

Dear friends,

FROM ASH WEDNESDAY TO EASTER: A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND REPENTANCE

(by Rev'd Maria Brand)



I picked up the weekly brochure for my local supermarket and saw tins of tuna with the slogan, 'Fish for lent', across the front page. Ash Wednesday on March 5th this year, marks the beginning of the Christian season of Lent. Some people give something up during Lent, such as eating chocolate, or meat, or using social media. Why? What is Lent? Lent is the 40-day period leading up to Easter,

(excluding Sundays) that starts on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Resurrection Sunday (Easter).

During this time, Christians throughout history have used fasting, Bible study, radical giving and prayer as ways of going deeper in their relationship with God and preparing their hearts and minds in repentance for the remembrance of Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter. In the early church baptisms were often celebrated at Easter and therefore Lent was a time of preparation.

The sign of the cross in ashes that people receive on their forehead at an Ash Wednesday service is a reminder of our need for repentance and the reality of our human frailty. In the Bible, ashes symbolise sorrow and mourning over sin (Dan 9:3).

During Lent this year, we have the opportunity to repent and turn to the God of hope, perhaps for the first time or recommitting after years of discipleship.

This year, as we think particularly about sharing our hope in Jesus, may we consider how we might deepen our love for God and for others. Following the self-sacrificial example of our Servant King Jesus, let us have a mindset of love and may the Spirit fill us with a desire to encourage and build people up in Christ. For our Lord Jesus said, *'a new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another'*. (John 13:34)





ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE: NEXT WEEK

Ash Wednesday Service, 10am, 5th March

We encourage you to invite family, neighbours and friends to a special reflective service for Ash Wednesday: the beginning of Lent. This year's theme: 'Peace with God - Our Hope'.

Come and receive a cross mark of ashes on your forehead as a sign of your penitence and mortality. Join us in this deeply moving Christian tradition of affirming our sinfulness, need for forgiveness, and 'Peace with God - Our Hope'.

THIS SUNDAY

This Sunday: Change4Change

Please bring your Change4Change jars this Sunday. Thank you for your generous contribution towards the Education Assistance Project (Mission of Truth Church, Surabaya). Alternately, you can also donate online with following details:

- Account: Glen Waverley Anglican Church, BSB: 033009, Account No: 108940
- Reference: change4change

SPECIAL

Starting Thursday 6th March- Everyday Evangelism: A 4-wk course for creating confidence in sharing the Christian Faith - all are welcome!



- Details: 6:30-8:30pm, 4 x Thursdays in March - 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th at GWAC.
- The cost of the four-week course is \$25 per person (payable one the first night) which includes the Course book, Sharing Story flyer and refreshments (*Finger food will be provided at the start of each session for those coming straight from work*)
- Registration: Fliers, Signup Sheet (Fellowship Area & Notice Board), website & App.

World Day of Prayer 2025 (The Cook Islands): Friday 7th March

- **Speaker: Rev'd Maria brand**
- When: Friday 7th March, 7pm
- Where: RAFT Anglican Church, 131 Taylors Lane, Rowville





HOPE25 Training Morning @ GWAC: Saturday 22 March

We have a Hope25 training morning that will run, 9.30am – 12.30pm on Sat 22 March at Glen Waverley Anglican Church (GWAC).

Please register at this [LINK](#). This is essential for presenters to prepare for their training sessions. *Hardcopy rego forms also available in the Fellowship Area.*

Topics include:

1. God conversations: **Maria Brand**
2. Hospitality Evangelism: **Kim Wellard**
3. Preaching Confident Hope: **(Bp) Paul Barker**
4. Using an Op Shop for Mission: **Paul Carr**
5. Hymns We Love: **Wayne Schuller**
6. Effective Follow Up: **Karen Morris**

Volunteering – Safe Ministry Training: Wednesday 19th March or Sunday 23rd March

Thank you to all volunteers serving at GWAC! If you're thinking about joining a ministry team, we encourage you to register for Safe Ministry Training now. In March, two in-person sessions are being offered:

- **Dates:** Wednesday 19th March or Sunday 23rd March
- **Time:** Noon – 2pm (BYO lunch)
- **Location:** Meeting Room 3

An online training option is also available. For more information or to register, please complete a Connect Card or email Kathryn Bickerton (GWAC's Safe Church Officer) at safe.church@gwac.org.au

IMPORTANT: For all current volunteers – if you're due to complete the refresher training, which is needed every 3 years, Kathryn will send an email notification to you.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

JOIN THE KIDS MINISTRY TEAM: TRAINING OPTIONS

Have you considered joining our Kids Ministry team? Speak to Anthony who has





many openings, including the TUESDAY morning Playgroup, or "Kids@5" at the evening service. (See also about the KHC below)

Looking for training options? Join other volunteer leaders like you from around Melbourne at the Ridley Children's & Youth Day. SATURDAY 15th MARCH.

RSVP by the 10th to Anthony W, a.wheaton@gwac.org.au

KIDS HOLIDAY CLUB (KHC)

KHC = Kids Holiday Club, is recruiting for this WINTER (2 days from MON 14th JULY). Want to come DREAM what it could be? The KHC is the perfect activity to practice meeting families from the local area, serving them with fun and a message.

Come to our 1-hour volunteer INFO SESSION, no strings attached.

- SUN 23rd MARCH, 3:30pm, GWAC
- We're looking to build a team of YOUTH and ADULTS who'll be ready to host up to 40x Grade 1-6's at GWAC's once-a-year KHC.

SPARK/LEERS

The LAST Spark/LEERS session for Term 1 is SUN 30th MARCH, completing our sessions in early Genesis.

SUNDAY 6TH APRIL - 10:30AM CREATIVE FAMILY SERVICE

- Special Guest: Don Stott.
- As school holidays begin, we'll enjoy lots of songs & teaching for Kids. The theme is 'Amazing Healings' from Mark 5.

IGNITE (Youth Ministry)

Ignite youth is off to cracking start! Amanthi is settling into her role and feeling blessed by the caring and talented Youth Leaders we have at GWAC and the enthusiasm and commitment of the Youth and their families who come along each week.

We've been working through our [Peak Wisdom series](#) from Matthew's Gospel. So far, we've had an amazing worship night looking at the Beatitudes, we've eaten a lot of salt looking at the Salt & Light passages, and gotten competitive at the Lawn Bowls.

March holds more worship and community nights as well as the big





VCYC One Night Event on March 14th. This year it will be held at PLC, Burwood.

Brad was encouraged by the large number of parents who turned out for the [Parents Information Night](#) and Grant Bickerton & Julianne Marshall are again offering a parents' Bible study on Friday nights during the Ignite program for those who'd like to join.

If you have a grandchild, niece, nephew, neighbour or friend who's in grade 6 to year 12, who'd appreciate coming along to Ignite Youth and being a part of a community of fun, faith and love, please grab a brochure at the welcome desk and invite them along. We are praying that more in our community will join this great group of youth.

Amanth Lynchi, a.lynch@gwac.org.au



HAPPY 103rd B'DAY, NANCE ESMORE!!

Happy 103rd Birthday to GWAC family member, Nance Esmore!

Nance is a faithful member of our Sunday 8am congregation and a great encouragement to us all!

We thank God for you Nance!

CHURCH GARDENS: THANK YOU, RUSSELL & PATRICIA MILLS, LYNN PRYOR!

GWAC extends its heartfelt gratitude to Russell & Pat Mills, and Lynn Pryor for their many years of dedicated service in maintaining the church gardens. Their hard work & commitment have helped create a beautiful and welcoming environment for the church community. We pray that God will bless them in the next season of their lives.

DON'T MISS!

This Saturday 1st March: Train Your Brain (TYB)

- Topic for the Month: we will be following the health theme in March with Brian Stokes, who will focus on First Aid
- 9.30am – 12 Noon (registration from 9am)





Mondays at 1.30pm (except public holidays): Easy Does It (EDI)

EDI runs on Mondays at 1.30pm, in the Hall (stadium).

Note: A reminder that there will be no EDI on March 10 (Labour Day holiday).

Saturday 8th March & 12th April- 'Crafts of Care' - Knit, Sew & Craft Afternoons

- 1.30 - 4pm. Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
- Includes creating knitted shawls, beanies and knee rugs and sewing pocket prayer quilts to support GWAC's Pastoral Care ministry. See church notice board for more details. All welcome (including beginner knitters 😊)!

Thursday, 27th March: Mother's Union & Friends

- The next meeting is on March 27, (1.30pm MR 1&2), A time of Lenten reflection
- Enjoy afternoon tea and fellowship.:

[A note about MU & Friends from Lynn Pryor \(President MU & Friends\)](#)

MU & Friends is a group of women and men who meet for worship and fellowship once a month. Often, we have opportunity to learn about community services. Currently we meet on the fourth Thursday of each month (1.30pm in MR1/2). We are not a Seniors only ministry; we welcome people of all ages to join us.

MU is a worldwide organisation- Mothers Union seeks to share Christ's love by encouraging, strengthening and supporting marriage and family life; maintaining a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service; promoting conditions in society that favour stable family life and the protection of children; and helping those whose families have met with adversity.

We would love to have younger people join us in our fellowship and support those in our world who need encouragement and support.

Enquiries to Robin Hickson 0419 611 085 or Lynn Pryor 0401 257 647.

Friday Mornings: Prayer Meeting (With Breakfast)

Please join us on Fridays in [Meeting room 1 & 2 from 7am](#) for toast, muffins, hot drinks, and PRAYER. Come when you can and leave when you must.





Saturday 29th March: Working Bee

The next Working Bee at GWAC will be on Saturday 29th of March starting at 8.30am till lunchtime, with morning tea at about 10.30am.

Jobs include:

- Cleaning Garden Beds around the Complex
- Mulching some garden beds
- Clearing out some drains around the site
- Other jobs to come as we get closer to the day, including inside jobs.

DO YOU NEED MULCH?



We have a pile of mulch near the east (top) end of the car park. Feel free to take some for your home if you'd like.

VALE GLENYS PULS

Dear Friends, Glenys Puls, a member of our church community, has died and her Funeral Service will be held at GWAC, 10am Friday 7th March. Following refreshments, the family will travel to the Geelong Cemetery for the burial. Please keep the family in your prayers. The service will also be livestreamed.

(Bp) John Harrower





PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE- MARCH 2025

Thank you for praying for the Parish Council Planning Day which was on Sat 1st February. It was an exciting day with significant unity in what we discussed. Below is a summary of our discussions.

Future visioning:

- Currently children/youth/families are seriously lacking in the GWAC community. Vision is of a multi-generational church that loves one another. Mentoring of all generations.
- Intentionally asking all people to be serve in one area – using their gifts as part of their discipleship
- Ministry of building the kingdom of God at GWAC through tithing, using gifts, loving one another and sharing the gospel.
- A church that is marked by its 'openness' and 'outwardness' to newcomers, totally relevant to the community (especially youth), engaged with the local community resulting in gospel mission opportunities, and known as a safe place to come.
- A church that is united in Christ and His mission locally and overseas.
- The Mandarin congregation is totally integrated into the ministry of GWAC.

PC Action items:

- Mentoring- how can we encourage/establish inter-generational mentoring
- Encouraging people to volunteer-make it easy, follow-up all offers, keep selection based on suitability
- Prayer- must be the basis. Encourage attendance at prayer meetings on Friday morning & Sunday before 5pm service,
- Web site and social media-does the use of the tools need a revamp?
- Signage- how can we improve this as well as social media presence
- Continue to develop TEAMS resource channel to facilitate ministry
- 5pm hospitality works well. How can this be improved and extended to all services

Summary: There was complete agreement that the focus needs to be reaching out to the community, with a particular focus on children, families, and youth.





FINANCE UPDATE

Income & Expenses: Oct23-Feb25	
	\$
Income	\$317,023
Expenses	\$325,293
Shortfall	(\$8,270)

The shortfall for the first 4 months of the year is \$8,270.

Thank you for your continued partnership in the ministries and missions of GWAC. We are grateful for your continued support and generosity.

FOR THE MANDARIN SPEAKING COMMUNITY

Let's Learn English Class

- Every Sunday: 12.15 – 1.30pm, GWAC

ALPHA Course (8 sessions, Mandarin congregation only)

ALPHA Course will continue in March, and a light lunch will be provided by volunteers from the Mandarin Congregation.

- Date & Time: 8 Sundays, starting Sunday 23 Feb, 2pm – 3.30pm
- Where: Meeting Room-3
- Contact: Ginger, g.chen@gwac.org.au if you're interested.

Joshua Life Group Bible Study

Every fortnight, Joshua life group gathers to learn the Bible, encourage each other, and grow together in God. Everyone in the Mandarin congregation is welcome.

- When: 1st and 3rd Sunday, 1:30pm-3pm (after worship and lunch)
- Where: Stadium
- Contact: Wei Cheng and Sean





Chinese Brothers' Fellowship

- When: Every Tuesday, 7:15pm-9pm
- Where: Meeting Room-3
- Contact: Sean Hsien, Anthony Zhao.

Chinese Sisters' Fellowship

- When: Every 1st and 3rd Thursday, 7pm-9pm
- Where: Meeting Room-3
- Contact: Wei Cheng Foo and Joanna Zhou.

Chinese Translation Ministry

We are going to have the Chinese version of GWAC happenings ready to distribute to our Mandarin congregation and others who need from March. Praise God for the service of our translation team.

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES @ GWAC

Sunday English Services: [Ways to Love your Church \(sermon series\)](#)

Ways To love your Church (contd... from Feb)		
2 March	1 Peter 2:9-10	• Speaker: Maria Brand
Mark Sermon Series		
9 March	Mark 1:14-20	• Speaker: Maria Brand
16 March	Mark 2	• Speaker: Liz Folland
23 March	Mark 3:7-19, Mark 3:20-35	• Speaker: Stephen Abbott
30 March	Mark 4	• Speaker: Maria Brand
6 April	Mark 5:31-43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8am Speaker: Maria Brand • 10.30am Speaker: Guest • 5pm Speaker: Amanthi Lynch





13 April (Palm Sunday)	Mark 11:1-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8am Speaker: Amanthi Lynch • 10.30am Speaker: Genghua Zhang • 5pm Speaker: Amanthi Lynch
18 April (Good Friday)	Mark 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker: Brad Jackson
20 April (Easter Sunday)	Mark 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker: Maria Brand

Wednesday English 10am Service: Series Theme: 'God's Invitation'

5 Mar	2 Corinthians 5:17 – 6:2 Psalm 51:1-17	ASH WEDNESDAY 'Peace with God – Our Hope'	Speaker: John Harrower
12 Mar	Luke 4: 1-13	<u>Lent Series: Jesus Our Hope</u> Jesus was: Tempted	Speaker: John Harrower
19 Mar	Luke 4: 14-30	Jesus was: Rejected	Speaker: Brad Jackson
26 Mar	Luke 4: 31-44	Jesus was: Identified	Speaker: Amanthi Lynch
2 Apr	Luke 23: 32-43	Jesus was: Trusted	Speaker: John Harrower
9 Apr	John 13: 1-17	Jesus was: Loved	Speaker: John Harrower

Blessings,

Maria Brand | Lead Minister (Vicar)

