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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/resources.html.

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One in Christ

In 325 CE the ecumenical Council of Nicaea drafted the Nicene Creed. At that time there was only one universal church. Then came the split between east and west in the 11th century and Catholic and Protestants in the 16th century, followed by the Pentecostals in the 20th century.

The modern ecumenical movement is usually dated from the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910. Although Christian disunity had long been recognised as scandalous by Protestant churches, it had reached a state where it interfered with the church's work in the mission field.

Ray Williamson wrote in [The Ecumenical Movement: An Historical Overview](#), "This movement is grounded in the conviction that God's mission in the world, of which the Church is an instrument, is a mission of reconciliation and unity, and that division is a denial of the unity Christians have in Christ and thereby is a hindrance to mission." Out of the missionary conference of 1910 three streams of activity developed: Mission, Justice, and Theology. In 1921 an International Missionary Council was formed. Justice was pursued by the first "Life and Work" Conference in 1925. The divisive doctrines were taken up at the first "Faith and Order" Conference in 1927. Eventually "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order" merged to form the **World Council of Churches** in 1948 and the missionary stream joined them in 1961.

In Australia, ecumenical committees, national and for each state, were established in 1946, becoming the **Australian Council of Churches** in 1960.

Illawarra Church News

1. The **Wollongong Ministers' Fellowship** is meeting every two months at TIGS. Ministers in the central Wollongong area can contact Ps Rod Bayley of Wollongong Baptist Church for further details.
2. **Illawarra Church Soccer Association** Season 2023 Registrations are now open. See the [Facebook group](#) before going to the [registration page](#). [Women's soccer](#) failed to eventuate.

5icm News

1. **Wollongong Gospel Choir** rehearsals will recommence in May. Choir bookings for later in the year are available and free of charge. For further information, see the WGC [website](#).
2. **Gary Hetherington** and his team conducted an outreach in the main street of Canowindra followed by a barbecue in the CWA hall. The results were discouraging. The next day at a team prayer meeting held in Cowra, the Holy Spirit manifested his presence in power confirming the Spirit's desire for the people of Canowindra to come to the Lord and be saved. Gary and his team will try to plant a church in Canowindra after Easter if funding is available for petrol, advertising, and hall rental.

- 3. Illawarra Seniors Band** rehearsals are once a month on a Tuesday morning at 10.30am (these currently vary) at the Port Kembla Senior Citizens Community Hall.
- 4.** The Five Islands Christian Ministries **email address** has changed to ficm@spin.net.au. (admin@5icm.org.au redirects to this address). The old address will continue to work for a couple of months.
- 5.** The next issue of **Clearing the Way for Jesus newsletter** will be sent on **Tuesday 4th April**. Please send me church news items, prayer requests and combined church events to share 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

Wollongong Gospel Choir – Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays during school terms and will recommence in Term 2.

7:00 pm. At Wollongong Senior Citizens Centre, 192 Gipps Road, Gwynneville.
Contact: [John Sandercock](mailto:John.Sandercock@5icm.org.au) 0499 444 151

Tuesday 21st March, Illawarra Seniors Band Performance

Details: 10:30 a.m. Blue Haven Retirement Complex in the Atrium, Thompson St, Kiama.

Saturday 25th March, NSW State Election

Tuesday 28th March, Port Kembla Mission to Seafarers AGM

Details: 4:00 pm Mission Hall, 55 Darcy Rd, Port Kembla
RSVP: 22nd March to [Gienah Yama](mailto:Gienah.Yama@portkembla.org.au), 4274 6498

Friday 31st March, What's Normal? Youth For Christ.

Speaker: Martyn Iles
Details: 6:30-8:30 a.m. Awaken Church, 39 Ellen St, Wollongong
Register: \$12 (includes breakfast) & watch promo video at yfc.org.au/wnlaunch

Saturday 1st April, Easter Outreach Day

Combined churches come together to worship, pray and/or share Jesus with people in MacCabe Park and Wollongong central mall.
Details: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm meet at City Central Presbyterian Church, 33 Burelli St, W'g

Palm Sunday 2nd April

Maundy Thursday 6th April 2023, last day Term 1 for students

Good Friday 7th April

Easter Sunday 9th April

VMTC Training School 12th-15th April

4-day *Victorious Ministry Through Christ* healing and wholeness prayer ministry training.
Venue: The school is live-in at Chittick Lodge, Gerringong.
Cost: \$400 (includes accommodation and meals. [Download flyer](#).
Register by 22/3/23 <https://vmtc.org.au/ministry/training-schools>

Orthodox Easter Sunday, 16th April

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