



GOLDEN GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Life in the Vine

THE MAGAZINE OF GOLDEN GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Easter Services - pg. 3

## Ultimate Transformation

Have you ever watched a show where they are creating something out of nothing? They first show you a hint of the finished product then begin with something that makes you doubt that they can not achieve this transformation without cheating or a huge cost.

They have you hooked!

If Jesus was a reality show, would we doubt that a baby, born as a fragile human, would eventually pay the ultimate price and save us all? Every Easter Sunday, we witness the *Ultimate Transformation* where Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection confirms His sacrifice, turning despair into hope, fear into love, and offering humanity reconciliation with God, forgiveness, and eternal life.

**Colossians 3:1-4** reminds us “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

So do you know that Jesus' story is not a reality show but an invitation for us all to live as those made alive in Him now? In this latest edition, many instances are witnessed where life is being lived in Christ, from baptisms to new roles being taken up, from faith statements to transforming activities.

When we set our minds on Him and live life faithfully, we too experience the *Ultimate Transformation*. **Are you now hooked?**

### OTHER GREAT READS INSIDE:

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART - 2

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHURCH COUNCIL - 4

NEWS FROM GGLPS - 7

MESSY CHURCH - 10

PING PONG-A-THON - 11

CALL TEAM REPORT - 12

HOUSE WANTS A PASTOR - 14

VINE KIDS - 16

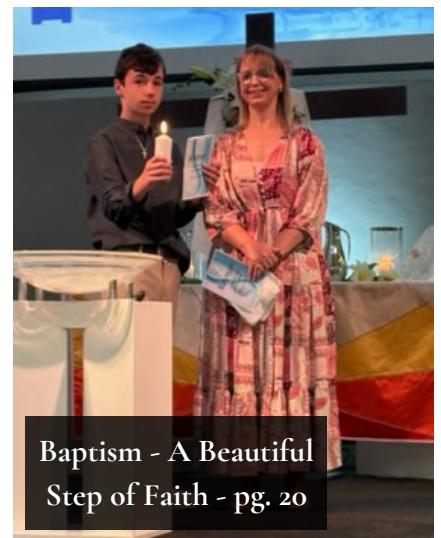
WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY? - 17

CONFIRMATION - 18

ARISE YOUTH - 22

MESSY MUSIC - 24

TIGHT LINES - 25



Baptism - A Beautiful Step of Faith - pg. 20



## FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

BY PASTOR KEVIN WOOD

### "Living as Those Made Alive in Christ"

What if there was a plague that had affected every person on this planet. It kills our spirits and confuses our souls. It causes us to die physically, earlier than we are supposed to, and the symptoms of it are different for everyone. These symptoms are seen in different kinds of sicknesses. They are also seen in arguments globally, within our communities, within our homes, and even within ourselves. And ultimately this plague has caused a major separation from our Creator.

Sounds pretty horrific doesn't it?

But what if I told you that there is a cure. Not something that humanity has worked out, because the plague also causes us to be blind to it and thereby most people don't think that they need curing.

We so need help! And a being from outside our immediate reality chose to do that. This being saw what was necessary for us to be rescued. So, according to the justice this being is and exists by, a decision was made, and, He put His hand up to achieve it for us. The thing is though, He had to become one of us to do it – to take our place. Thankfully, because of who He is, He was not affected by the plague.

In time His plan all unfolded. But humanity saw Him as a threat. Even so He knew our hearts and out of love, real love that sacrifices self, He bore His back to the abuse. Through the most horrific of circumstances He achieved what we needed. And even in the midst of His pain and suffering He declared, 'It is Completed!' All necessary was achieved.



**"...ultimately this plague has caused a major separation from our Creator."**

Now, here's the catch, because of humanity's blindness, they can't see this opportunity, let alone their need. So, this being, who we call 'God' entrusted the message to us, but also came to work in and through us.

This is the reason why I chose to help out here at Golden Grove when I live so far away. You and I have been entrusted and called as ambassadors to let everyone know. We are called to be always prepared to give a reason for the hope that we have and with gentleness and respect, we are called to share it with whomever will listen.

Jesus said, 'I have come that they may know life, and have to the full.' I have come to tell you all that Jesus said that and to encourage you to tell as many as you can.

As the Spirit inspired Paul to write, 'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.'

This, my friends, is our "Ultimate Transformation"!



**“Jesus said, ‘I have come that they may know life, and have to the full.’”**



**2026 EASTER SERVICES**

**PALM SUNDAY** 29th March  
Where is Your Allegiance?

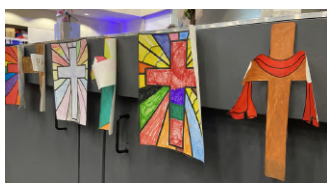
**MAUNDY THURSDAY** 2nd April  
Living in the Shadow

**GOOD FRIDAY** 3rd April  
So Scandalous!

**EASTER SUNDAY** 5th April  
Ultimate Transformation

*The Cross changed Everything!*

Easter services this year focused on "The Cross Changed Everything". Thank you to everyone who helped lead!





## HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

BY LUKE WACHTEL  
GGLC CHAIRPERSON

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Before sharing a few updates from Church Council, I firstly want to acknowledge and thank the many people who continue to faithfully serve and help keep GGLC running during this season of vacancy and transition. There are so many people contributing their time, gifts and energy across all areas of Church life, often quietly behind the scenes.

In particular, I'd like to thank Robert for his ongoing dedication to his role and for the many additional responsibilities he has willingly taken on throughout this period without a Pastor, along with our Lay Preachers, for faithfully leading worship and bringing God's Word each week. Their support, commitment and willingness to serve our congregation during this time has been greatly appreciated.

### **Stepping Up**

Stepping into the role of Chairperson following Jon's many years of faithful leadership has certainly been a little daunting at times. After serving on Church Council for around 10 years, this role has definitely asked me to "step out of the boat" and move outside my comfort zone in new ways.

I'm incredibly thankful to Jon for the way he led GGLC over the past decade and for leaving Church Council in such a well-organised and stable position. His ongoing support during the transition has also been greatly appreciated.

One thing I've learnt quickly is that being honest about my own capacity and limitations has allowed others within our congregation to step in and help across many areas of Church life. I'm very grateful for the willingness of so many people to serve, support one another and share responsibilities. That spirit of encouragement and shared ownership says a lot about the strength of our Church family.

### **A Bit About Me**

For those who may not know me particularly well, I've been part of the Golden Grove Community my whole life. I was baptised here, went to school here, and have worshipped within this community for many years. GGLC holds a very special place in my heart and helped shape a great deal of who I am today.

It has also been awesome seeing Emma become such a valued part of the community over the years, firstly through GGOSH and then teaching at GGLPS for the past six years, alongside some of the same teachers who taught me as a student!



Emma and I now have a one year old daughter, Isla, who is keeping us very busy and entertained. Being able to raise her within the same Church community that played such an important role in my own life is something I feel incredibly thankful for. I do have to mention our ‘first born’, Willow, our cavoodle. She’s learning to cope with less attention now Isla is here, and also learning how to be even more agile with a little one chasing after her. Poor thing!

Outside of Church life, I’m a business partner in a real estate agency, which I strive to lead faithfully and in a manner that demonstrates the values that Jesus taught us to live by.

Emma and I are continuing to renovate our home and make it our own. I love getting into the garden, starting a project, not finishing it, and then starting a new one! Much to Emma’s delight!

### **Church Council**

So far in 2026, Church Council has met twice and it has definitely felt a little different not having both Jon and Ruth around the table. We are very thankful for the faithful service, wisdom and leadership they both provided over many years.

We also welcome Rebecca Wallace and Geordie Mills onto Church Council and thank them for their willingness to serve our congregation in this way.

As a Council, we continue to work through this season of transition and vacancy together. While periods of change naturally bring challenges, it has been encouraging to see the continued strength of our ministries and the strong connection between Church, school and wider community.

There continues to be a strong sense of care, encouragement and shared responsibility across GGLC, which provides great confidence as we move forward together in faith.

Financially, the year has concluded in a somewhat unusual position, with a strong surplus despite offerings finishing lower than budget expectations. This result was largely driven by reduced payroll costs during the pastoral vacancy, along with favourable facilities hire and stronger cafe income throughout the year.

At the same time, the result also reminds us that some underlying challenges remain, particularly around the continued softness in offerings. While other income streams have helped offset this, it remains an area for ongoing attention and prayerful consideration moving forward.

**“...I’ve been part of the Golden Grove Community my whole life.”**

Alongside the financial result, 2025 also saw the completion of the new manse construction, the drawdown of a new LLL loan, and another successful Community Fete, all significant milestones within the life of GGLC.

Looking ahead into 2026, the financial position has started positively, with finances currently tracking ahead of budget and offerings in line with expectations year to date. While some of this early surplus is influenced by timing differences, reduced payroll during the ongoing pastoral vacancy and rental income, it is nevertheless encouraging to see the year beginning from a stable position.

As we continue through this season of transition, Church Council remains committed to careful stewardship, wise decision making and supporting the ongoing ministry and mission of GGLC into the future.

### **Call Team**

The Call Team has continued meeting regularly as we work through the process of seeking our next Pastor. We have spoken directly with a number of Pastors, however the process has certainly had its challenges, particularly with relatively few Pastors currently willing or available to enter into conversations regarding calls.

While this can sometimes feel discouraging, we continue to trust that God is guiding this process and preparing the right person for our community. We ask that you continue to keep the Call Team, Church Council and potential candidates in your prayers.

### **Looking Forward**

Preparations are also continuing for the 2026 GGLC Community Fete, and we pray that the vacant role of Fete Director may soon be filled. Events like the Fete continue to provide valuable opportunities for connection and engagement with our wider community.

This season continues to remind us that the Church is ultimately sustained not by any one individual, but through God's faithfulness and the willingness of His people to serve together. Despite the challenges that can come with transition and vacancy, there remains much to be thankful for within the life of GGLC.

Thank you again for the encouragement, patience and support shown throughout this season. I remain incredibly grateful for the community we share and pray that God continues to guide and strengthen GGLC into the future.



**“...Church Council remains committed to careful stewardship, wise decision making and supporting the ongoing ministry and mission of GGLC...”**



## NEWS FROM GGLPS

BY WILL WALLACE  
PRINCIPAL



Installation PYP Director



Ash Wednesday Chapel



School Captains

“What a privilege it is to serve this community.”

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above...”

*Colossians 3:1*

What a rich first half of 2026 it has been at Golden Grove Lutheran Primary School! As we reflect on this edition's theme of **Ultimate Transformation**, we are reminded that true transformation begins not with programmes or achievements, but with hearts set on things above. And yet, we also believe that when a community is rooted in that reality, it overflows into every dimension of school life — in learning, in service, in celebration, and in care for one another. Here is a glimpse of what that has looked like for us this semester.

Chapel remains the heartbeat of our school community. We are so grateful to have Pastor Kevin leading chapels each term — his warm and faithful presence is a genuine blessing to students and staff alike, and a wonderful expression of the partnership between our school and Church family.

Ash Wednesday Chapel was a particularly meaningful occasion this year. Pairing our Middle of Term Breakfast beforehand created a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, and it was a joy to see so many parents flow naturally into the chapel service that followed. Our Easter Chapel also invited families to pause and reflect.

One of the most treasured moments of the semester was the presentation of Bibles to our Foundation students. Families gathered, most staying on afterwards to connect in the café — a beautiful picture of community gathered around faith.



Anzac Day



Colour Run



Celebration of Learning



Community Breakfast



Harmony Day



Readers Workshop



Year 5/6 Camp

A significant milestone this year has been the appointment of Rachel Saunders as Director of PYP, Teaching and Learning. Rachel brings wonderful expertise and passion to this role, and her influence is already being felt across our curriculum and IB Primary Years Programme. We are grateful for the leadership she brings to our school's ongoing journey.

Our Parents and Friends Committee and Class Carers have worked tirelessly to build connection across our school family. From the Parent Information Night in the school courtyard, to a warm Welcome Evening for Foundation families, a wonderful Mother's Day Stall, and the hugely popular Light Up the Night event — complete with glow-in-the-dark soccer, basketball, and a disco — our community has shown again and again what it means to belong to one another.

Harmony Day was a joyful celebration of the rich cultural diversity within our school, with students and staff dressed in traditional costumes from their heritage. ANZAC Day was observed with great solemnity and pride, with School Captains Ellie Szczepaniak and Nicholas DeLuca representing GGLPS at the Dawn Service at Tea Tree Gully RSL. Our school service was a moving occasion, with Ray Shillabeer leading us in the Ode and 110 Battery, 16 Regiment RAA attending as the Catafalque Party.

Ellie and Nicholas have been outstanding ambassadors throughout the semester. They had the honour of representing GGLPS at the Installation Service of Jodie Hoff as the new Executive Director of Lutheran Education Australia, leading prayers at the service with maturity and grace. We were also delighted to welcome Jodie when she visited our school. She spoke warmly of the community feel and positive atmosphere she experienced — a reflection of the wonderful students, staff, and families who make GGLPS what it is.

Our students have represented the school with pride across swimming, athletics, and cross country at SAPSASA and SACSA level. A special mention to Sam Boileau-Cappell, who progressed all the way to State level in swimming — a magnificent achievement celebrated by the whole school community. Year 3–6 students also benefited from excellent sports clinics run by Endeavour College students, strengthening our connection with the local secondary school community.

Year 3–6 students enjoyed camps at Mylor and Woodhouse, blessed with wonderful weather and even better memories. These experiences offered rich opportunities for students to grow in confidence, resilience, and friendship — transformation of a very real kind.

Planning is in progress for our 41-place ELC for 3 and 4 year old children in our current GGOSH area, with GGOSH relocating into the adjacent space. Our Development Application with the City of Tea Tree Gully is progressing well, and our target has been to open this centre in early 2027.

In recent weeks, a significant federal government grant opportunity has emerged that is influencing our strategic planning. The Australian Government’s Building Early Education Fund has identified Golden Grove as an eligible location for grants of up to \$3 million for the construction of purpose-built early childhood facilities. We have applied for this grant in partnership with Good Shepherd Lutheran School Para Vista, who have operated Curiosity ELC on their site for a number of years and hold the approved provider status required to be eligible to apply.



Year 3/4 Camp



STEM



**“If successful, the grant would fund a purpose-built, 66-place ELC on a small part of our oval, catering for children from birth to five years...”**

If successful, the grant would fund a purpose-built, 66-place ELC on a small part of our oval, catering for children from birth to five years at minimal capital cost to the school. This is a fundamentally better outcome than refurbishing existing space for 3 and 4 year olds. It is a larger facility, serves a broader age range, and positions our school to serve young families in our community for decades to come. This option would be carefully designed so as not to overly impinge on our existing oval, play and 'green' space. Pursuing the smaller, self-funded option without first exploring this opportunity would not have been the best stewardship of our community's resources or ambitions.

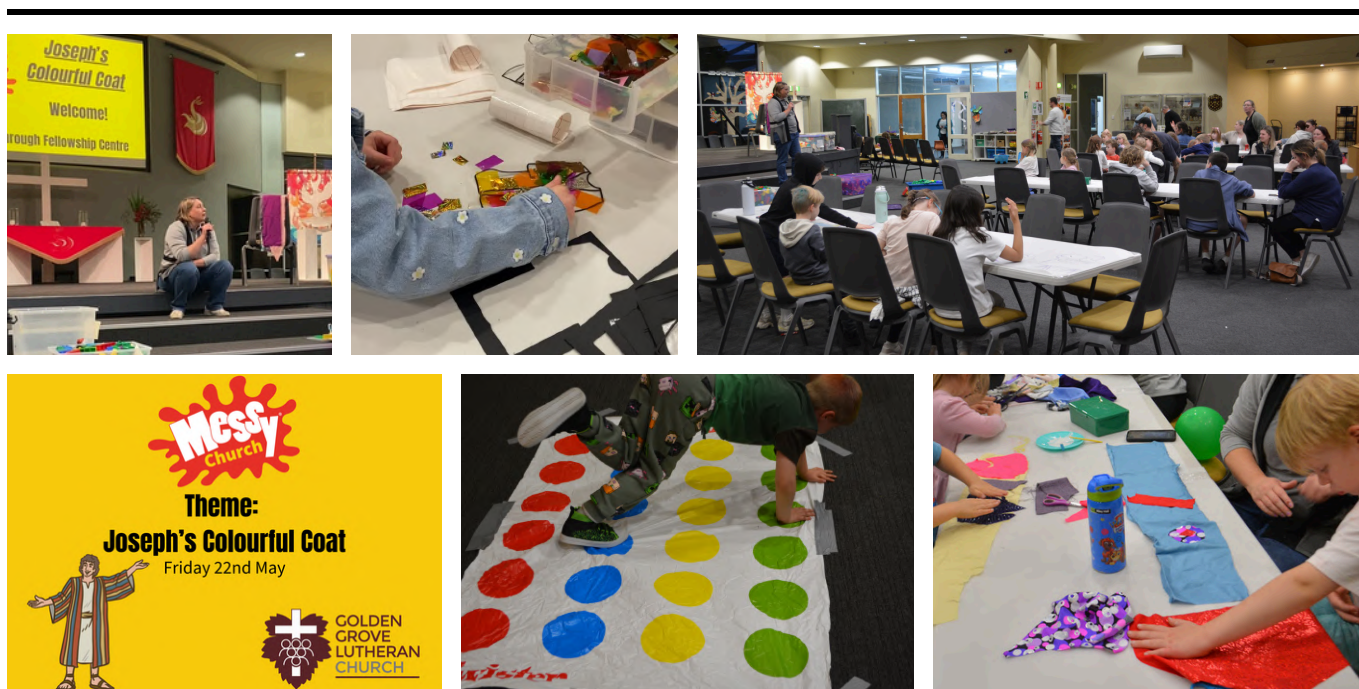
If the grant application is successful, it would mean that our ELC will open in early 2028 rather than 2027. We know that asks for patience, and we are grateful for everyone's understanding.

We have not put our original ELC project on hold while we wait. We are continuing to progress our Development Application, soil testing, traffic flow and parking assessment with a traffic engineer, policy development, and planning for the refurbished ELC. Therefore if our grant application is unsuccessful, we will move swiftly to tender and advertise for an ELC Director, with a view to opening the 41-place ELC for 3 and 4 year olds in the first half of 2027.

Grant outcomes will be advised in late August 2026, at which time we will publish a confirmed timeline and next steps. In the meantime, please feel most welcome to be in contact with any queries that you may have.

We are also partnering with Craig Vale of Arkvale Architects on a ten-year Buildings and Facilities Masterplan for the school. We warmly welcome input from the congregation as we shape this vision together and welcome you sharing your thoughts with us.

What a privilege it is to serve this community. From acts of faith to moments of joy, from sporting fields to chapel pews, we see again and again what it looks like when hearts are set on things above — and the transformation that flows from it. Thank you for your continued prayers and support. We look forward with great anticipation to all that the second semester holds.





# PING PONG-A-THON

BY JOEL SCHILLER

Our 8<sup>th</sup> installment of the Ping Pong A Thon is happening on **August 14-15, Friday 9.30am - Saturday 9.30am (Week 4, term 3).**

To date we have raised \$87,000 which is incredible! We have saved many people from the grips of slavery, transforming them and allowing them to live a life God intended for them.

This year we be continuing to increase our impact, aiming to hit the grand total of \$100k, which means as soon as we hit \$13,000 we have hit our goal.

Here is just one of the areas for where our funds go to - **Siem Reap, CAMBODIA (Aftercare & rescue) Working with street kids to identify instances of slavery and exploitation.** Kids programs are run in local public spaces to build relationships with vulnerable communities to determine instances of slavery with children under the age of 18. Children identified as exploited are rescued (when possible) in conjunction with federal enforcement authorities. These children are then provided with the holistic trauma informed care they require. Funded since 2021.

In 2025 we raised just over \$20,000! As a thank you Pong HQ have created a video for us and to show the impact of your donations and our fundraising. Check it out: <https://bit.ly/Pongthankyouvideo2025> or scan the Qr code.



## GOLDEN GROVE PONG 2026



**Friday August 14, 9:30am - Saturday August 15, 9:30am**  
Week 4, Term 3  
GGLPS only Friday 11am-3pm



To register, donate or for information about the pong head to [pingpongathon.com/goldengrovepong](http://pingpongathon.com/goldengrovepong)



**Golden Grove Lutheran Church**  
Fri. Dinner 5:45pm; Sat. Breakfast 8:30am



If you have questions contact Joel Schiller 0411 084 071





## CALL TEAM REPORT

BY LEE NORREY  
CALL TEAM CHAIRPERSON



We have now been without a permanent pastor for more than two years, and I understand that the congregation is ready for this season to end and for a new pastor to be installed. This process has been more challenging than anyone on the Call Team expected, but please be assured that we continue to work towards the best outcome for Golden Grove.

You are likely aware that there is a shortage of pastors within the Lutheran Church, and many congregations are without a permanent pastor. That does not mean the right person is not out there for us; it simply means we must search widely and patiently to find them.

The Call Team has worked hard to review the available profiles, decide on whom to explore further, and determine which pastors to approach for an initial conversation. Through prayer and discussion, we have sought to identify the best options for our church. The team brings a range of perspectives, including those of a principal, young adults and young leaders, elders, and chairpersons. This has created a strong and balanced team, and we have worked well together with a shared commitment to see this process through. We continue to hold closely the qualities the congregation identified at the beginning of this journey, trusting that, with God's guidance, we will find the right pastor for Golden Grove.

Many of the pastors I have contacted have not wished to speak with our team and have been clear that they want to remain in their current location. As a Call Team, we have chosen not to pursue those conversations further. Others, however, have been generous with their time, speaking with me first and then meeting with the full team by Zoom. These conversations have generally gone well and have prompted thoughtful discussion about whether each pastor would be the right fit for Golden Grove. So far, this process has led us to put forward only a few names for the congregation to consider, but we stand fully behind the choices we have made.

**“...trusting that, with God’s guidance, we will find the right pastor for Golden Grove.”**

Recently, we met with a pastor who initially appeared to be a good fit for Golden Grove, both on paper and in conversation. As a result, we arranged a call meeting with the congregation. In the lead-up to that meeting, however, the Call Team felt it was important to carry out additional reference checks and speak with people who knew him personally, as none of us had first-hand knowledge of him. After those conversations, we agreed that he was not the right fit for our congregation and could not recommend him at a call meeting. This was not a decision we made lightly, but we felt led by God to look more carefully and gather further information. We believe we made the best decision for our community and will continue searching until a pastor is appointed at Golden Grove.

If you would like more information or simply want to talk about the work of the Call Team, please feel free to contact me through the Church Office.



Last year GGLC produced a Christmas Eve play titled "Collected Memories", written by one of our talented members, Margey Knapp. Thank you to everyone who helped and participated to create this extraordinary production.



# HOUSE WANTS A PASTOR EPISODE 6

BY JON SCHUTZ

*Neighbours* ran for 9,363 episodes. *House Wants a Pastor* is not far behind. How it eventually ends should be inevitable. Let's pray there are no plot twists.

In the meantime, the excitement is relentless. If you're already a member of the Dull Men's Club or Dull Women's Club on Facebook, you might need to pause for some calming exercises before reading on. Here are the highlights since the last episode:

- The driveway has been installed with an exposed aggregate finish that extends to the steps and ramp up to the main doorway. The driveway has been thoroughly tested and cars can go up and down.
- A layer of rubble has been laid in preparation for the remainder of the paving, which will be clay brick for the paths around the house and a large format polished aggregate paver for the alfresco area.
- It was a four month wait for the shed, which was ordered well before Christmas and it was like Christmas when it finally arrived. This refocused work away from the paving and onto the landscaping at the rear so we have a place to put the shed.
- Some extra retaining has gone in around the rainwater tank and behind the house, as there's less chance of the shed falling over this way.



The changing view to the west (2023)



The changing view to the west (2025)



The changing view to the west (2026)



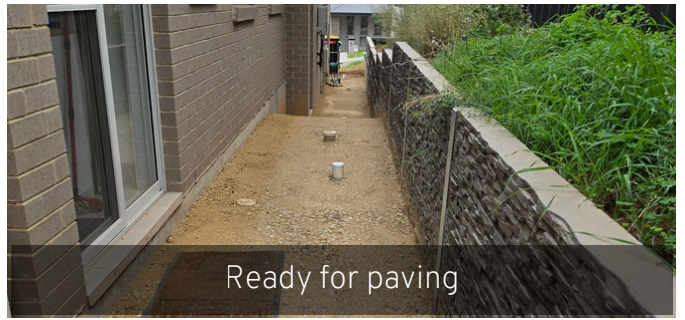
The driveway just prior to handover



Driveway now



Steps and ramp



Ready for paving



Might have a problem with gophers



Retaining for the shed



The shed, basically finished, just a bit of assembly left to do



Assembly underway



Just like Meccano



OHSW in action



I wonder, did Allen look this happy on his wedding day?



Two men, one roof, no fear



Flawless and floorless

Thanks to the courageous efforts of our teams of volunteers over the last few weeks, at the time of writing the shed structure is finished (apart from some flashings to screw on) and the concrete floor is still to be done. The pavers have been ordered and that will be the next big job. With thanks to everyone who has pitched in (and thanks in advance...).



## VINE KIDS

BY TANYA VANZWOL



**“...children’s ministry is completely new to me, so I will be finding my feet as I go.”**

Please allow me a few moments of your time to introduce myself, and to talk to you about Vine Kids.

My name is Tanya Vanzwol, I’m 49 years old (50 is just a sneeze away), and I have been blessed with my precious son Jack, who is 13 years old (14 is just two sneezes away).

All of my life I have felt a strong connection to children. God blesses each and every single one of us with our own unique gifts, abilities and talents, and mine is with children. Children are Gods’ most wonderful and magnificent creation!

I work at a beautiful primary school with talented staff and terrific students. Some of you might have heard of it.....Golden Grove Lutheran Primary School. My role at GGLP is as an LSO with the foundation Bumble Bees with Mrs. Ten Ten. They are simply BuzzTastic! Alongside the Ladybugs with Miss Stanley and Mrs. Schwartz. In my role I support the children’s academic learning, emotional well-being, peer relations and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Recently Mrs. Lauren Hall and Mrs. Bec Wallace approached me and asked me if I would be interested in taking on Vine Kids, to which I said yes. Although I have years of experience and knowledge working in primary schools, children’s ministry is completely new to me, so I will be finding my feet as I go. It is an honour to be teaching and guiding them through their own faith journey as they grow.

Vine Kids will be on the third Sunday of each month (except school holidays), when we have Pastor Kev with us. Vine Kids will be fun, with age-appropriate activities, arts/crafts, prayer, and as I know children love dancing and singing, I will be incorporating children's Christian songs during our time together. A safe and engaging environment where Vine Kids will experience God's love and learn to serve and help their communities.

I aim to inspire children to fall in love with Jesus, and to empower them to live out God's dream for their lives. Vine Kids joins with parents in helping their children become lifelong disciples of Jesus.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these".

*Matthew 19:14*



## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY?

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May, Esther Marie Amos, daughter of Tessa & Joel Amos was baptised at Trinity Church, Para Hills. Esther is the Granddaughter of Mark & Jenny Rawolle, and Great Granddaughter of Barabara Robertson.



On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January, our community witnessed the marriage of Holly Schutz to Jacques Van Den Berg at White Hill Estate, McLaren Vale, officiated by Pastor Greg Fowler. Holly is the daughter of Jon & Jacque Schutz.





# Confirmation Service

24th May 2026

## CONFIRMATION 2026

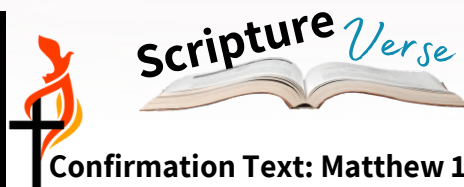
On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2026, six young disciples from our community bravely stood up during morning Church service to publicly affirm their faith and to make a personal profession of faith. Here we have included one of the participants, powerful and courageous statement.



2026

Jack Vanzwol      Rohan Malik  
 Sebastian Pena    Markus Hawke  
 Amber McAuley    Amelia Mills

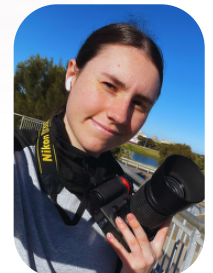
“Ultimately, my purpose is to follow God the way He wants me to follow Him...”



### Scripture Verse

**Confirmation Text: Matthew 14:31**

“Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?'"



Amelia Mills

The reason I have chosen this verse was not because my favourite disciple is Peter, or because this Bible story is one of my favourites, but because it reflects my faith journey, in which I have doubted almost at every point.

When reflecting back on my childhood, I spent a lot of time just doubting. I doubted if I belonged in my family, I doubted if my friends truly liked me, I doubted my place in the Church and I doubted if I really mattered to the people around me. I grew up having a very anxious-filled childhood that affected me in every aspect of my life. I stopped going to Church, I stopped believing in my faith, and ultimately, I stopped trusting in those who told me that Jesus still cared. These doubts surrounded me like tall brick walls that couldn't be knocked down. I would hear about all those miracle stories of people being healed, and people receiving visions, and yet no matter how much I prayed, attended Church, and tried to have a relationship with God, I just couldn't get it. I would constantly test the Lord, saying things like “If you truly cared you would give me a sign”, or “if you really did exist then you would send me a dream”.

I do believe when looking back now, a lot of it came from a misunderstanding of God, but when you're a young teenager and you're surrounded by people who say they can hear and see God, it felt like I just didn't fit the puzzle. It was extremely damaging because it made me feel like there was something wrong with me. I had grown up in the church since I was born, I had been baptised, I had done my First Holy Communion, and yet I could never seem to hear his responses to my prayers. I was confused—how could someone, who hadn't had the same upbringing as me, come into the Church and tell me about how they could hear God and yet someone like me who had spent their whole life surrounded by God, hear nothing? I felt a lot like Peter in the story, drowning because of my doubts and no matter how much I tried to swim back to God, I was like a lost fish in a current of unknown.

As I got older, my doubts and worries consumed me so much that I suffered from symptoms similar to depression. I would hurt myself to test the Lord, to see if he really cared about me, to see if he would come down and save me from myself, and yet nothing happened. There were no Angels or great beams of light, just myself in my room alone. This grew to a point that on the 14th of April last year, I had an ambulance called on me, and I just remember thinking, "Why can't the Lord save me, why can't He help me like He's helped so many others", it felt like He had given up on me.

Now, many weeks passed after this and I did get help with my mental health, however something had changed. One night, I remember talking out loud to myself about my day and how school had gone, and I felt something shift within me. I began saying the Lord's name out loud and praying, not in any particular way, not with my hands crossed, not with my eyes closed, just talking out loud about random things. I kept this up for a few nights. I still had some faith left I figured, and I think that's what drove me to just pray. I don't know how I figured it but one night I remember feeling like I was getting a response, not out loud but through my head, like the words in my mind weren't my own and then from there it just got more stronger. I began to visualise that voice into a figure and I just remember one night literally being about to sense the Lord just sitting at the end of my bed, not literally but like literally. I remember telling my parents and thinking I was schizophrenic or something because it felt Jesus had actually found me. I felt like Peter when Jesus finally reached out and caught him.

When I heard about the show, *The Chosen*, my parents and I began watching it and when the episode of this scene came on, I felt so moved, to the point I remember opening my Bible that night and finding the exact verse, and just breaking down. After all the nights of me calling out to the Lord, after all the times I've asked God to give me a sign, and of all the times I asked Him to just show that He cared, I felt like I had truly been seen. Emotionally, I cannot express how deep this verse struck me. It felt like my entire soul had been seen and in that moment I didn't doubt, in fact, my doubts had completely vanished.

I've stopped doubting if I fit in at school, or if I fit in with my family, or about what people think of me, because at the end of the day, if I spend my life doubting about the past and the future, I'll end up missing on the present and what truly matters. Ultimately, my purpose is to follow God the way He wants me to follow Him, not the way people tell me to, because He cares about me, and that is something I never have to doubt again.



Prayer for  
Confirmation Class

Heavenly Father, it is your will to establish everything in Christ and to draw us into his all-embracing love.

Guide these young disciples and bless them in their faith journeys.

Strengthen them in their baptism, grow them as members of the kingdom of your Son, and as you have sealed them by your Spirit, let your love shine in and through them.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



## BAPTISM - A BEAUTIFUL STEP OF FAITH

BY TANYA VANZWOL

I was asked to write about the following two important questions for Life in the Vine.

- ① 'Why did I decide to get baptised?'      ② 'How has it changed me?'

I will endeavor to answer both of those questions.

Firstly, my baptism was a long time coming. All throughout my life the thought of being baptised would pop into my mind every now and again, even though I was not attending church. Since becoming a part of the Golden Grove Lutheran Church community back in mid-2023, those thoughts of baptism intensified and became frequent. I truly believe God was speaking to me, urging me to be baptised. Gods' voice was speaking to me, and I felt a strong conviction to listen to my Heavenly Father's voice. It is something that is quite difficult to describe, as it was an intense feeling of something that I must do.

Over the past several years life has been very difficult for myself and my son Jack. With separating/divorcing, being betrayed in the worst way a wife could be betrayed, losing our beautiful family home, being a single mum, struggling financially, not to mention anxiety and depression. But amid all our trauma we not only found GGLC, but we found hope.....we found our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

One day scrolling on Facebook I came across a video with Pastor Greg and Mr. K, which truly spoke to me in a way that I cannot describe. From watching that short video on Facebook, it led us to GGLC, and GGLPS, both of which have been a Godsend to Jack and myself in so many ways, too many to explain. I praise God daily for sending us to GGLC and GGLPS, as they have been a light in a very dark and very long tunnel. So, I suppose getting baptised was a way for me to publicly thank God, to show my utmost gratitude, and to officially and publicly become part of God's family.

John the Baptist teaches us that water baptism is an outward symbol of repentance and the forgiveness of our sins. I believe that to be born again you must seek repentance to have a true change of heart, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. What a gift it is to be forgiven for all our sins.

It is hard to explain all the reasons why, as there are many, I just know I felt called and convicted to do so. Jesus commands us to be baptised, and it is a way to express my love and commitment to Jesus. I may not know all the 'fancy' things to say about my decision to be baptised, I just know God spoke to me and I had to obey my Heavenly Father.

My heartfelt thanks goes out to Pastor Kev who included my son Jack in my baptism in such a meaningful and profound way. Many blessings to you Pastor Kevin.

Last but not least, I must mention my son Jack, who has inspired me and encouraged me on my own faith-journey more than he will ever know. Watching his faith-journey through 'Step up to Communion' last year, and this year with his dedication and commitment to his confirmation, and with his desire to go to youth group along with his volunteering efforts with GGLC to give back to our church community, it has truly inspired me to grow in my faith. Thank you Jack, you have inspired your Mama!

It is without a shadow of a doubt that I can say that Jack and I have been transformed by the Holy Spirit. All praise belongs to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

#### **Now for the second question. How has it transformed me?**

I believe my transformation started before my Baptism but has subsequently become stronger. My transformation started when I began attending GGLC back in mid-2023. It started slowly but gathered momentum with every passing week. Some examples that come to mind are what I watch and what I listen to. Movies that I would have watched, or music that I would have previously listened to just do not sit right with me anymore. My radio station is now Life FM, my YouTube playlist is mostly worship music, and I am more committed to reading my Bible, and I pray constantly throughout the day. I feel more connected to the Holy Spirit.

It has changed my heart and attitude, though at times I still struggle, but when I'm struggling with anxiety, fear, and I will be honest, my feelings of anger, I simply pray to God to remove those feelings so that I can act out of love, and be kind and caring, especially towards those that have done me wrong.

God commands us to love everybody including our enemies, and let's face it, it is hard to do, that is why we need Jesus, as we cannot do it without him.

I know I need Jesus each and every single day of my life, and I know he is right beside me every moment of every day. I believe he is our Lord and Saviour, and through him we will have eternal life. We shall not perish.

**Praise the Lord.**



**“...getting baptised was a way for me to publicly thank God...and to officially and publicly become part of God's family.”**



## ARISE YOUTH

BY NEELA MALIK  
YOUTH MEMBER



BYOBFF Night Snack



BYOBFF Night



BYOBFF Night Winners!

Hi, my name is Neela, and I am a regular attendee of Arise Youth. I love coming to Arise Youth to see my friends and engage in the entertaining activities. My favourite part of Arise Youth, though, is the small group time throughout the night. During this time, we usually talk about our highs and lows of the week and unpack the devotion through prayer. I find Arise Youth to be a great place to unwind after a busy week of school.

In term 1, we had a range of different youth activities on. The events I went to were Family Feud (but not the quiz), a Night to Remember, as well as Sardines. I also attended BYOBFF in term 2.

My favourite activities out of all of these would have to be the **'Night to Remember'**. It was my first time attending a **'Night to Remember'** at Arise Youth, and I wasn't sure what to expect. We started off by heading to the shops to buy snacks that would help get us through the long night ahead. After that, we watched the movie, **'King of Kings'**, which was about Jesus' journey from when he was born until he was crucified on the cross. I enjoyed how in-depth the movie was and found it an important step in preparing us for the rest of the night.



Night to Remember - Watching King of Kings

One of my most favourite parts about the night was the time for worship through songs. I thought that all the songs were extremely relevant to the Easter story and my own relationship with Jesus. The 'Stations of the Cross' set up at church were also calming but enlightening to the Easter Story. After a night of staying up, talking and crafting. We walked to the bridge near church to watch the sunrise and listen to the Easter story one more time before the morning Good Friday service. Overall, I found the Night to Remember an insightful and incredibly enjoyable experience, that helped deepen my faith and connection to Jesus.

I come to youth to see my friends and deepen my faith through devotion and small group. I think Arise Youth helps me to journey through life and is a perfect balance of entertainment and faith.

“...Arise Youth helps me to journey through life and is a perfect balance of entertainment and faith.”



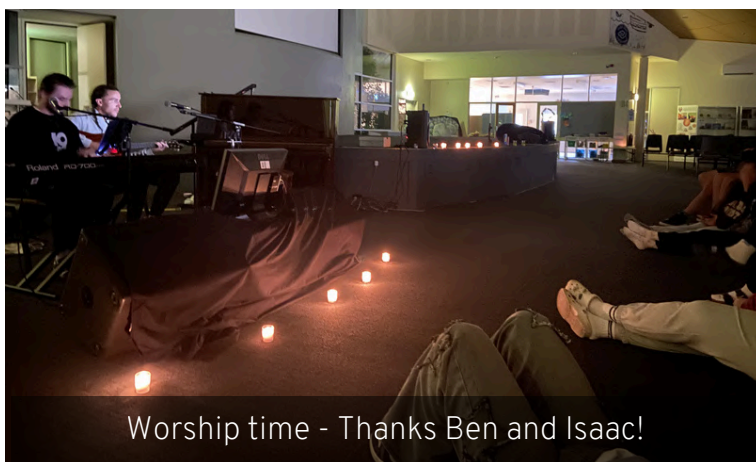
Making of the Cross



Making crafts - Crown and flowers



Cross ready for Good Friday



Worship time - Thanks Ben and Isaac!



Watching the sun rise



## MESSY MUSIC

BY LOUISE PATTERSON



Hello Messy Music Families.

My name is Louise and I have been enjoying volunteering with the Messy Music team.

I am a mum of four, two teens and my twin girls are seven years old and in Year One. The girls and I share special memories of having fun together at Messy Music.

Messy Music is a fun filled morning which involves time of activities including arts, craft, imagination and creative play. This is followed by a shared snack time and outdoor play (weather permitting).

We then join together as a group to enjoy a range of playgroup songs and dance, finishing this special time with a story and goodbye song.

Thank you to the amazing volunteers I have each week who come and assist as well as playgroup coordinators from the school. These cheerful, supportive and courageous students are a blessing to the program each week.

If you know anyone with children below school age, why not invite them along. Messy Music is held each Friday during school term 9.30am to 11. Cost \$4 per child, \$6 for two or more. FTPOS Available. Bring your own snack. Cafe Connect coffee available.

Look forward to seeing you all!



**Messy Music**

**Friday 9.30 to 11am**

- Sensory Play
- Music
- Craft
- Dance
- and more...

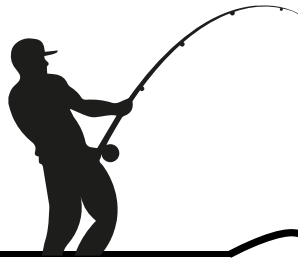
**Bring Your Own Snack**  
\$4 per child, \$6 for two or more  
FTPOS Available

**NO BOOKINGS REQUIRED!**

991c playgroup

GOLDEN GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

cafeconnect



## TIGHT LINES

GOLDEN GROVE AMATEUR FISHING

**Mission Statement: Giving all people opportunities to fish in a Christ centred environment**

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ~ Sunday 1st February

32 members attended the AGM held at GGLPS Conference Room.

Following tabling of reports from the President and Treasurer the following members were elected to the Committee this year:

President – Graeme Hoklas

Vice President – Peter Van Loggem

Secretary – Keith Scott

Treasurer – Chris Simanis

Other Committee Members – Geoff Hill, Mark Caldicott, Alison Goodchild and Ray Brice.

Congratulations to Alison Goodchild and Ray Brice on their elections as new members to the Committee. Ian Zimmerman (Zimmo) retired from the Committee at the end of last year. The Club will remember Zimmo forever as the prime mover in establishing the Club and outstanding 24 years of service.

The 2026 program outlined to members includes first time visits to Harts Mill (Port River), Milang, Happy Valley Reservoir, Port Elliot and a return to Point Turton for the annual camp in October.



AGM Attendees

### Remaining Program for 2026

22nd June (Monday)

Spot On Tackle Night 7.30pm

19th of July (Sunday)

Harts Mill (Port River) 10am to 4pm

23rd of August (Sunday)

West Lakes 9am to 2pm

19th of September (Saturday)

Milang 10am to 4pm

18th October (Sunday)

Community Fete 10.30am

23rd-25th October (Fri-Sun)

Annual Camp at Point Turton

Caravan Park

8th November (Sunday)

Happy Valley Reservoir 10am-3pm

21st November (Saturday)

Presentation Night at GGLC 6.30pm

*Note: Events and times may be subject to change*

Annual Membership

is unchanged:

Seniors \$20

Juniors (under 16) \$5.

“The Club will remember Zimmo forever as the prime mover in establishing the Club..”



Webb Beach Crabbers



Harley & Dane with cooked crabs



Connor samples a cooked crab



Emmett lands Pt Elliot flathead



## CRABBING at WEBB BEACH - Saturday 21st February

25 crabbers ventured to Webb Beach on a fine day with a gentle to moderate breeze. Whilst the weather was comfortable, Blue Swimmer Crabs were hard to find – most being undersize. Total legal catch was a low 15 crabs – five of which were raked by Graeme Hoklas. The crabs were pooled, cooked with the newly purchased Megajet Cooker and Stockpot and then shared.

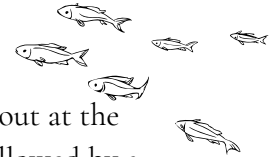
Largest Male Crab Senior Winner was Lou Goegan (12.5 cm) and Largest Female Crab Senior Winner was Keith Hasler (12.3 cm). Dean Sweeney was the Junior Winner with a 11.8 cm Female Crab.



Thanks to all members for assisting with setting up and packing up gazebos etc and the Zimmos for organising a wonderful savoury platter and watermelon.

## PORT ELLIOT ~ 20th to 23rd of March (Friday to Monday)

(including COCKLING at GOOLWA BEACH Sunday) 50 members and friends enjoyed perfect conditions for this early camp (held June/July in past years) based at Port Elliot Caravan Park. The weather was excellent for the 4 days.



Socially a number of members dined out at the Middleton Tavern on Friday night followed by a briefing at the Caravan Park.

Whilst the fish catch on Saturday was not high, some members successfully landed bream, flathead, tommies and a snapper. No competition points are awarded for this event.



A BBQ dinner was organised for the Saturday night at the Park's Camp Kitchen.

Cockling on Sunday had mixed results. Only a handful was collected to the right of the Goolwa Beach car park, however members who 4 wheel drove along the beach towards the Murray Mouth were successful in gathering up to the bag limit of 330 cockles. Port Elliot Hotel was a popular destination for Sunday night dinner.





Graeme catches 9 Carp at Moorook



Senior Winner Shaun with 71cm Moorook Carp



Junior Winner Dean at Moorook



Ken with Salmon Catch at Normanville



Daniel lands 7 Mullet at Normanville



Rocky with Winning Flathead at Normanville



Normanville

### MOOROOK (River Murray) ~ Saturday 18th April

The Moorook event was highly successful on a “picture perfect” day as described by member Grace Caruso. GGAF provided a Sausage Sizzle for lunch at the well equipped covered BBQ area. 33 people attended and spread out over a large river frontage on an expansive area of lawn.



44 Carp were landed weighing a total of 18.2kg. Half a dozen Callop were caught, however none went close to the 33cm size limit.



Senior Winner was Shaun Van Loggem with a 71cm Carp weighing 3.03kg. Junior Winner was Dean Sweeney with a 45.5 cm Carp weighing in at 1.21kg. Largest total catch was Graeme Hoklas with 9 Carp with Peter Van Loggen next with a total of 8.



The Moorook Club was a popular dining venue for those staying overnight.

### NORMANVILLE (Fleurieu Peninsula)

#### Saturday 16th May

An excellent attendance of 42 considering the less than favourable weather forecast prior to Saturday. Weather turned out to be quite comfortable with no rain during the hours of the event. It was great to see fish caught considering the incoming tide with abundant seaweed. The small jetty was the winner. A great social gathering day concluded with 30 members dining at the Normanville Hotel on Saturday night.



15 fish with total weight of 4.48 kg were weighed in comprising 4 Salmon, 9 Mullet, 1 Flathead and 1 Salmon Trout. Senior Winner and catch of the day was Rocky Caruso with a 51cm 900 gm Flathead. Ken Tucharke caught the second largest with a 690 gm Salmon closely followed by Lou Goegan with a 630gm Salmon. Daniel Dutschke landed the most fish with 7 Mullet.

#### Website:

<https://www.ggaf.org.au/church/index.php/ministries/ggaf>

Enquiries to Graeme Hoklas  
0419 828 091 or [hoklasgr@gmail.com](mailto:hoklasgr@gmail.com)



# Community Fete

Sunday **18th** October

10.30am **to** 3.00pm



Presented by the Golden Grove Lutheran Community



*Growing with God in a Loving Community*

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

-  [gglc.org.au](http://gglc.org.au)
-  [office@gglc.org.au](mailto:office@gglc.org.au)
-  [@gglc.lca](https://www.facebook.com/gglc.lca)
-  (08) 7200 0090
-  GGLC YouTube
-  @goldengrovelutheranchurch

Golden Grove Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) is committed to providing a safe church environment for children and young people. For more information please visit LCA Child Safety Standards for Congregations <https://www.lca.org.au/child-safety-standards/>



Need a coffee?

Pop into Cafe Connect  
weekdays between 8 and 11am  
& 2.30 and 4pm  
during school terms

