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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

We began this series on ecumenism with Lesslie Newbigin, so we will end with some quotes from his book *Truth to Tell; The Gospel as Public Truth*. "To abandon hope of speaking truthfully about reality is to abandon the adventure of life. The road that has led us to this point is a long one, but it seems to me that the fatal step was taken when it was supposed that there was available to us a kind of certainty about truth which could excuse us from the duty of taking personal responsibility for our beliefs. It is not only the Christian who is called to walk by faith." (p.4).

"...the local congregation is the local presence of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church that we acknowledge in the creeds. The local congregation is not a branch of the universal Church, but it is the place where the universal Church is made visible. When the local congregation speaks and acts, its words and acts must claim to be the words and acts of the universal Church if they are to be authentic. But this is hard to achieve, or even to acknowledge, in our divided state." (p. 88).

Newbigin concludes, "In a world that is now knit together into a global city, the Church must be visible and recognizable as the community that embraces the whole city in the Father's love. The word of truth that the Church speaks to Caesar must be, or must aim to be, the word of the whole Church. Splintered, confused, and compromised, the Church seldom sounds worth listening to. But the Church has outlasted many occupants of Caesar's throne and will outlast many more, for the truth entrusted to her is the truth of God." (p.90).

Illawarra Church News

- 1. Church of the Week.** From the next edition of this newsletter we will start praying for the churches of the Illawarra, one each week. We did this before in 2010-2013, so it is high time to start again. As before, there will be no particular order, so email me if there is an appropriate time coming up for your church (anniversary, special event, etc.).
- 2. ANZAC Day Services** will be held at St Francis Xavier Cathedral at 8:00 a.m., Shellharbour City Memorial at 7:35 a.m., Woonona Bulli RSL at 5:30 a.m., Wollongong Cenotaph, at the north-east corner of MacCabe Park at 5:00 a.m., and Kiama Blowhole Point at 5:30 a.m.

5icm News

- 1. Wollongong Gospel Choir** rehearsals will not recommence until May but you may make a free booking for later in 2023. For further information, see the WGC [website](#).
- 2. Gary Hetherington** plans to plant a church in Canowindra. If you can help, [contact Gary](#).
- 3.** The next issue of **Clearing the Way for Jesus newsletter** will be sent on **Tuesday 2nd May**. The first 400 editions from 2005 to 2023 are available for download as a zip file

from the 5icm Resources page. 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

[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.

Next Engagement: 2:00 p.m. Wednesday 19th April at IRT Woonona Aged Care

Monday 1st May, TGC Illawarra Regional Ministry Conference

Hosted by [The Gospel Coalition Illawarra](#) "a fellowship of evangelical churches in the Reformed tradition"

Speaker: Gav Perkins on Engaging a changing culture with the gospel

Details: 2:30-9:00 p.m. Wollongong Baptist Church, 330 Keira St, Wollongong.

Cost: \$15 (includes dinner) [Book here](#).

Tuesday 2nd May, Community Engagement RoundTable

Hosted by [Ps Josh Hammann](#), NSW ACC Leader for Community Engagement and the Lighthouse team. "The day will help senior church leaders, all pastors, chaplains and those leading in the community engagement space (including those in community engagement roles in faith-based organisations) to think, be inspired and reflect upon how we reach our community most effectively." [Download flyer](#).

Speaker: Ps Paul Bartlett, NSW ACC President

Details: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lighthouse, The Station, 1 Railway Square, Wollongong.

Cost: \$25 (includes coffee & \$5 donation for Red Frogs). Lunch can be purchased from on-site cafe. Register [here](#).

Friday 26th May, [Illawarra Prayer Breakfast](#)

Speaker: Wendy Francis of Australian Christian Lobby

Venue: 6:30am Lighthouse Church, 1 Railway Square, Wollongong

Cost: TBA.

Pentecost Sunday 28th May

Musical Afternoon Celebration supporting the cost of sending Shoeboxes

Fundraiser for Samaritan's Purse - community singing, special musical items, speaker from Operation Christmas Child, trading tables. [Download flyer](#) for further information.

Venue: 2:00 p.m. Albion Park Uniting Church, cnr Terry & Russell Sts, Albion Park.

Cost: \$10 (includes afternoon tea)

Contacts: Lyn Brown 0425 219 233 and Daphne Chapman 4262 2314

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