Wescott, Michelle Parker as teachers and Xavier Pratt as the youth helper for this class. The children learnt about the angel's announcement to zealous Zechariah in term one. Paul from the book of Acts in term 2 and pictures of Jesus from the book of Mark in term three. Lastly, they learnt about how God's people lived after king David.

The primary enjoyed a big group last year, almost outgrowing their current space, with 20 on the book and only a few of those are irregular attendees. They were able to utilise the main room in the education block to accommodate for this number. They studied from the book of Hebrews in term 1 and continued with Jesus and his disciples in term 2. Term 3, they looked at the books of Samuel 1 and 2. The year ended with the group delving into God's plan of salvation. Geoff Wescott and Maureen Lott are the teachers for this class with Esther Woodruff as the youth helper for this class.

The senior class had 10 children and they delved into the Lord's prayer, Psalm 23, and they also looked at various passages and methods of studying the bible (such as the Swedish method, mid map, praying through a passage and other methods). The teachers of this group are Jane Crawford and Nicole Mannyx, with Liam Mannyx as the youth helper.

Along with the regular leaders and youth helpers, we have members of the congregation stepping in when some of the teachers are unavailable, these are Tracey Mercer, Bronwyn Kelly, Anna Mason, John and Lyndall Pickering and Hugh Prattis. We are very grateful for their help and willingness to serve in this way.

As 2025 is beginning to take shape, I can see how God had been at work in the growth of Kids' Church. This year, we have a total of 55 children on the official list, there might be some names missing, simply because we haven't got to getting the parents to fill in a form, but it is one of the biggest list we had for a while. As we grow, we are faced with new challenges such as the need to train more leaders, the lack of space for two of our biggest upper primary classes and suitable heating and cooling options. We are trying our best to find creative solutions but we would really appreciate the prayers and do be praying to see if God calls you to serve in this ministry.

Furthermore, due to the increasing family demands due to my father being sick, I am stepping down from my role as the Kids' Church Coordinator. Please be praying that God will raise up someone who would fit this role and grow this ministry. Just as the Lord says in Matthew 9:37-38 "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

*~ In Christ,  
Cynthia*

## **BIBLE STUDIES ANNUAL REPORT for 2024**

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 of our Bible Study groups are meeting in person at church or in homes. Two groups meet 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, such as parents of young children or people house bound because of health.

There are about 11 bible studies at Penrith Presbyterian Church with about 85 people attending groups. About half the studies used the KYB material. 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. A new Bible study is looking at starting on Wednesday from 5.30-7.30pm, which would include sharing dinner together. If you are interested in joining a Bible Study, please let me (Steve) know.

Thank God for we are able to study his word, encourage each other in Christ and pray together as his people.

*~ Steve*

# STAKZ WEEKLY KIDS CLUB ANNUAL REPORT for 2024

The purpose of Stakz 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.

Currently most of the kids are from church, and some from local schools. We are facing a challenge of being able to advertise through schools. It seems that religious groups are not being advertised due to community sentiment. This makes it harder to get new kids into Stakz and reduces the evangelistic impact.

STAKZ also is an opportunity for teenagers and young adults to be trained to serve and lead. Liam Mannyx, Toby Mannyx and Xavier Pratt 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, Toby Mannyx, Xavier Pratt

Teaching in the 3-6 group: John Pickering, Lyndall Pickering, Liam Mannyx

Preparing and Serving Afternoon Tea: Violet Wilson, Bronwyn Kelly, Helen Weir

Other people have also come and helped when people on the team have been away or sick.

STAKZ is starting again in 2025. The Pickerings will be finishing up this term and so we will need new Stakz leaders.

Please continue to pray for STAKZ for:

- Kids and their families to trust in Jesus
- For the teenagers as they are trained and equipped.
- To be well attended by kids from beyond the borders of our church
- For new leaders to come on board

~ Steve

## **ANNUAL REPORT for 2024**

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

- 2024 saw an average of about seven youth at YG each week. That number is slightly down from the year before, however the group has been happy and harmonious. We had one of our youth graduate (but will stay on as a leader), two move away, but we welcomed a new member and a year 6'er in term 4.
- About 1/3 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, Emily McDonald, and myself with Sam Taylor as a 'leader in training'. Unfortunately, Emily stepped down on fairly short notice, which left us with no permanent female leader for term 2. Thank you to Heather Shaw and Anna Mason who filled in, along with other occasional leaders, notably, Ian Pathuis. We thank God that Lisa Sperinck came on board and has been learning the ropes well.
- We continued to develop the skills of our leaders with NextGen training over January/February, Saturday day training and PY encourage express nights.
- In 2024 we studied: Romans, Proverbs, Philemon, Serving at Church, and Revelation. In term 2 we also did a QandA each week. We learned memory verses to go along with these topics, and explored a range of Christian songs.
- We continued with our usual selection of fun and exciting events including on and off-site activities. These are not just for 'fun', although they are that, but activities allow us to connect with each other.
- As part of our program, we try and include acts of service and connection. Last year we took part in clean up Australia day, cooking for Revive pot-luck dinner, and helping set up for Operation Christmas Child.
- We held a combined night with St. Mary's Youth Group in term one, however that was the last time (for now) as their group switched to a different day and structure. We continued to participate in Unite combined youth events with other churches from the local area. They are a wonderful time of fellowship, fun, and learning.
- We had a number of youth and leaders attend Summer Camp, and the camp as a whole is growing, although it does come with significant dollar cost. For the second time, our youth group attended a local camp at Winmalee (pictured above). It was a wonderful time, although stressful for the leaders!
- Thank you to Thea Pratt for taking on the Return and Earn this year. Please continue to donate containers. Thank you also to everyone who bought a block of Rocky Road last year. Both fundraisers help subsidise the cost of camps.

~ Hugh

## **“ENGAGING WITH GOD” ANNUAL REPORT for 2024**

This year, on the third Wednesday of each month, there were Engaging With God Seminars that trained those who attended in how we might practically engage with God. Areas that we covered were:

- Our Hearts and God
- The Word of God
- Prayer
- Spiritual Transformation
- Church
- Evangelism
- Work
- The Big Picture

Up to 12 people would attend the seminars, ranging from teenagers through to older members. Those who participated were greatly helped in the way they Engage With God.

***In 2025, the monthly seminars will be focusing on training to serve and are called SERVING THE CHURCH.***

~ Steve

## **ENCOURAGEMENT LETTERS REPORT for 2024**

Encouragement Letters have continued to be published each week throughout 2024. At the end of March, we will have done this for five years with 260 letters sent out.

Many members in the congregation continue to gain much encouragement through these letters. If you are not receiving these letters and would like to please send me an email: [smannyx@gmail.com](mailto:smannyx@gmail.com)

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.

~ Steve



# EVENING PWA ANNUAL REPORT for 2024

## Secretary's Report 2024:

As I prepare this report for our AGM, I am reminded of the aim of the PWA, which includes "a friendly comradeship for worship, mutual help and inspiration" and again I realised that we, as a group, have achieved this.

It has been a difficult year for our members, with each one of us affected by either the loss of a friend or loved one, trauma, sickness, or ongoing medical treatment. We have been there to support, comfort and encourage our members, as well as practically with phone calls, visits, and transport. But we are reminded that God is always there for us, in our thoughts and prayers, to encourage and strengthen us, our family and friends, as Isaiah 41, verse 10 says "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

And "co-operation with other organisations to advance God's kingdom"? We have continued to work with church members and Christian organisations when organising social & fundraising events, such as the Church picnic, and Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child.

This year has seen Sewing 101 and Cuppa 'n Craft, become a full day, held once a term. Our ladies again attended the Craft Camp in October, some leading classes. Baby Baskets continued to be given to families in our congregation.

We attended the PWA Rally, provided morning tea for funeral services, and supper for Presbytery. Our members are involved in Scripture, Kid's Holiday Club, Kid's Church, Bible studies, Community Pantry, and are on rosters for Bible readings, counting, morning teas and cleaning.

Throughout the year, together with the congregation, we have supported Operation Christmas Child, collecting items for the shoeboxes, then packing, and shipping. This is a Christian charity that we, as a church, have supported for many years, and this year we packed over 360 boxes. It is a joy to watch the faces of the children who receive these boxes, who are told about Jesus and His work on our Earth, and who often go on to become Christians themselves.

To help with transport costs, we held our "*Come Fly with Me*" function in March, where we simulated a flight, at an entry cost of \$12.50 (the freight for one box). Thank you Debbie & Tracey. In September, Debbie held a stall to sell the soft toys given to us when we attended the Connect! seminar with Samaritan's Purse in July.

This was a day of praise, thankfulness and encouragement. After the dedication service for the boxes, led by Hugh, we held a closing collection for donations.

The church picnic was held in May, again with wet weather, but well attended by the congregation. And our Board Games Night, with input from our youth, was a resounding success. Requests were made for one in 2025. And we attended the PWA Rally in May but unfortunately, we had to cancel the PWA 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

Our Scam Information Morning in July was also well received by the community and congregation. The addition of cuppa & biscuit was welcomed by all.

Our dinner in October at the Rowers' Club was also well attended, with great conversation and food.

On behalf of our committee, Kelly, Michelle and myself, I thank each of you for your support, your tireless work, your suggestions, your conversations, encouragement and fellowship. We achieve because we work as a team, for the good of God and our community, so that the word of God can be spread. In all that we do, our faith is foremost, our interactions with each other paramount, and our aim is to encourage others in our congregation to share in the work, and worship, for our Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, *"Therefore, encourage one another, and build one another up, just as you are doing"*. And from the Old Testament, Joshua 1:9 says, *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong, and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."*

~ Maureen Lott, Secretary.

## **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**

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

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

10.30 am each Sunday

### **YOUTH GROUP**

Fridays at 7.30 pm

### **COMMUNITY PANTRY**

Sundays from 3.30 - 4.30 pm

### **WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING**

Wednesdays from 9 – 10 am

### **STAKZ WEEKLY KIDS CLUB**

Fridays from 3.30 – 5.30 pm

### **EVENING PWA MEETINGS**

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

### **BIBLE STUDY GROUPS**

*(held weekly during school terms)*

MONDAYS: 10.30 am / 6.30 pm / 7.30 pm

TUESDAYS: 9.45 and 10.00 am

TUESDAYS: 7.30 pm

WEDNESDAYS: 5.30 pm

WEDNESDAYS: 7.30 pm

THURSDAYS: 7.30 pm (3 groups)

FRIDAYS: at 6.00 pm

*\*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 7.45 pm

### **SESSION MEETINGS**

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

### **EVENING PWA (Ladies) MEETINGS**

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

**SEWING 101 CLASS** (9 am - 12)  
**Plus CUPPA AND CRAFT** (1 - 3 pm)

Held ONE SATURDAY each term

### **VIP SENIORS LUNCHEONS**

(Quarterly as advertised)

**MEN'S BREAKFASTS** (Quarterly)

Saturdays @ 8 am (as advertised)

### **TRAINING SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS**

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

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