

OUR NEWS

5th February 2023

Our Vision

A Community Transforming Lives



Our Values

Grace,
Inclusion,
Dignity,
Faith and
Hope

Congregational life at Westmead & Parramatta,
Hospitality Services at 175 Hotel and Wesley Apartments
Meals Plus Services providing for those in need across the
Parramatta LGA

Parramatta Mission acknowledges that all of our work takes
place on the land of traditional owners.

We pay respect to the original custodians of the land on
which we gather, and acknowledge their elders past and
present, and their emerging leaders.

Weekly Reflection
Matthew 5:13-20,
Epiphany 5A, 2023

Salty

Debie Thomas.



When I was seven years old, my mother decided that I was old enough to help her in the kitchen. My first tasks as her assistant included grating coconuts, chopping onions, and peeling what felt like an

infinite number of garlic cloves. But there was one culinary lesson Mom stressed over all others. Before she'd let me preside over an actual pot of curry, I had to learn — or, rather, my mouth had to learn — “how to check for salt.”

Under Mom's tutelage, I learned that it was possible to get every ingredient in a curry just right — to combine perfect amounts of cumin, turmeric, paprika, ginger, garam masala, and cayenne — and still ruin the dish with salt. Too little salt, and the curry would remain bland and lifeless, all of its potential zest and kick subdued. Too much salt, and the curry would lose its depth and complexity to a sharp, unbearable bitterness.

In our Gospel reading for this week, Jesus says, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.”

Living as most of us do in cultures of plenty, we take household goods like salt for granted. But as Mark Kurlansky writes in his book, *Salt: A World History*, “from the beginning of civilization until about one hundred years ago, salt was one of the most sought after commodities in human history.” The ancients believed that salt would ward off evil spirits. Religious covenants were often sealed with salt. Salt was used for medicinal purposes, to disinfect wounds, check bleeding, stimulate thirst, and treat skin diseases. Roman soldiers were sometimes paid in salt — hence our English word, “salary.” Brides and grooms rubbed salt on their bodies to enhance fertility. The Romans salted their vegetables, as we do our modern day “salads.” Around ten thousand years ago, dogs were first domesticated using salt; people would leave salt outside their homes to entice the animals. And of course, in all the centuries before refrigeration, salt was essential for food preservation.

Nowadays, we still use salt for all sorts of purposes. Salt accentuates flavors, melts ice, softens water, and hastens a boil. It soothes sore throats, rinses sinuses, eases swelling, and cleanses wounds. In some contexts, salt has more than a flavor; it has an edge. It stings, burns, abrades, and irritates. If we don't have enough salt in our bodies, we die. But if we have too much? We also die.

I know that it's possible to take a metaphor too far. No single descriptor from Scripture — salt, light, bride, clay, sheep, branch, dove, soil — will capture or contain the entirety of what it means to live as followers of Christ. But when Jesus calls his listeners “the salt of the earth,” he is saying something profound, something we'll miss in our 21st century context unless we press in and pay attention.

First of all, he is telling us who we are. We are salt. We are not “supposed to be” salt, or “encouraged to become” salt, or promised that “if we become” salt, God will love us more. The language Jesus uses is 100% descriptive; it’s a statement of our identity. We are the salt of the earth. We are that which will enhance or embitter, soothe or irritate, melt or sting, preserve or ruin. For better or for worse, we are the salt of the earth, and what we do with our saltiness matters. It matters a lot. Whether we want to or not, whether we notice or not, whether we’re intentional about it or not, we spiritually impact the world we live in.

Secondly, we are precious. Again, it’s easy to miss the import of this in our modern world where salt is cheap and plentiful, but imagine what Jesus’s first followers would have heard when he called them salt. Remember who they were. Remember what sorts of people Jesus addressed in his famous Sermon on the Mount. The poor, the mournful, the meek, the persecuted. The hungry, the sick, the crippled, the frightened. The outcast, the misfit, the disreputable, the demon-possessed. “You,” he told them all. “You are the salt of the earth.” You who are not cleaned up and shiny and well-fed and fashionable, you who’ve been rejected, wounded, unloved, and forgotten — you are essential. You are worthwhile. You are treasured. And I am commissioning you. For all of us who’ve spent months or years trying to earn divine favor, believing that our piety might someday make us precious in God’s eyes, I hope this metaphor will stop us in our tracks. Jesus knowingly named a commodity that was priceless in his time and place. He conferred great value on those who did not consider themselves valuable. He is still doing this. For us. Now.

Thirdly, salt does its best work when it’s poured out. When it’s scattered. When it dissolves into what is around it. I would have done my mother’s curry recipes no favors if I’d kept our salt shaker locked in a kitchen cabinet. Salt isn’t meant to cluster. It’s meant to give of itself. It’s meant to share its unique flavor in order to bring out the best in all that surrounds it. Which means that if we want to enliven, enhance, deepen, and preserve the world we live in, we must not hide within the walls of our churches. We must not cluster and congregate simply for our own comfort. We must not retreat into our pious, theological bubbles out of fear, cynicism, shame, or self-righteousness. Salt doesn’t exist to preserve itself; it exists to preserve what is not itself. Another metaphor for this? A metaphor Jesus used all the time? Dying. Jesus calls us to die to self. To die in order to live. Remember — we are salt. It’s not a question of striving to become what we are not. It’s a question of living into the precious fullness of what we already are.

Lastly, salt is meant to enhance, not dominate. Christian saltiness heals; it doesn’t wound. It purifies; it doesn’t desiccate. It softens; it doesn’t destroy. Even when Christian saltiness has an edge, even when, for example, it incites thirst, it only draws the thirsty towards the Living Water of God. It doesn’t leave the already thirsty parched, dehydrated, and embittered. One of the great tragedies — and most consequential sins — of historic Christianity has been its failure to understand this distinction. Salt fails when it dominates. Instead of eliciting goodness, it destroys the rich potential all around it. Salt poured out without discretion leaves a burnt, bitter sensation in its wake. It ruins what it tries to enhance. It repels. This, unfortunately, is the reputation Christianity has all-too-often these days. We are known as the salt that exacerbates wounds, irritates souls, and ruins goodness. We are considered arrogant, domineering, obnoxious, and uninterested in enhancing anything but ourselves. We are known for hoarding our power — not for giving it away. We are known for shaming, not blessing. We are known for using our words to burn, not heal.

This is not what Jesus ever intended when he called us the salt of the earth. Our preciousness was never meant to make us proud and self-righteous; it was meant to humble and awe us. So what do we do? Our vocation in these times and places is not to lose our saltiness. That's the temptation — to retreat. To hide. To choose blandness instead of boldness. To keep our love for Jesus a hushed and embarrassed secret.

But that kind of salt, Jesus told his listeners, is useless. It is untrue to its very essence. And so we are called to live wisely, creatively, and in balance. To learn — as my mother put it when I was a little girl — “how to check for salt.” Salt at its best sustains and enriches life. It pours itself out with discretion so that God's kingdom might be known on the earth — a kingdom of spice and zest, a kingdom of health and wholeness, a kingdom of varied depth, flavor, and complexity.

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes concrete the work of love, compassion, healing, and justice. It's not enough to simply believe. It's not enough to bask in our blessedness while all around us God's creation burns. To be blessed, to be salt, to be followers of Jesus, is to take seriously what our identity signifies.

We are the salt of the earth. That is what we are, for better or for worse. May it be for better. May your pouring out — and mine — be for the life of the world.

Foster your faith this week

Is 58:1-9a (9b-12)

Ps 112:1-9 (10)

1 Cor 2:1-12 (13-16)

Mt 5:13-20

Australia Day at Parramatta Park



Leigh Memorial Congregation

WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY

This **Sunday, 5 February**, we'll be gathering for worship Onsite + Zoom at Leigh Memorial at 9.30am with Rev Vladimir, inc. Communion. *All Welcome!*

ONLINE PCUC SERVICE

Members are reminded that a weekly, PCUC "online service" (approx. 30 mins in duration) is available for viewing at any time during the week via the Northmead Uniting facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/northmeadunitingchurch/>

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Our love & support remain with those in need of solace, healing and strength at this time, including members who are unwell and requiring additional care & support. NB: Contact details for the pastoral team (Revs Vladimir & John and Pastors Fil & Sarah) are in the newsletter. The congregation leaders/worship team can be reached via LeighMemorialUniting@gmail.com

CALENDAR: FEBRUARY

NB: Members and visitors are warmly invited to join us for morning tea after worship each Sunday.

Sunday 5 February – 9.30am with Rev Vladimir (inc. Communion)

Sunday 12 February – 9.30am with Rev Vladimir

Sunday 19 February – 9.30am with Pastor Fil, followed by a 'Pancakes' morning tea

Wed 22 February – 7.00pm, Combined Ash Wednesday service with Rev John @ Leigh

Sunday 26 February – 9.30am with Pastor Fil

Wed 28 February – 6.15pm, Sydney Alliance Assembly (Westmead). Details below.

SUNDAY MORNING ROSTERS

If anyone is interested in joining the Leigh Memorial Sunday morning worship and/or morning tea rosters in 2023, please see Liz.

UNITING MISSION & EDUCATION: 2023 COURSES

UME is offering a number of enriching face-to-face plus Zoom courses during 2023, including the 'Living Our Faith' and 'Living Our Values' series. A short course on Mission property & planning is scheduled for March 16-17. Check the website for details regarding course content:

<https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/upcoming-events/>

SYMPATHIES

The PCUC is saddened to learn of the recent passing of **Mr Chris Aukett**, a gifted artist and long term art teacher at Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School, who was a strong supporter and exhibitor for many years in the 'Stations of the Cross' exhibitions coordinated by Northmead UC. In the following link, Rev Dr Doug Purnell describes one of Chris' Easter-themed installations:

https://m.facebook.com/UnitingChurchAu/videos/rev-dr-doug-purnell-at-the-stations-of-cross-2016-art-exhibition/1021362681271400/?locale2=sw_KE

SYDNEY ALLIANCE ELECTION ASSEMBLY IN WESTMEAD

Members of the PCUC are invited to attend the next Sydney Alliance 'assembly,' which will be held in Westmead on 28 February:

- Guests – NSW Treasurer Matt Kean (LIB), Shadow Treasurer Daniel Mookhey (ALP) & representatives of the cross-bench;
- When? Tuesday evening, 28th February, 6.15pm – 8.15pm.
- Where? The Morley Centre (Catherine McAuley School), 2 Darcy Road, Westmead;
- Dress in organisational or cultural wear;
- Registrations required: <https://events.humanitix.com/sydney-alliance-nsw-election-assembly-february-28>

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD: PARRAMATTA SQUARE

Parramatta Square (pictured) is located directly behind Leigh Memorial Church and the Fellowship Centre. The Square includes the red-roofed 'Phive' building (housing Parramatta Library), the Parramatta Town Hall (built by Hart & Lavors – the same Wesleyan Methodists who built Leigh Memorial), and a number of new restaurants, cafes and other businesses. It is also conveniently connected to the railway station, Westfield, and the rest of the city. Construction of various other high-rise buildings in the city continues, as does work on the large 'Metro' site opposite the church (where archaeological surveys are revealing the area's rich Aboriginal and post-European settlement histories). Members are encouraged to take a walk and explore our church's ever-expanding and multi-faceted local neighbourhood in Parramatta! A 3D "virtual tour" of what the completed Square will look like is available at:

<https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/vision/parramatta-square>



Westmead Congregation

Sharing the Hospitality of Jesus Christ

Sunday 5th February 2023, 9.30am

Pastor Sarah Bishop will be conducting our Holy Communion Service today, as usual which is the first Sunday of the month. We look forward to seeing you again, Pastor Sarah, as we acknowledge we are already in the second month of the New Year!



Little reminder – Today is also Gold Coin donation Sunday.

We are working towards providing small Welcome Packs for families occupying Wesley Apartments and rebuilding the connection to Westmead Uniting Church following Covid restrictions.

For those who are attending or visiting Westmead Uniting Church for the first time today, a very warm welcome to you – please join us for a cuppa after the service.

Last Sunday's service was a highlight when all the PCUC congregations combined for worship at Centenary Church. It was a very good turnout of people and a fair few of the Westmead congregation members were able to attend – thank you to Stuart Hills and others who graciously helped with transport. We would like to thank Rev. John Barr and Rev. Vladimir for a beautiful service and Reflection on the Beatitudes - a personal insight on what things we can be grateful for and thus emotionally turn and give blessings for it, was shared from members of each congregation. This was especially touching and deeply reflective. A thank you goes out as well to the caterers for providing us with a lovely luncheon after service!

WESTMEAD WORSHIP - FEBRUARY 2023

All services begin on site at 9.30am

5 February: Communion service with Pastor Sarah Bishop

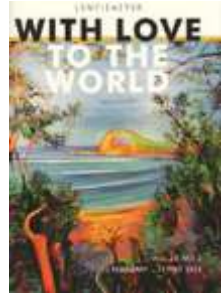
12 February: Pastor Fil

19 February: Rev. Vladimir

26 February: Rev. Vladimir

The next issue of the Bible Study booklet 'With Love to the World' is now available.

The booklet covers Lent and Easter. Cost: \$5.00



ACTIVITIES YOU CAN JOIN:

BIBLE STUDY: Re-commencement planning for 2023 is underway.
<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/95043695512>

TAI CHI:



Tai Chi held each Friday, 10am - 11am at Uniting Westmead
Cost: \$5 per session.
All welcome to join the group for a fun morning and finish with a nice cuppa at the Uniting Community Café.

ENQUIRIES:

Chairperson:	Jan Robson:	0418 438 901
Administration &		
Liturgy Co-ordinator:	Lorna Porter:	0408 365 478
Prayer Chain Requests:	Ruth Geggie	0430 271 205
Newsletter &		
Technology:	Cheryl Shyam:	0432 436 999
Technology:	Alysa Biju:	
	E-mail:	westmead.uca@gmail.com

Leigh Fijian Congregation



주현 후 제5주제 (5th Epiphany of Sunday) 2023년 02월 05일 오후 1시30분

개회 찬송 (Entrance Hymn) 예배를 위한 묵상

예배의 부름 (Calling) 인도자

송영 (Gloria) **새 1장** **통 1장** 만복의 근원 하나님——다함께

사도신경 신앙고백 (The Apostle's Creed) 다함께

찬양/찬송 (Chorus & Hymns) 다함께

새 23장 **통 23장** 만입이 내게 있으면

기도 (Prayer) 주기도문송 **새 635장** 하늘에 계신 우리 아버지 다함께

성경 봉독 (Scripture Reading) **골로새서 3:12-17**

말씀(Preaching)- 전현구 목사 사랑받은 사람답게

봉헌 송(Offertory Hymn) **새 220장** **통 278장** 사랑하는 주님 앞에

나눔과 알림 (Announcement & Notices)

1. 전 세계가 전염병으로 힘들 때 주님과 동행하시는 성도가 됩시다.
2. '매일 성경' 말씀으로 주님과 교제의 시간(QT)을 갖고 적용하는 훈련을 합니다.
3. 말씀, 기도, 전도 생활로 하나님이 기뻐하시는 삶을 사는 성도님들이 되시기 바랍니다.

폐회찬송(Final Hymn) **새502장** **통 259장** 너 시온아 이소식 전파하라 (1절)

축도 전현구 담임목사

QT나눔 & 성경공부
오후 4:00

수요기도회 : 오후 7시
마태복음 8:14-26

새벽기도회 : 오전 5시
마태복음 8:23-10:23



“And here’s what happened with the hot air balloons!

It was awe-inspiring to watch a fleet of air balloons flaring up and taking to the air – **even better** still to watch it happening 10 feet away.

That’s what our volunteer team did this Australia Day. In support of the Parramatta Park Australia Day event and the hot air balloon team, we managed to get over 400 people high in the air!

Everyone that wanted to, also got a ride - that made me very happy. A huge thank you to our wonderful team on day!”

Chao Zhou
Parramatta Mission
Volunteer Coordinator



Prayer Points

The people of Parramatta Mission invite you to pray for Our Community

- We give thanks that some small gatherings are starting to take place. We give thanks for welcoming cafes and the disciplines we have learnt to help keep us all safe.
- We give thanks for coffee, tea, muffins and spiritually encouraging conversations.

PM Westmead

- We pray for those that need comfort and healing from illness and those especially who are nearing the end of their life's journey. Lord also be with those near and dear to them and provide Your Almighty strength to them as they watch and wait.
- The war in Ukraine, it's people and the impact on the wider world – Father we pray for peace to arrive in Ukraine – shelter its people from the cruelties of war. We pray for the impact on energy, food prices and supplies on countries especially those who are already battling their own crises of poverty and famine.
- For those who suffer from anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges – Lord please be their guiding light daily and be their best friend.
- Climate change – we pray for governments to recognize the real issues facing our future generations with this. We pray for the low lying nations of the world where people may not be able to voice out their concerns adequately.
- The First Nations People – as we approach the constitutional referendum later this year.
- For the homeless – that they may be helped adequately in getting a shelter and also that their problems be understood first hand.

PM Fijian

- We pray for those who are going through transitions from school to beyond.
- We pray for the Synod Pulse Team and Ofa's role as a newly commissioned Pastor in the Team, resourcing youth ministry across NSW/ACT.
- We pray for the guests at the Bula Feeding Ministry and Meals Plus and our wonderful volunteers. We pray for those who are unable to meet because of rain or storms and for those who have been sleeping rough.

PM Korean Faith Community

- We pray for the Korean community in Western Sydney and for the revival of the church.
- We pray especially for Nak Su Baik, Kyeong Ok Hyeon (Those who are not in good health).

Prayer Points

PM Leigh Memorial

- We pray for congregation members, leaders and staff who are unwell, or having tests or procedures, and those experiencing anxiety surrounding work, study, family life or health. We particularly remember our members in need of additional support at this time, including those who are separated from their families or grieving. We also remember those within our congregations who are devoted carers to others in their family or within the community;
- We pray for wisdom and inspiration to infuse all current and forthcoming decision-making processes and actions by our dedicated ministers, leaders, managers and staff – and specifically pray for Paul and the team at Meals Plus, Cameron and his team at Westmead, the Bula Feeding ministry, and the life and witness of our fellow Parramatta Mission & Parramatta City Uniting Church congregations;
- We also pray for greater mutual respect, compassion and care within our local communities, and for the realisation of a community-wide spirit of inclusion and love for all people.

Wider Work

For our Combined Parramatta Mission Team

- May God guide all our staff and volunteers to live out our values of grace, inclusion, dignity, faith and hope;
- Rev. Vladimir, Rev. Hyun Goo, Chaplain Sarah, PMC Chairperson, David and Secretary Robert and all those who lead and serve.

Service & Zoom Information

Leigh Memorial Congregation

Time: Sunday 9.30am on site & Zoom

<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/5199089657>

Meeting ID: 519 908 9657

Westmead Congregation

Time: Sunday 9.30am on site

Leigh Fijian Congregation

Time: Sundays 11.15am on site

Pastoral Contacts

Prayer Points may be sent to
wecare@parramattamission.org.au

For a conversation or to contact a Minister, please call
Parramatta Mission Reception (9am-3pm)
119 Macquarie Street Parramatta NSW 2150
9891 2277

Leigh Memorial Church
119 Macquarie Street Parramatta NSW 2150
9891 2277

Westmead Church
175 Hawkesbury Road Westmead NSW 2145
9891 2277

IN TIME OF PASTORAL NEED

Please contact our minister Vladimir Korotkov for any pastoral needs.

Rev Vladimir Korotkov (Transition Minister)	0431 759 573
Rev John Barr	0457 879 099
Pastor Fil Kamotu	0404 552 915

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THESE PEOPLE FOR PASTORAL ISSUES

Rev Hyun Goo Jun (Korean Faith Community)	0433 320 588
Pr Sarah Bishop (Children's Hospital)	0429 912 943
Anare Vocea (Fijian Vakatawa)	0432 772 852



Parramatta Mission



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