



The Hurstville New Church

News & Notes

for January to February 2026

What's Coming Up

Garden Service with Holy Supper (4 January)

Join our first Sunday service of the year on the 4th! It will be our first service of the year, and as it is our tradition we will have it in the garden with Holy Supper following. I imagine it as a relaxed, family-style service. And yes, the 'garden' part of the service is weather permitting.

Bishop Peter Buss Leading the Service (11 January)

The Following Sunday, the 11th, will be led by Bishop Peter Buss. As announced last month, Bishop Buss and Teresa will be visiting Sydney from 10 to 14 January. And he will lead our service on the 11th in Hurstville. The service will be followed by a potluck lunch at the Richard Morse Room. Let's give them a big, warm welcome! While their visit to Australia is scheduled for two weeks, their stay in Sydney will be short. They will be arriving at night on the 10th and will be leaving for the 2026 Retreat on the Sunshine Coast on the 14th, a day early. Things may be quite tight given the short visit, but I would suggest feel free to contact him if you would like to visit with them, or have concerns to share, or so.

2026 NCIA Family Retreat – January 15-19 on the Sunshine Coast

We've been closely following the 2026 Retreat' plans, and most recently, the Retreat Booklet and Session information were sent off by Carolyn. So, there isn't much to update at this point, except to say that it is just around the corner, and that it will be wonderful to be all together after a year gap!

No Church Services on the 18th and 25th of January

Note that there will be no church service on the 18th due to the camp that weekend, also no church service on the 25th as decided at the last Society Meeting.

2026 Journey Program (1st February through 16th March)

February will kick off with a Journey Program, "Pause: Make Space for God". The basic format is that our seven-week series will focus on each week's program topic during Sunday services.

I am personally excited with this program, as it will give us an opportunity to engage with basic questions about our faith that can lay a foundation for something higher. For more details about the program, see our December Newsletter issue.

Note: The Pastor's office will print out the workbook for and send it out to those who will have enquired their copy for the Monday small group. Individual copies will be sent out or handed out in early January before we leave for the Retreat. Those who individually expressed their interests will be in touch.

2025 Year in Review

Looking back on the year 2025, the first thing that hits me personally is that it was my first year as the pastor. For me, the year has been busy and rewarding with connecting with people, keeping the wheel turning, and getting to know better about where we are at the moment.

Where Are We?

This year, we struggled with the lower number of Sunday service attendance, except for the big Sundays such as Easter, the New Church Day, and when we had guests visiting. The average church attendance of the last six months was between 6 to 7, me excluded. Yes, the Hurstville New Church will still be solid for years to come. In the meantime, we may see, especially those who have been present at the church on Sundays, that the church is facing a real challenge as for its long-term future. This wouldn't be anyone's happiest report following their first year. But looking away from what has surfaced is not good either. Where can we go from this?

Looking Ahead to 2026

With all that said, I am rather excited to share what the year 2026 can look like. We won't see much difference in terms of our Sunday services. But my intent is that we look at things that we or people can participate more, where they engage for themselves, share, appreciate, and grow.

The Theme for the Year: Own It for Yourself.

Online + in-person Bible reading group and Men's Weekend are the few things I look forward to organizing this coming year. I also look forward to visiting and connecting with people beyond Hurstville and Sydney.

But as you can imagine, this isn't and cannot be about me alone. For example, I can't organize a Women's Weekend. Nor can visits (such as sitting together and talking about faith, the Word, etc.) happen unless there are people on the other end who would like those. This makes it crucial to have you on the other end expressing your interest or willingness to be part of some of the ideas mentioned above. So, do let me know. My hope is we can then talk more and individually as chances arise, most likely at the Retreat.

It should come natural that our spiritual life can't be lived by someone else. The way we are able to perceive the Lord's truths grows only through going to His Word and teachings and living them out in our life. The life of our church or any church is dependent on the individual's ownership and love of the Word, its truth, and life coming from it.

I look forward to the new year ahead and wish you all a happy New Year!

