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Clearing the Way for Jesus

The newsletter of **Five Islands Christian Ministries** links Christians and churches from Helensburgh to Gerroa to promote church unity. A printer-friendly 2 x A4 PDF file of the newsletter may be downloaded from www.5icm.org.au/resources.html.
Distribution of this edition: 4,247

Church of the Week

"[Central Church](#) meets at 4 Fitzwilliam St, Port Kembla. The senior minister is Carolyn Meers. Central has 'a monthly rhythm' of gatherings with different styles of services connecting with different people's needs at regular times across each month. We have a Contemplative service based around spiritual practice, Wild church which is a space to connect with God in the cathedral of Creation, Classic church, which is the regular worship and sermon style and House churches.

Central aims to be a safe space for the doubters, the misfits, those deconstructing, & religiously burnt out. Our heart is to live out a faith in Christ that is habitable, beautiful and fruitful. We value curiosity over certainty and try to be courageous in exploring the diversity of Christian thinking throughout history and across cultures and people groups. Central also has a heart for justice and the ways God calls us to live out the ethics of God's way of life as embodied by Jesus.

At Central we affirm the goodness of people of all cultural backgrounds, abilities, ages, gender identities, sexual orientations, economic circumstances, neurodivergence and relationship status. Every person is a unique expression of God's image and greater diversity in our church will give us a richer, fuller, understanding of God. Our hope is to increasingly become a place of welcome, celebration, and belonging as we work out our faith together through love. (Gal 6:5)" (Emailed by Ps. Carolyn Meers)

Church of the Week (next week)

"[Wollongong Congregational Church](#) at 33 Market St is one of the oldest churches in Wollongong, serving Christ since 1855. The minister is Rev. John Reed. Services are held Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Our church doors are open at 11am at various times during the week; we hold a playgroup every 2nd Thursday at 10.30am and there are Bible Studies fortnightly. Our ministry to Mandarin speakers in the Illawarra has a Gospel Outreach Meeting on the 4th Saturday of the month at 11:00 a.m., Mandarin Christian Fellowship (for students/young adults) on 3rd Friday of the month at 6.00pm and a Bible Study/fellowship meeting every Tuesday at 11.45am.

We would appreciate prayer for our witness to our immediate neighbours in Market Street, the growth of our playgroup, the effectiveness of our Mandarin outreach and our faithfulness as a Christian community." (Emailed by Jenny Bergstedt, Church Secretary)

Church News

- 1. The Men's Well** is a new group for men who are separated (e.g., estranged/widowed) or divorced from their ex or current partner. It is led by Rev. Mark Beaton at Northern Illawarra Uniting Church. A group of about 10 men have been meeting together, which is indicative of the need for such a group. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7pm. Details are always available on the [5icm Events page](#), scroll down to regular events.

2. A quotation from Lesslie Newbigin in "A Faith for This One World", p. 81-82.

"... the disunity of the Church is a contradiction of its proper nature and a public abdication of its right to preach the gospel to all nations. ... How can he use us to draw all men to himself if we do not let him draw us to one another? How can the world believe our witness to Christ's love if we ourselves have found that love too weak to overcome our natural differences? Our divisions are a public denial of the sufficiency of Christ."

Sicm News

1. **The Illawarra Seniors band** continues to perform monthly concerts. New brass and percussion players are always welcome to join.
2. The next issue of the **Clearing the Way for Jesus** newsletter will be sent on **Tuesday 23rd July**. Please email me your church's ecumenical events for sharing with Christians of the Illawarra. To subscribe to this newsletter, please [email](#) or message me on Facebook with your email address.

God bless,
Derek Thompson,
Five Islands Christian Ministries Inc., a registered charity.

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Ecumenical Activities in the Illawarra

Illawarra Seniors Band rehearsals are on the third Tuesday of each month from 10.30am at the Port Kembla Senior Citizens Community Hall. *Contact:* [Jill White](#), the Secretary.

Tuesday 9th & 23rd July, The Men's Well

Rev. Mark Beaton conducts a group for men who are separated (e.g., estranged/widowed) or divorced from their ex or current partner.

Details: 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Northern Illawarra Uniting Church fellowship hall, corner Princes Hwy & Point St, Bulli.

Contact: Mark Beaton on Mob: 0430 209 195 or email: mark.beaton2@gmail.com or visit [Download flyer](#).

Sea Sunday, 14th July, Support the Port Kembla Mission to Seafarers

Information for use in church services is found [here](#).

Friday 26th & Saturday 27th July, [Chaplaincy Australia - Empower 24](#)

Two day gathering for pastors, leaders, and chaplains.

Speakers: Ralph Estherby, Deb Kuhna, Susan Marcuccio

Details: Fri 9:30am-1pm; Sat 9am-3:30pm at Lighthouse Church, 1 Railway Station Square, Wollongong.

Cost: \$150 for both days.

Saturday 27th July, Christmas in July

Details: 12 noon at Dapto Uniting Church hall, 122 Princes Hwy.

Cost: \$35 each. No walk-ins. Booking essential, by emailing Janet at exercisecare@gmail.com for bank details

Wednesday 7th August, Illawarra Seniors' Band Concert

Details: 10:30 a.m. Marco Polo Aged Care, 11 Watergum Way, Woonona

See the [Sicm Events page](#) for **more events** and the **Regular Events** list.