



# NEWSLETTER

2 - 8 March 2026

Revive  
Restore  
Reach Out

## Sunday Worship 9am

### Prayer for Our Church

Dear God,  
As we work through Practising the Way, encourage and guide us. Help us to know how to live our lives for your Kingdom rather than striving to fit in to the world in which we currently live. Give us the wisdom to follow you and to become more like Jesus every day. May we seek God amid the suffering and hardship faced by us and our loved ones. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen



You are invited to pray this prayer individually, in small groups, Bible study groups or at other gatherings during the week.

Rod has written a short article entitled "**Palm Sunday through the lens of the Magnificat**" If you would like to read it, click [here](#).

There will be a **Congregational Meeting** after the Church service on Sunday 22nd March. It will begin at approx. 10.20 am and is expected to finish by 11 am.

This is an opportunity for all members of NRCC to hear more about what is happening in their church and to ask questions.

If you would like anything added to the agenda, please contact Beverley Chow (Chair of the Congregation) [chowab@optusnet.com.au](mailto:chowab@optusnet.com.au)

### Practising the Way - NRCC Feb-Mar 2026

The **Practising the Way Course** is designed as a framework for spiritual formation built around teaching, community, and practice. At North Rocks Community Church, we aim to integrate **sermons, supplied videos, discussion groups, and homework**. Below is an **eight-week plan** that balances those elements, structured around a weekly rhythm.

## Previous Sermons

If you have missed any of our previous sermons you can listen to them on our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@nrcc6214> or read them on Rod's blog at <https://rodbenson.com/>

## Dates for your Diary

**Wednesday Morning Prayers** - Rod will be leading early morning prayers on Wednesdays at the church from 7am. The session will last about 30 minutes. All are welcome.

March	
14 & 28	Community Garden
22	Congregational Meeting
29	Palm Sunday
April	
3	Good Friday
5	Easter Sunday
July	
25	Trivia Night

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## Community News and Notices

The poster is for an event titled "Issues for the Church in Ukraine: History, Theology, Politics". It is organized by the NSW Ecumenical Council and is part of a series called "Come Join Us". The event is scheduled for March 9, 2026, from 6.30 to 7.30 pm at St Stephen's Uniting Church, Macquarie St, Sydney. The speaker is Prof Cyril Hovorun, an eminent Ukrainian Orthodox theologian. The poster includes contact information for registration and a tagline at the bottom: "Churches in NSW working together for the common good."

**NSW Ecumenical Council**  
*Come Join Us*

### Issues for the Church in Ukraine

History, Theology, Politics

March 9, 2026 | 6.30–7.30pm

**St Stephen's Uniting Church**  
Macquarie St, Sydney

**Prof Cyril Hovorun** is an eminent Ukrainian Orthodox theologian known for work on ecclesiology, church reform, ecumenism, political theology, and Christian responses to contemporary geopolitical conflict.

FREE entry + refreshments from 5.30  
Registration essential:  
Email [gensec@nswec.org.au](mailto:gensec@nswec.org.au)

Churches in NSW working together for the common good.

## Lecture and Panel Discussion on spirituality and ethics

1.00-3.00pm Saturday 14 March

Pitt St Uniting Church, 264 Pitt St, Sydney

Venerable Geshe Lhakdor, Director of the Library of Tibetan Works and Artifacts at Dharamsala, India, will present a lecture on "Turning inward: The first step to universal compassion." Afterward, he will join Rev Dr Rod Benson, General Secretary of the NSW Ecumenical Council, for a moderated dialogue on Buddhist and Christian approaches to spirituality and ethics.



Our world urgently needs a movement of attentive and generous discipleship.

The climate crisis is undoing decades of progress, driving poverty, food insecurity and forced migration across our world. There's profound injustice at its heart: those who've contributed the least to this crisis are suffering the most, while those who've burned the most fossil fuels have largely insulated themselves from its effects.

UnitingWorld's [Lent Event](#) offers a way to step into meaningful action. Take part in 40 For The Future - a climate challenge for all ages living more simply and raising funds for UnitingWorld projects

### ▪ Uniting Church Assembly and Synod News Links

Uniting Church Assembly: <https://uniting.church/news/>

NSW & ACT Synod: <https://nswact.uca.org.au/>

Parramatta Nepean Presbytery: <https://pnp.uca.org.au/>

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## Reflection of the Week

Pessimism is a cunning enemy of a growing faith in Christ. One of the reasons it is so sneaky is that there are times when it masquerades as a virtue. We call it discernment, cautious wisdom, and sometimes even a realistic worldview. At its core, pessimism is unbelief. It is a lack of faith in God and His ability or desire to keep His promises.

A great example of pessimism rightly labelled is found in Mark 9. A father brings his possessed son to Jesus and says, "If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us" (v. 22). Jesus responds by saying, "If you can"? . . . Everything is possible for one who believes" (v. 23). In a moment of clarity, the father cries out, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (v. 24). Face to face with Christ, the father had to admit that the issue was with his faith and not with Jesus' power.

Deliverance from pessimism is possible. We see it in the apostle Thomas' life. Thomas had a history of

unbelief, so much so that he is often referred to as "doubting Thomas." Jesus defeated pessimism in Thomas' life, giving us insight into how Christ can defeat it in our own lives.

The first step in defeating pessimism is understanding who you are in Christ. Thomas was specifically called by Jesus to be one of His disciples. Knowing that he was chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ and that he was loved unconditionally by Him was the first step in Thomas' transformation.

It can be the beginning for us, as well. God called us to be His own because of His great love for us and His unique design for each of our lives. We are loved specially and unconditionally by His grace, and the God of the universe holds each one of us forever in His hand. There is nothing we can do to affect God's calling. He freely called us because we are special to Him.

*Prayer: Lord, I admit that at times I struggle with unbelief like the father with the possessed son. Today I cry out, "Help my unbelief!" Thank You for Your love for me and for the calling You've placed on my life. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1).**

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## Prayer Points for This Month

### **For Our Church**

- Pray for encouragement and strength for our congregation as we learn to serve each other as Jesus does.
- Pray for Rod that he will receive God's wisdom as he leads our church through Practising the Way.
- Pray for wisdom for church council as they work together to serve NRCC.
- Pray for healing and restoration for those in need.

### **For the Wider Church**

- Pray for the Community Services Ministries of Parramatta Nepean Presbyteries – [Gateway Family Services](#), [Junction 142](#) and [Parramatta Mission](#).
- Pray for strength and perseverance for churches around the world in areas of conflict. May they continue to know peace that can only come from you.
- Pray for those in mission as they reach out to those who do not yet know you. We pray especially for the missionaries we support - Mike & Jacky Hammond, Richard & Lindsey Parker, and Bill & Sandra Callister.

### **For Australia**

- Prayers that leaders will act with integrity, wisdom, and courage to make just decisions for all.
- Pray for unity and healing, for overcoming division, reducing tension, and fostering peace.
- Pray for the vulnerable and voiceless, and bring justice to those who have suffered injustice

## For the World

- We pray that world leaders might find peaceful solutions to conflict between countries.
  - Pray that local churches and Christians worldwide remain faithful, act as conduits of hope, and bring God's love to their communities.
  - We [pray](#) for Belgium, Luxembourg, and Netherlands
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### Prayers

**E - give** (Anonymous Direct Electronic Giving)

**Account Name:** North Rocks CC - Giving

**(BSB):** 634634 **Account Number:** 100025906

If you have any prayer requests or would like to know about those with particular pastoral needs to pray for, please contact Cathy or another member of the Pastoral Care Team  
Cathy: 0411 055 403

### Ministry Leaders

Transitional Supply Minister: Rev Dr Rod Benson / 0412421678 / [rod@northrocks.org.au](mailto:rod@northrocks.org.au)

### Church Council

Chairperson: Cathy Nelson Secretary: Samson Leung Treasurer: Anne Crabb  
Alex Chow, Jenny Keyte, Sue Vasilevska