## OUR NEWS 26th March 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

which we gather, and acknowledge their elders past and present, and their emerging leaders.

#### FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

26th March 2023



## Rise up....and live!

John 11: 1-44

Rev John Barr

It is said "big boys don't cry." And you know, this is, to a degree, true. Surveys across many countries show men, when compared to women, are far less likely to shed tears.

But is this always true?

I am, to be honest, prone to be a member of that "stiff upper lip" club. I guess it's part of my English heritage. But there are times when I do want to cry. And it has often happened in response to moving events depicted in the cinema.

Have any of you seen the movie <u>Schindler's List?</u> During World War Two a German industrialist goes to great lengths to preserve the lives of Jewish workers who would otherwise have gone to the gas chambers. But in a very touching scene at the end of the war Oskar Schindler is overcome with guilt at the thought that he could have, if he tried harder, saved more lives. This is a deeply stirring moment.

There is that heartbreaking scene in the movie, <u>Titanic</u>, when that Irish larrikin, Jack Dawson, drowns as his distressed lover, Rose, looks helplessly on.

There is that scene in the movie, <u>Lion</u>, where an Indian boy who is separated from his parents and then adopted by an Australian family, finally meets his mother again after more than twenty years of being apart.

Then for me, one of a most intense, distressing moments comes in the movie, <u>Rabbit Proof Fence</u>, when, back in the 1930's, the official Protector of Australian Aborigines intervenes in the Western Australian town of Jigalong by taking three young girls, Molly, Daisy and Gracie into custody. Their mothers are distraught. They are grief-ridden. They are gutted and broken as their little girls are cruelly whisked away. The absolute heartbreak of these mothers brought me to tears.

And finally, the movie, <u>Sophie's Choice</u>, left me quite desolate. Sophie Zawistowski, played by Meryl Streep, is the daughter of a polish professor who is involved in protecting Jewish people during the Nazi occupation. Together with her two children, ten-year-old son, Jan, and an eight-year-old daughter, Eva, Sophie is arrested and sent to Auschwitz extermination camp. Here Sophie is protected as she works for a German officer. But there is a catch. She must surrender one of her children to the gas chambers. If she doesn't, then all three of them will be exterminated. Sophie is faced with the most horrendous decision of all – and in doing so, offers up her daughter. The scene is chilling, shocking and horrifying. I did shed more than a tear.

Now, today we witness another man shedding tears. It's a moving, touching moment as Jesus is confronted by the reality and the grief that his friend, Lazarus, has died. Moreover, it is suggested that if Jesus had made it a priority to be there a few days earlier, then Lazarus would still be alive.

This is an intense, dramatic story told beautifully and quite powerfully by the Apostle John. We are told Jesus is "greatly disturbed" after entering the village of Bethany, being met by the grieving Mary and Martha, and then being confronted with the grave of Lazarus.

Some translations of the New Testament tend to tone down Jesus' reaction here by saying he was simply "upset". But most translations pick up on the deep meaning of the text as they declare Jesus is greatly affected. The New King James Version says Jesus "groaned in spirit" while a more contemporary translation called The Message says "a deep anger welled up within him".

A reading of the original Greek, in which this text is written, suggests Jesus really was troubled here. The original text actually suggests Jesus "shuddered with sadness". Jesus "shook with emotion", Jesus "snorted with anger".

Now these are pretty strong reactions.

Then we are told "Jesus began to weep". Here Jesus actually cries. Jesus bursts into tears,

This is significant. So often Jesus is presented in somewhat sanitized, one-dimensional ways, as a figure who is in total control of his emotions and never phased by the stark realities around him. But not so here.

In this story of Lazarus, Jesus is stirred up. He is deeply grieved by the circumstances he faces. Moreover, Jesus is so touched by what happens that a well of anger bursts up in him!

This a very "human" scenario with which many of us can identify. Have you ever felt this way?

Friends, I feel this way when I watch those troubling reports concerning the war in Ukraine. I experience it when I witness the desolation of the Australian landscape as a result of floods and fire. I grieve in the knowledge that some 143 million native animals were impacted in the Blue Mountains bushfires of 2019-20 — many of whom died. I shudder when confronted by the way the gambling industry here in NSW ruins the livelihoods of vulnerable families in Western Sydney.

I am devastated, indeed, angered as I hear, on average, one a woman a month is murdered here in Australia as result of domestic violence while one in five women since the age of 15 have experienced sexual violence. I weep when the drums of war are being beaten over a possible confrontation with China. And I am outraged when national interest and personal gain usurps the needs, the rights and the wellbeing of others.

Friends, Jesus was "greatly disturbed" and "deeply troubled" because his friend Lazarus was dead. Jesus "shuddered with sadness", "shook with emotion" and "snorted with anger" as he witnessed such grief on the faces of Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha.

And you know, I believe this tells us something incredibly important about Jesus. For you see, Jesus is vitally attuned to the predicaments we experience in life. Jesus is truly in touch with the frailty, the vulnerability and the angst of what this involves. Jesus is deeply affected by the hurt and the injustice of it all.

So, what does Jesus do?

In midst of darkness and despair, Jesus shines a light. Out of such agony and death, Jesus offers life.

Jesus enters the cemetery, and he faces the tomb. Despite some concern that Lazarus' body is already decomposing, Jesus commands the grave be opened. Then Jesus literally calls Lazarus out with the words "Lazarus, come out!

The rest of the story is simply stunning. Lazarus comes out. His face and feet are unbound. Life returns to a place of death and decay. Light conquers the deep, mysterious chasms of darkness. The horrible stench of death is thwarted!

Friends the incredible truth being revealed here does not suggest we are free from the traumas, the hurt and the injustices of life. Lazarus did go on to die once again. Jesus' mission is not to keep people from dying. And when you think about it, Jesus did not abolish suffering and death. That's pretty obvious when look around us. We all need hospitals. Palliative care is in increasing demand. And we will all have a funeral! What's going on here is this:

God, in the person of Jesus is deeply aware of the things of life. God, in the person of Jesus is deeply moved, indeed, God, in the person of Jesus, is deeply affected by what's happening.

God, in the person of Jesus, is upset, greatly disturbed, indeed, God, in the person of Jesus is angered and profoundly shattered by the realities that are exposed all around us.

And this means God doesn't look the other way. Rather, God comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ to pilot us through.

God doesn't retreat into a mystical, holy aura, Rather, God comes to us in the person of Jesus to "talk to the talk" and "walk the walk" - not by-passing, circumnavigating or dodging the things of life. Rather God comes to us in the person of Jesus to penetrate those indestructible brick walls, to show us the way out of those deep black holes and to break through those the insurmountable dead ends.

God does so to open new horizons, to offer new possibilities and to gift us with new ways of being.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, know that this shining light, this death-defying Jesus is present with us always. And because of this, be assured that God wants to be part of our lives. Be heartened that God is gracefully and compassionately involved in this world and all its frailties. Be secure in the knowledge that God is there for each and every one of us.

On this fifth Sunday in Lent our calling is to acknowledge this life-sustaining, death-defying truth. Our challenge is, therefore, to bear witness to it and to live lives that will never succumb to, or give even an inch to, the powers of darkness and oppression that constantly menace us.

Rather in all of this, trust God. Stand firm against every affliction. And in doing so, call those haunting, destructive powers out. Never let them or their stench ever have the last say.

For this is never God's will or God's intention

Friends, know that God is with you. God is for you. God will never fail you.

Rise up, therefore, and live!

Amen.

## Foster your faith this week

Fz 37:1-14

Ps 130

Rom 8:6-11 Jn 11:1-45

#### EASTER 2023

#### PARRAMATTA CITY UNITING CHURCH



## Thursday 6 April:

Centenary Uniting Church – 7.00pm (Combined PCUC service, 46 Sorrell Street, North Parramatta)

#### Friday 7 April: Good Friday

Westmead Uniting Church – 9.00am (Combined PCUC service, cnr Hawksbury & Queens Roads, Westmead)

#### Sunday 9 April: Easter Sunday

Leigh Memorial Uniting Church - 10.00am

(119 Macquarie Street, Parramatta) (Combined Leigh Memorial & Leigh Fijian service)

Northmead Uniting Church – 9.30am (3 – 7 Hammers Road, Northmead)

Westmead Uniting Church – 9.30am (cnr Hawksbury & Queens Roads, Westmead)

> Enquiries: LeighMemorialUniting@gmail.com muchurch@bigpond.net.au



### Leigh Memorial Congregation

#### **WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY**

This **Sunday 26 March**, we'll be gathering for worship <u>Onsite + Zoom</u> at Leigh Memorial at 9.30am with **Pastor Fil Kamotu**.

#### **REV GEOFF @ LEIGH MEMORIAL**

Last Sunday we welcomed Rev Geoff Smith to our Leigh Memorial service. Thanks for your thoughtful reflection Geoff and our warmest prayers as you farewell your Galston congregation of 11+ years and embark on your new role with the PCUC. NB: Geoff will be with us next on 23 April, and everyone is also welcome to attend Geoff's Induction at 2pm on Sunday 30 April at the Centre for Ministry.





#### **PCUC EASTER PROGRAM 2023**

**Thursday 6 April** – 7.00pm: Combined Tenebrae @ Centenary.

Friday 7 April – 9.00am: Combined Good Friday worship @ Westmead. \*\*
There will be no services held at Leigh Memorial on Good Friday this year. \*\*
Sunday 9 April – 10.00am: Combined Leigh Memorial & Leigh Fijian Easter

Sunday worship @ Leigh Memorial, followed by an Easter morning tea.

#### PASTORAL MESSAGE

Our prayers remain with Lalaja, Mae, Jolame and everyone within our worship community who isn't 100% at the moment – or in need of some additional support. We're also thinking of those who can only connect with us via Zoom, or who receive their newsletters in the post and haven't been able to come to church in a long time. We hope you're keeping well and that we see you soon. Please note that contact details for the ministry team (Rev Geoff, Rev John, Pastor Fil & Pastor Sarah) are in the newsletter. The Leigh leaders/worship team can be contacted via the Leigh Memorial UC email:

LeighMenorialUniting@gmail.com

#### **LENT EVENT 2023**

To donate to Uniting World's Lent Event this year, or to learn more about this inspirational program and its goals for supporting & transforming lives in international communities through the provision of children's education, teacher training, financial aid, clean water and climate initiatives, and many other forms of practical and prayerful support, please see the website:

https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/event/lent-event/home

#### PCUC ELECTION MORNING SAUSAGE SIZZLE!

Come along and purchase a "democracy sausage" at Northmead UC this Saturday 25 March – any time between 7.30am and midday! Northmead Uniting will be one of suburb's four NSW Election polling centres on the day, so join in this great Australian tradition and enjoy a sausage sandwich with us while you vote – or just be part of some community outreach and fundraising.

#### OUR AUTUMN GARDEN: THE LEIGH MEMORIAL/ MEALS PLUS COURTYARD

The courtyard and potted garden beside Leigh Memorial Church, which is used Mon - Fri by Meals Plus, is looking great this Autumn due to a combination of recent warm weather, plenty of rain plus the good care provided by the Meals Plus staff, volunteers and attendees. Pictured are 'Flaming Torch' bromeliads in full bloom - and a lush corner filled with various plant species including spathiphyllums, ferns, succulents and a vigorous stromanthe triostar shrub. The colourful and soothing atmosphere of the courtyard garden is enhanced by its vibrant Hope, Joy, Love, Faith and We Belong wall murals. Everyone is invited to visit the garden when possible. To donate to the crucial, weekly work of Meals Plus, please go to: https://www.parramattamission.org.au/donate/





## Westmead Congregation



#### **Sharing the Hospitality of Jesus Christ**

#### **Sunday 26th March 2023, 9.30am**

Our Worship service this morning will be led by Reverend John Barr. It's a real pleasure seeing you again Rev John and we look forward to hearing from you. We warmly welcome anyone who is visiting us today. Please stay for coffee/tea or just pray in the chapel.

Last Sunday Pastor Sam Sadrata led us in worship – it was lovely to meet your wife, Sam, and congratulations on your recent wedding! Sam asked us "what metaphor would you use to describe your relationship with God?" – the image of a Shepherd and Sheep is often used in the Bible. Our personal relationship with God can be an "intimate one". God invites us daily to come as we are, to be "honest, genuine, and vulnerable with no façade". Thank you, Sam, for your lovely reflection.

Vision Day held last Saturday at Centenary was a successful day of forging new relationships with other members of the PCUC (Parramatta City Uniting Church). A big thank you to Stuart Elliott and Rev. Geoff Smith for chairing the event. Also a big thanks to Ken and the ladies for providing refreshments and looking after us. This day was informative and discussed the way we were headed and the "vision statement" for our church. It was an interesting information session and a good brain workout!

Prayer chain continues to hold those in difficulty and in ill health.

WESTMEAD WORSHIP: MARCH - APRIL 2023

(All services 9.30am except Good Friday)

26th March: Rev. John Barr

2<sup>nd</sup> April Palm Sunday + Holy Communion: Rev. Geoff Smith

7<sup>th</sup> April 9.00am Good Friday (Combined Church at Westmead): Ministry Team

9<sup>TH</sup> April: Pastor Fil Kamotu (Easter Sunday)

16<sup>th</sup> April: Pastor Fil Kamotu 23<sup>rd</sup> April: Pastor Fil Kamotu

#### **EASTER SERVICES:**

**Thursday 6 April** – 7.00pm, Tenebrae Service (Maundy Thursday) at Centenary Church, North Parramatta

Friday 7 April – 9.00am Good Friday Combined Service at Westmead

**Sunday 9 April** – Easter Sunday. Usual Westmead time of 9.30am



**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April –** CCLM meeting at Centenary Church. (Westmead will be hosting. Please bring a plate for morning tea if you are able).

**Thursday 30 March** - Parramatta Mission will be hosting a 'Rich Person-Poor Person' fundraising dinner in the Parramatta Mission Hall, 6.00 – 8.30pm. Further information is included in this Newsletter.

**Sunday 16 April - There will be a Thanksgiving service at Westmead.** Lorna has kindly assisted with a suitable list of non-perishable items that you could bring in – these items will be donated to Meals Plus, after the service is over.

#### **REV. GEOFF SMITH'S INDUCTION:**

**Sunday. 30 April** - Geoff Smith's induction as the PCUC's Lead Minister will take place from 2.00pm at the Centre for Ministry, North. Parramatta. There will be no worship services held at PCUC churches on that Sunday.

BIBLE STUDY: Each Monday, 2.00pm

Zoom Link: <a href="https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/95043695512">https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/95043695512</a>

#### **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

- 1. Lotu ena macawa oqo 26/03: Na lotu ena macawa oqo na veisau vunau kei Fiji Parish. Rau na gole yani ki Fiji Parish ko Viliame Kamotu kei Taito Dovibua. Vunau vakarau Sosi Toa kei Epeli Semani. Tu vakarau ena veiliutaki matamasumasu naba 3.
- 2. Lotu ena macawa mai oqo 02/04: Na macawa mai oqo na sigatabu ni gone. Era na vakaitavi tiko kina na luveda. Ena qaravi tale tiko ga na sakaramede, ena veiqaravi tiko kina ko talatala Same Sadrata. Tuirara ni vakayakavi ni turaga SosiToa kei Epeli Semani.
- **3. Lesoni ni macawa oqo (Lent 5) 20/03-26/03:** Isikeli 37:1-14, Same 130, Roma 8:6-11, Joni 11:1-45
- **4. Lesoni ni macawa mai oqo 27/03-02/04:** Aisea 50:4-9, Same 118:1-2, 19-29, Filipai 2:5-11 Maciu 21:1-11

**Lolo kei Na masumasu** - Veinanumi ena lolo kei na masumasu ena vei matai ni Vukelulu ena vei vula mai na <u>6am – 12pm</u> se <u>6am – 6pm</u>. Soli tu na galala ke o rawa ni qarava.

Veinanumi ena Masu: Kerei meda veinanumi tikoga ena veimasulaki vei ira na nodatou qase kei na vuvale ra sotava tiko na dredre ko Mereoni Kamotu, S Qata, Akisi Dovibua Baranski, Dia Allison.Ko ratou na veiliutaki tiko ena nodatou vavakoso vaka viti kei na veivuvale kece sara ena loma ni nodatou vavakoso. Na nodratou veiqaravi na Bula Feeding. Me nanumi na FNC ni tou na veiwaseitaka na veiqaravi kei na tolu na valelotu. Ena qaravi tiko na FNC ena Okotova ni yabaki mai oqo 2024.

Gadrevi na noda veinanumi ena masu vei ira na lewe ni vavakoso era mai sasaga kei na nanumi talega ni nodra vuvale mai Viti.

시드니 조은	문교회 Syd	ney Jo-Eu	n Church	23-13
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송영 (Gloria) 제1장	봉1장	만복의	근원 하나님	다함께
사도신경 신앙고백 (Th	e Apostle's C	reed) ·······		다함께
찬양/찬송 (Chorus &	Hymns)			다함께
새 144 장	통 144 장	예수 나를	위하여	
기도 (Prayer) 주기도 성경 봉독 (Scripture Ro	JI 022.8		신 우리 아버지	다함께
말씀(Preaching)- 전현구 목사		마가복은 3: 1-6 참 안식일의 주인은 누구인가?		
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Thursday, 30 March 2023

6.00 PM - 8.30 PM

PARRAMATTA MISSION DINING HALL, 119 MACQUAIRE ST.

## <u>Tickets available</u> on Humanitix

https://events.humanitix.com/richperson-poor-person-fundraiser







To discuss sponsorship, inclusions or marketing aspects, please contact:



#### Davyn de Bruyn









For Your Support

## Temporary Job Vacancy - Temp counsellor Northmead Uniting Church

Northmead Uniting Church has funding under the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program to employ an Adolescent and Family Counsellor to provide Counselling, Parenting Programs and Education and Skills Training to young people, parents, and families where the young person is experiencing mental health issues and/or is at risk of disengagement from school.

Our current Counsellor is planning to take some extended leave in the second half of this year.

We are looking to recruit a replacement Counsellor to fill this role on a part time basis (19 hours/week) for a period of approximately 25 weeks from 3 July 2023 to 22 December 2023.

If you know anyone who might be interested in applying for this position a more detailed advertisement and position description are available from either Jenny at <a href="mailto:nuchurch@bigpond.net.au">nuchurch@bigpond.net.au</a> or Wendy McGuirk at <a href="mailto:wmcguirk@optusnet.com.au">wmcguirk@optusnet.com.au</a> or 0402031843.

## **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

- For those in our congregation or in our hearts that have a new diagnosis, are unwell or undergoing treatment – We pray for divine love from You to heal and restore.
- For Turkiye and Syria We pray for the devastation that lies there, especially in the hearts and minds of many.
- For the wars that rage, especially Ukraine, that peace may arrive We ask for Your Holy intervention in awakening conscience and letting respect for human life, flow through.
- For those without shelter, food or clothing May You open the eyes of the passer by that they stop to help. Make us aware that we may care for them.
- For those whose illness is hidden from the eye May You help their mind and soul to be daily cleansed and refreshed by Your power.
- For those on the verge of breakdown due to finances, relationship breakdown, loss of loved ones or a change in life circumstances Lord we ask that help may arrive to righten their circumstance.

#### 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 members who are unwell, and those experiencing anxiety and grief.
- We prayerfully support those in our local communities who need additional care and support at this time, including people experiencing hunger, homelessness, addiction, family crisis and loneliness, in addition to those who assist them – such as devoted care-givers, nurses, doctors, community support teams and emergency workers;
- We pray for wisdom and inspiration to infuse all current and forthcoming decision-making processes and actions by our dedicated ministry team, leaders, managers and staff – and specifically pray for Paul and the team at Meals Plus, Cameron and the team at Westmead and for the life, witness and outreach work being conducted by our fellow Parramatta Mission & Parramatta City Uniting Church communities;
- We pray for greater mutual respect, compassion and peace throughout the world, and for the realisation of an international spirit of inclusion, acceptance 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 Geoff Smith, 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 Lead Minister Geoff Smith for any pastoral needs.

Rev Geoff Smith (Lead Minister)	0407 416 377
Rev Vladimir Korotkov (Transition Minister)	0431 759 573
Rev John Barr	0400 694 540
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





