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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. Printer-friendly 2 x A4 PDF files of the newsletter may be downloaded from www.5icm.org.au/index_files/ctwfj.html. Please send news items, prayer requests and comments to admin@5icm.org.au.
Distribution of this edition: 3,551

Prayer

- 1. Road and Water Safety.** Traffic is likely to be busy this Christmas. Let's pray for a zero road toll in the Illawarra. Summer holidays mean increased people at the beach and waterways, so pray that no one will be drowned.
- 2. Scripture Union Family Missions** have been cancelled this summer. The teams are still trying to make an impact through gift packs and via the Internet.
- 3. Christmas church services** are an opportunity to help visitors encounter Jesus.

Illawarra Church News

- 1. The National Church Life Survey** will take place in October and November 2021. "Involving thousands of churches over 30 years it is the largest, longitudinal study of church life in the world." NCLS has prepared a one-minute [video invitation](#) to the survey. The survey is held every five years. Payment arrangements will be different for denominations that subsidise the payment for a local church. For a small church with up to 30 regular attenders the price is capped at \$250.
- 2. Rev. John Cornford** died on 29/11/20 after a long illness. Before his retirement, he was the senior minister at Albion Park Anglican Church. He is survived by his wife, Sue, to whom he had been married for 52 years. John was a long-time member of the prayer network and instrumental in starting the Gong Men's Days.
- 3. Rev. Con Despinidic** the senior minister of **Wollongong Congregational Church** will retire at the end of this year after 45 years of pastoral ministry. Also retiring, **Rev. Ian Barnett** after 12 years as senior minister at **Figtree Anglican Church**.
- 4. The NSW Government's Covid-19 requirements** have been relaxed again allowing singing (but wearing a mask is still recommended), up to 50 performers indoors, and people spacing relaxed to 2 sq m distancing. There are no upper limits on weddings or funerals provided social distancing and the 2 sq m rule is applied. Contact details of people attending Services still must be taken and each church must have a Covid-19 Safety Plan. Physical distancing of 1.5m is encouraged of people who are not from the same household. Avoid shared objects such as cups and collection plates. Clean frequently touched areas with detergent/disinfectant.

Sicm News

- 1. Wollongong Gospel Choir** has not been able to meet and sing together this year. Hopefully, with the easing of restrictions on singing, they will be able to recommence next year.
- 2. Albion Park Community Church** continues its commitment to church unity welcoming Emmanuel Bakenga, pastor of Hope Church 2505 (Port Kembla) as its guest after-dinner speaker on Saturday 19th December starting at 5:00 p.m., May Housler, pastor of River of Life Church, Dapto on 16th January, and Hamilton Gervais of Fresh Start Missions on 30th January. All welcome (dinner included in Service).

The church will provide Christmas lunch 11:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m. on Christmas Day at Centenary Hall, 108A Tongarra Rd, Albion Park.

God bless and Merry Christmas,
Derek Thompson,

Five Islands Christian Ministries Inc.

A registered charity.

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Ecumenical Activities in the Illawarra

Wollongong Gospel Choir - Rehearsals on Tuesdays during school term times.

Rehearsals **CANCELLED** until otherwise advised on [Facebook page](#).

Carols in the Carpark (Port Kembla Baptist Church) - Sunday 20th December

Children activities including petting zoo from 5.30pm, Sausage sizzle 6.15pm, Carols 7.00pm-8.30pm. Covid-19 restriction apply such as signing in or using the QR Code, singing is allowed if masks worn, sitting in chairs provided, in the event of rain the event will be cancelled.

Venue: Port Kembla Baptist Church car park, on the corner of Illawarra & Cowper Streets, Port Kembla.

Contact: 0407 433 690

Christmas Day - Friday, 25 December 2020

[Albion Park Community Church](#) will be hosting Christmas dinner for anyone who would like to join us this Christmas.

Details: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Centenary Hall, 108A Tongarra Road, Albion Park.

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