

ISSUE 15 - Semester 2, 2024

ourplace

WYCLIFFE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

REFLECTIONS
FROM PRESCHOOL AND
YEAR 6 STUDENTS

WYCLIFFE
ALUMNI

LESSONS FROM
THE PSALMS



Sharing the stories of our school community

2025 Term Dates

TERM 1, 2025

Monday 3rd February
First Day of Term 1, Preschool
and Years 1-12

Tuesday 4th February
First Day of Term 1, Kindergarten

Friday 11th April
Last Day of Term 1

TERM 2, 2025

Monday 28th April
First Day of Term 2, Preschool

Tuesday 29th April
First Day of Term 2, K-12

Friday 4th July
Last Day of Term 2

TERM 3, 2025

Monday 21st July
First Day of Term 3, Preschool

Monday 28th July
First Day of Term 3, K-12

Friday 26th September
Last Day of Term 3

TERM 4, 2025

Monday 13th October
First Day of Term 4, Preschool

Tuesday 14th October
First Day of Term 4, K-12

Thursday 11th December
Last Day of Term 4, K-12

Friday 19th December
Last Day of Term 4, Preschool

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Wycliffe Christian School &
Wycliffe Hope School
133 Rickard Rd, Warrimoo, 2774

P: (02) 4753 6422

E: office@wycliffe.nsw.edu.au

W: www.wycliffe.nsw.edu.au

Cover: A lizard suns itself near the Wycliffe oval
This page: Mural by Year 9/10 Public Art
Back cover: Photography by Studio Twelve08



This edition of Our Place includes QR codes like this, which you can scan with your phone to watch related videos.



Dave Johnston
Principal

The character of Christ

Dear Wycliffe Families,

It is always a delight to share with you a new edition of *Our Place*. I am thankful for the rich opportunities it provides to tell stories that celebrate the efforts and beautiful work of our students. Stories of learning and life from both in and out of the classroom space that build points of connection for our families and remind us of the amazing ways in which God is at work in our community. It is a real privilege to see the variety of creative, explorative and engaged learning happening across our school.

This semester I have been pondering the unique character of Jesus as I read Tim Keller's *Making Sense of God*. In one of the chapters, Keller highlights the beautifully diverse complexity that we encounter in Jesus as he interacts with and approaches people: "In him we see qualities and virtues we would ordinarily consider incompatible with the same person." He is the perfect unity of "justice and mercy, boldness and tenderness, high majesty and great humility".

We can see this being expressed through who God has made our students to be. Each one is an image bearer of Christ whom God has created—in His good design—to exist within community.

When we live together well, we get to see the character of Jesus in our midst: bold and kind, confident and humble, strong and tender, confronting and gentle, direct and patient. We get to see the full significance and rich blessing of these good traits as they are experienced in partnership with their counterparts.

The stories captured on the following pages are part of this rich tapestry of encountering and seeing Jesus in the learning journeys of our students: from meeting our new student leaders, to hearing beautiful Preschool reflections on the year; from encountering the ways in which Year 3 are getting hands on in their learning, to seeing some deeply creative illustrations and poetry from our Year 5 students; from joining our Year 8s as they dive into the Psalms, to farewelling our Year 12s as they wrap up their year and time at school. It is such a wonderful blessing to see our students thriving and growing.

So, I invite you to enjoy this edition of *Our Place*. To sit down with your beverage of choice and explore the beautiful learning and growth in the pages ahead, deeply thankful for God's work in our students and his ongoing abundant generosity.

Yours in Christ,
Dave Johnston



Our new student leaders

We caught up with Penelope and Isaac, our new school captains for 2024-2025, to learn more about their plans for the year ahead.

PENELOPE GESLING

Could you talk about your journey of faith?

I was raised in a Christian household, so I was always very aware of who God was and what he does, but there came a time where I found that nothing in this world could fulfil me and no one else could give me such a beautiful exchange for my hurt, brokenness or sorrow. God has delivered me and given me a brand new life, and my heart is on fire for Him. I have a heart that chases God; there is truly nothing that could tear me from his grasp, because there is such joy, fulfilment, truth and an unconditional love from God that I cannot explain.

How would you like to impact other students and the wider community?

I would love to bring the student body closer together. I want us all to put our gifts that God has given each of us, and work through the school with them for His glory. I really want to be someone in the school who students can come to for help, prayer or even to hang out with.

What are your personal goals for the coming year?

My personal goals for the coming year would be to start a prayer box, which the Leadership Team has already started

working on. This would be an anonymous way for students to receive prayer and be confident that they are cared and looked out for by the Leadership Team. I am definitely looking forward to this and hope that God will bless it and allow our students to feel more connected to him. One other goal for later this year is to start a Senior book club, where I would love to connect with students in the Senior School who share my own interest in books and have fellowship with them, creating a deeper connection within the community.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Look to people you respect for guidance on how to live, and do the things they do! The greatest example is Jesus, but if they follow him, there will be many parts of their lives worth following as well.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love to read my Bible and journal, but I also love to fellowship with my friends.

ISAAC BARTLETT

Could you talk about your journey of faith?

Since as early as I can remember, every Sunday morning would be spent at church. The church and Christian school community have both played a major role in moulding and establishing the faith that I hold today. Every season of life brings new opportunities and challenges to my faith, and so I feel my faith



Our new captains and vice captains. From left to right: Cohen, Isaac, Penelope, and Charlotte.

is a journey, and never a final destination. I do consider Jesus to be my Lord and saviour.

How would you like to impact other students and the wider community?

For me, I would love to see the school more united, all the way from Kindergarten to Year 12. Wycliffe sporting events that involve everyone such as handball competitions, or simple whole school barbecues are a few possibilities. I also think having a space or group where people of all ages can come and ask questions about Jesus and the Bible, or just life in general, would be great.

What are your personal goals for the coming year?

In the coming year there are a few things I would like to see happen in my life. Firstly, I want to see myself grow deeper and stronger in my relationship with God, not pushing him to the side when life gets busy. I want to see my friendships grow,

knowing I have made friends that will last a lifetime. I want to go all the way through and finish Year 12 knowing that I have given my best effort, and I want to win the World Irish Dancing Championships!

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

The best piece of advice that I have received is probably best related to sport, but goes "When you turn up to practice, you have already fought half the battle getting there, so use the time you have, give everything you can and leave nothing on the floor". I feel this mindset provides a good framework to approach life in general. When used, it gives you a good process for achieving your goals and getting the most out of your time.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

In my spare time I like to sit down, maybe watch some television, go for a swim, or just relax listening to music.



SAUSAGE SIZZLE

LEFT AND ABOVE: Each year, the Student Leadership Team comes up with fun activities and fundraising plans to raise money for good causes. In Term 4 they ran a sausage sizzle for Senior students and it was very popular! The team have chosen to donate the revenue from this event to Canteen Australia, which supports young people suffering from cancer.

PLEDGING TO SERVE

RIGHT: At our special assembly to celebrate the end of Year 11 for our class of 2025, student leaders read out their pledge, committing to serving the Wycliffe community in the year ahead.





A few of our favourite things

Many of our Preschool children will be entering big school next year. As they prepare to join Kindergarten in 2025, we asked each of these children: **“What have you loved about Preschool?”**

Eating morning tea and lunch. - **Asher M**

Singing with the Year 5s. - **Evalea**

Making friends with people who visited from High School. I made a castle. - **Reuben**

Playing with blocks. - **Lucas**

Playing with Koah and Jack in home corner. - **Asher K**

Playing with 150 friends. - **Tennyson**

Playing outside in the sandpit. - **Emelie**

The painting. - **Adaline**

Kid's K'nex. - **Teddy**

Um... That I have 20 friends to play with. - **Sophie**

I've lots... The K'nex, the trains, the snakey and Technics and... Pretty sure that's it. - **Jack**

Playing with Elliana in home corner. - **Franklin**

Playing with Maisy in home corner. - **Chloe**

Block corner - building big towers. - **Elijah**

The snakey and technics stuff. - **Koah**

Playing in block corner building a zoo. - **Noah**

Crashing mats. - **Jacob**

Playing in home corner in the kitchen and reading books. - **Georgia**

Play dough. - **Noah**

Drawing in home corner. - **Elliana**

Elise visiting here. - **Molly**

Doing special drawings. - **Tully**

Building and playing on the see saw. I like playing with Olivier. - **Oliver P**

The sandpit and the digger. I really love Levi coming here. I don't know how he got to the same school as me. I was surprised he was being here. - **Charlie**

Love the painting and playing on the obstacle course. - **Diana**

I like playing Minecraft and Ninjago and playing on the obstacle course. - **Olivier**

Playing in the sandpit. I like all the sandpit toys. I love making things out of paper. - **Albert**

Playing with the tech machines. Playing in the sandpit. - **Flynn**

Best thing about Preschool is kinetic sand. - **Adelaide**

Loved painting and drawing and playing with Anna and Georgia. - **Indiana**

I loved block corner. Loved playing with the little people in block corner. - **Anna**

Playing with my friends and playing the copying game. Playing tag outside with my friends. Building with the big blocks. - **Levi**

I love the seesaw. I like balancing on the bucket stilts. - **Lilla**

The sandpit. I like playing with the toys and the ginormous digger. - **Oliver S**

Playing with my friends. - **Arabella**



Preschool Goodbye!

Sticky fingers, little noses,
Head, shoulders, knees and toes-es.
Shapes and colours, ABCs,
Taking turns and 1-2-3s.

Cheeky smiles, hugs and giggles,
Group times and lots of wiggles.
Wooden blocks and dress-up clothes,
Learning how a flower grows,

Water and fruit, first-time friends,
Thinking days like these won't end.
Now the end of the year has come,
And preschool days have all been done.

Like a butterfly, time has flown,
You have learned so much and grown.
Tiny chairs give way to desks,
Little readers and spelling tests.

So take off now, spread your wings,
Soar to new heights, learn new things.
Just remember as you do,
We are so very proud of you.



Does a Christian school have Christian learning?

Inviting young people to see and understand the world through the perspective of God's truth.

Wycliffe Christian School is seeking to faithfully unfold a Christian education. What does this mean for learning? We believe that whether it's learning how to write an essay, learning how to triple jump, learning how to spell "pneumonia", or learning to factorise a polynomial, all knowing has its ultimate meaning and purpose when framed by God's big picture story anchored in Jesus. This story gives the starting point for learning and the end application for all knowing—to bring God glory and to serve others.

All schools and forms of education have a particular perspective

on life. It may not always be obvious or overtly stated, but this perspective will shape how things are understood and spoken about, how things are done, what is chosen to be taught, and the reasons given for why we might bother learning anything at all. This might be in the form of assumptions about the nature and origins of the world, or it might be evident through suggestions about the purpose of life and indeed what it means to be fulfilled as a human. No form of education is neutral as it will always be providing a particular lens through which students see the world and their place in it.

Wycliffe Christian School is in community and partnership with many other Christian schools around Australia as part of Christian Education National (CEN). What follows is an expression of how CEN schools think about learning.

A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Christian education invites young people to see and understand the world through the perspective of God's truth. The Bible becomes the lens through which students view what they are learning. The lens focuses their thinking on ultimate truth—a biblical and Christ-centred vision for life where the world is created and sustained by God; where God has acted in history to deal with the distortions of creation caused by human rebellion; and where history is advancing towards a new creation in which all things are reconciled to God through Jesus who is not only the climax of the biblical story but is also the focal point of the lens.

A WAY OF LIVING

However, Christian education is not just about a Christian way of understanding. It is also about a Christian way of living. When Jesus said "Follow me", he was expecting people to dedicate their whole lives to serving God. Christian education informs, invites, and inspires young people to live this way. The Christian school aims to teach this way of life every day through all that is done and taught. It does this in the setting of a unified community of love and learning involving parents, children and teachers.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Parents have the ultimate responsibility to educate their children towards a relationship with Jesus, a biblical way of knowing and a Christian way of living. The Christian school community is a partnership with parents and the school sharing in this vision.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Doesn't the Christian school shelter children from the real world?

Yes and no. All education (and good parenting) will have an age appropriate, gradual exposure to aspects and ideas in this world. Christian education is no different. However, it seeks to guide the students towards discernment about the distortions to God's good design. It can't do this if it ignores the "real world".

Do teachers in a Christian school tell the truth?

It might seem like a strange question, but some parents wonder that if by giving a biblical perspective of everyday things, it might result in current scientific understanding being at best

ignored, and at worst denied. Christian education embraces science and human discovery as blessings from God but seeks to help students discern the assumptions underpinning current understanding. It helps them critique the extent to which conclusions are, and are not, consistent with a biblical worldview. We believe this makes Christian education a more rigorous pursuit of truth.

Are teachers in a Christian school just as professional?

Just as there are well-trained and highly professional Christian teachers working in other schools, the teachers in Christian schools are no less trained and are no less professional. The parents of Christian schools expect no less.

Christian education is not just about a Christian way of understanding. It is also about a Christian way of living

Can you have academic rigour and Christian education? Isn't there a compromise?

No. The school embracing Christian education may, in fact, have greater academic rigour. The same state curriculum, with its secular, humanistic and naturalistic framework, is taught in all schools. The Christian school will seek to equip the student with a critical discernment of the worldview assumptions of this curriculum; a discernment that critiques all that is at odds with a biblically informed view of life and the world. This has a greater academic rigour than accepting uncritically what is taught and learnt.

A GOOD EDUCATION

Many schools provide what may be considered a good education. At Wycliffe Christian School we provide an education for parents asking the question, "what are the starting assumptions of this education and towards what endpoint is this education shaping the students?". Assumptions about the endpoint of education being individual power, career and fulfilment through competition and consumption are common. But Wycliffe Christian School offers an education that informs and inspires children and young people to be a distinctive, kingdom-seeking disciple who acknowledges that Jesus is Lord of all knowable and unknowable parts of this world. We see this as a truly good education.

Chris Parker serves on the Leadership Team as our Christian Foundations Leader. He also teaches VET Construction in the Senior School. Chris is an author (*The Frog and the Fish*, and various books on Christian education) and regularly speaks to parent, teacher and student groups addressing technology and its shaping influence.

Material from the Christian Education National resource titled *Welcome to Christian Education* is used by permission.



Sarah Allison
Head of Hope School

Unfinished projects

I have persisted, admittedly begrudgingly sometimes, with a line of inward and outward reflection this year that has centred on the concept of change. “Change” is a word that doesn’t always spark joy for me but has been so tangibly present in our community this year, not only in the form of building projects! One strategy that has served me well when processing change is to substitute the word for “growth”. The words we speak over our context, the thoughts we practice, will ultimately shape how we view seasons of change and the hope we have within these times.

**“...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 1:6**

Why do we need to change? Why is striving for growth important? The Bible tells us that we are unfinished projects. Can you picture the narrative and response if our building project were declared finished now with its scaffolding still up? It would be quite obvious that this was problematic and the building would not serve its intended purpose without further work being carried out. God’s love for us means that He does not leave us in our incomplete state either.

School is a hive of expected changes each day. Students arrive

knowing what they know and hopefully leave at the end of the day having added, extended or reshaped this knowledge. The weather patterns shift continually, little feet outgrow their little shoes and friendships evolve and rekindle all the time. It is interesting, then, in light of the change we inhabit (often unknowingly), that when we are forced to confront our feelings about change, there are some circumstances we long to see change, whereas in others we are longing for respite from dealing with changes. God is the same perfect God in all of these contexts, inviting us to embrace this transformative process of being made new. Whichever category the change happens to function in, God meets us in our need and ultimately redirects our understanding of our needs.

How will Hope School welcome and learn from change in 2025? We are approaching our fifth year of operation as a school and by God’s grace, we are not the same school we were when we first started. I give thanks for the provision of the hard lessons we’ve navigated thus far, which have prompted and led to a meaningful change of paradigm and practice. Whilst my humanity feels the fatigue and uncertainty of this growth at times, the foundation we place our feet on is Jesus. We have many reasons to be glad in the face of uncertainty and a hope for our future that what we cannot yet see or understand must be for our good as God has promised.

Yours in Christ,
Sarah Allison





Mazes and magnets

Hope Amber students have been fully immersed in their latest science unit on magnetics, culminating in an exciting hands-on project: creating magnetic maze games designed to captivate and challenge younger students from Ruby and Sapphire classes. Each student carefully crafted their maze, factoring in design appeal, playability, difficulty level, and aesthetics. The result: a collection of unique and visually engaging mazes that delighted the Junior Hope students, who had a blast testing them out.

Beyond the maze project, Hope Amber students have also been exploring the wonders of magnetism through interactive experiments. They've observed magnetic fields in action, worked with fascinating ferrofluids, and even made magnetic slime, transforming complex scientific principles into tangible, thrilling experiences. It's been a magnetic term to remember!

Bree Mayes
Hope School Teacher



100 DAYS OF KINDY

ABOVE AND RIGHT: At the end of Term 2, our Kindy students celebrated 100 days of Big School by dressing up as 100-year-olds and participating in some 100-themed activities with their buddies.



BUDDIES

LEFT AND BELOW: Kindy students are paired with buddies in Year 6, and take part in a range of activities with them across the year. Buddies read books, play games outside, and work on creative craft projects together.





KINDY'S FARM VISIT

In Term 3, our Kindy students went to Calmsley Hill City Farm to learn more about animals and how we take care of them! Everyone had a great time patting goats, milking cows, cracking whips, and of course, going for a ride on the tractor.



Learning Snapshot
Pet Projects



P-2 ATHLETICS CARNIVAL

Our Preschool to Year 2 students had a wonderful time at their Olympics-themed Athletics Carnival, hosted by Be Skilled Be Fit. Students competed in a variety of fun activities, running, throwing, and leaping to earn points for their Olympic country.





BOOK WEEK

A packed Book Week for our Junior School saw surprise classroom visits by special readers from around the school, a workshop by illustrator Lisa Flanagan, a thrilling and hilarious magic show by Professor Curio, and a performance by teachers based on the book "The Concrete Garden", which turned into a huge mural for our students to help decorate themselves. And of course, on Wednesday, everyone dressed up as characters from books and movies, and paraded across stage at our special Book Week assembly.



Learning Snapshot
Reading Is Magic

Hands-on learning

Year 3 have been completing lots of hands-on work in Term 4.

Students used air-dry clay to sculpt a gorilla, which is the lead character in the novel we were studying “The One and Only Ivan”. First, we watched a couple of videos showing us the techniques to create the gorilla. Then we scrunched up a piece of foil and then covered it with a flattened, rolled out piece of clay. Finally, we added legs, toes, arms, fingers, a head and a face. Some students also managed to scratch some detail into the clay to make it look like fur. It was messy, but very fun.

Meanwhile in Maths in Weeks 2 and 3, we learned more about fractions. We did many hands-on activities, including the one in the photo—folding paper “whole” circles and drawing and writing on our desks. Our goal was to be able to identify how many equal parts are in a whole and also how to write that as a fraction. The mathematical words we learned were

“numerator” and “denominator”. In Weeks 4 and 5 in Maths, we measured different items each day in centimetres and millimetres. We even ate some of them! We had a lot of fun doing this unit.

In Dance in Week 3, we explored dimensions, pathways and floor patterns. The students did a fabulous job of trying to be in sync with their actions.

In Writing, we have been learning to write factual paragraphs in a formal style, and persuasive pieces using strong, persuasive language. We apologise if the students have tried to persuade you (strongly) to give them more pocket money, let them stay up later or save the elephants!

Vivian Walker
Year 3 Teacher





YEAR 3 DAY CAMP

Year 3 recently spent a day together at Blue Gum Lodge in Springwood. Activities included fire making, exploring the bush, indoor and outdoor games, and painting with natural materials.





YEAR 4 CAMP

This year's Year 4 camp was held at Blue Gum Lodge, where students engaged with activities such as abseiling, rock climbing and low ropes. Year 4 loved their time away and you could see the students growing and developing their relationships with their peers, teachers and camp leaders.



Welcome to the
Class room of
Curiosity


○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○
Book	Book	Bag	Bags
art	fidget	MF	MD

Maths 9/6/32

???

TT
Mystery
test

$7 \overline{)92}$



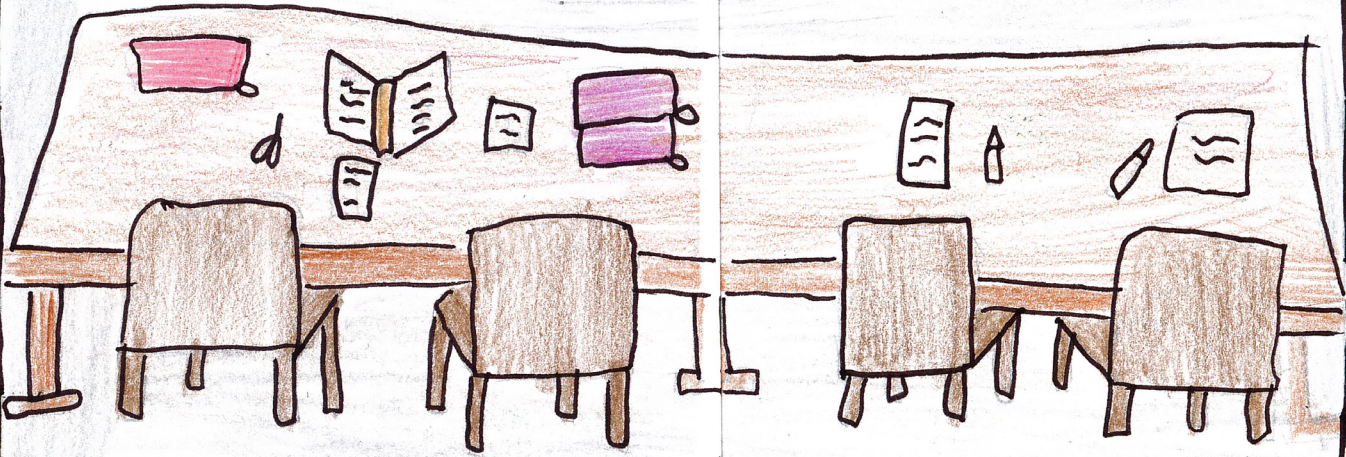
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Our Home, Our Place

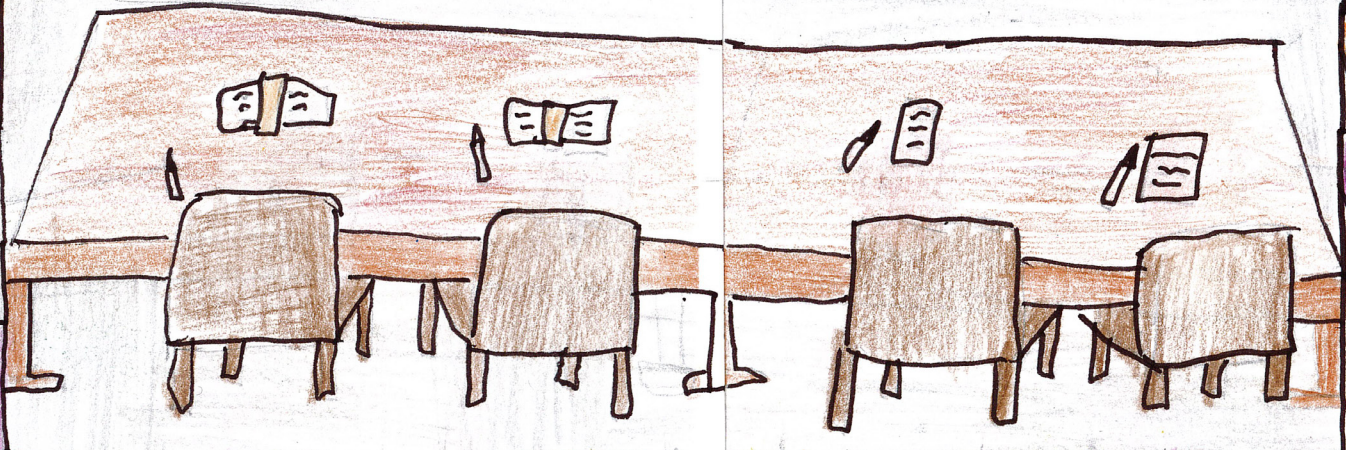
Hi,
I'm siri!

zzzzzz
zzzz

Class
rules



Year 5 students used poetry and illustration to bring these imaginary worlds to life.



class

Class

This term in English, Year 5 has been working with literature focused on the theme of "Our Home, Our Place". We have examined how authors use various literary techniques to make places come to life for their readers. Following their lead, we wrote some poems of our own using description, juxtaposition, alliteration and personification to help create some weird and wonderful places. We hope you enjoy stepping into some of our imaginative worlds with these excerpts of poems and art created by Year 5.

Judy Dillen
Year 5 Teacher



PREVIOUS PAGE:

The Classic Classroom of Curiosity

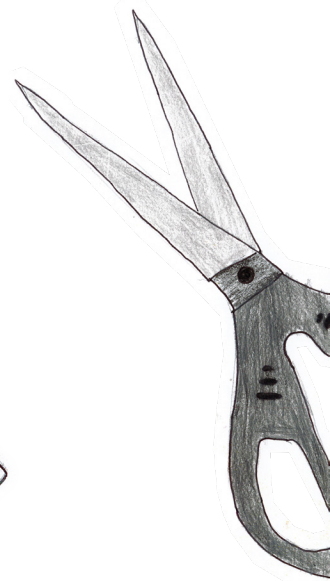
by Amelia

In the classic classroom of curiosity, I found
A terrifying traumatic tarantula with terrific teeth
A disgruntling disgrace of a dejected projector
And a miraculous maze of mugs

In the classic classroom of curiosity, I saw
Students fighting fiercely to finish their work
The teacher regrettably taking a snooze
And many books falling apart from overuse

In the classic classroom of curiosity, I heard
The distant chatter of advanced calculus
A hand shoot up to claim an answer
And the scratch of pencil on paper

In the classic classroom of curiosity, I met
A kind person I call a friend
A smart someone named Siri
And a feisty few fighting for success



The Abundant Seabed of Life

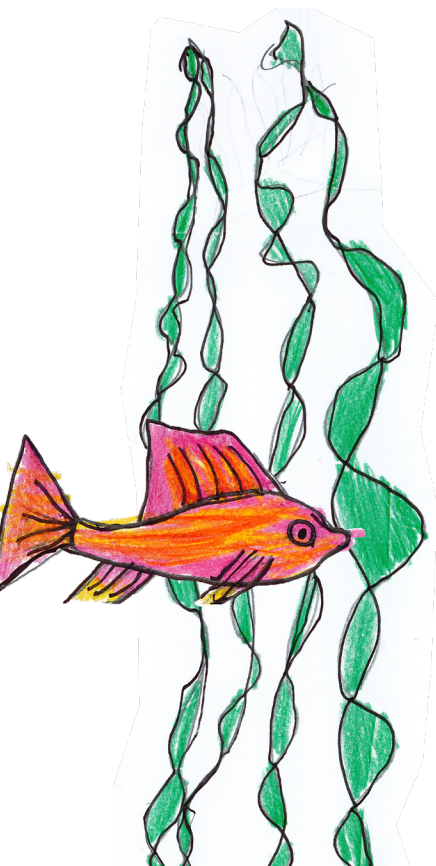
by Brooke

In the abundant seabed of life, I saw
Jellyfish jiggling joyfully in jubilation
Fresh flying fish flapping frantically
Dancing dolphins delicately diving

In the abundant seabed of life, I discover
Bleached coral losing its life
Old dry sea sponges soaking up water
Dead dry fish on land, live fish in water

In the abundant seabed of life, I sensed
The taste of salt tingling my tongue
Hard corals against my palm
Fish splashing around in my face

In the abundant seabed of life, I met
A little fishy swimming around
A pink dolphin splashing happily
A little red crab scaling the floor





The Forbidden Library of Forgetfulness

by Clara

In the forbidden library of forgetfulness I found
 Letters long left alone on the lone lonely floor
 Empty shelves filled with endless longing
 Cheeky chairs choking on cushions

In the forbidden library of forgetfulness I saw
 Beastly books bard with wordless pages
 Shaking tables trembling with the fear of falling
 Cold hard floors daring to keep all life away

In the forbidden library of forgetfulness I discovered
 Wondering windows without glee
 Paintings pitifully crying their paint like tears
 Books bringing bored lists to the librarian

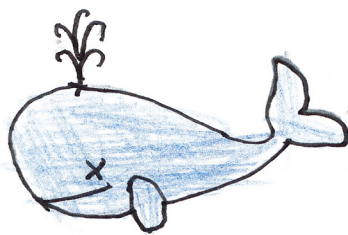
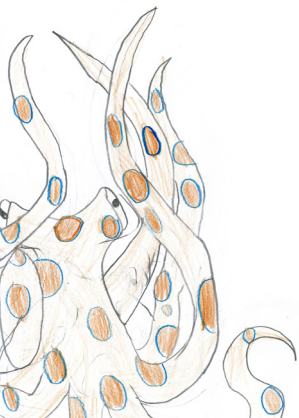
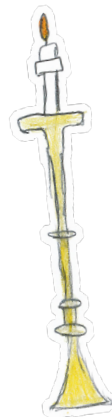
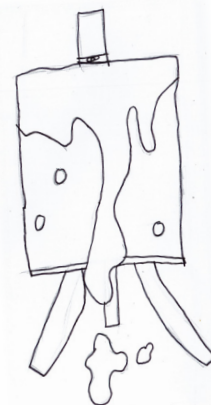
In the forbidden library of forgetfulness I met
 A skeleton looking for its long lost soul
 A librarian endlessly sorting the books
 Bats flying among the beams of the roof



The Library of Forgetfulness

by Liam

In the library of forgetfulness, I felt
 The warm air in a dark summer night,
 The smell of old dying books,
 Dark ashes of paper floating through the air,
 Old and ancient words falling out of books



The Sea of Sadness

by Bonny

In the sea of sadness I sensed
 Fishy sorrows swimming south
 Salty tears from blubbing belugas
 Coral weeping from romantic tragedies





Memories of Junior School

As the year draws to a close, Year 6 are completing their Junior School years and will move on to the wonderful world of Senior School! Here are some reflections they shared about their time at Wycliffe.

What is your favourite school memory at Wycliffe?

Last year's cricket day. Particularly when we got to watch a Thunder game. - **Rupert**

Going to the Winmalee Plate and winning. - **Bailey**

Going to gala days. - **Toby**

My favourite memory was going to the school soccer competition for the third year in a row. - **Isaac**

When the debate team got slushies. - **Annie**

My favourite memory is going to the chess competition in 2024 because we got 2nd place. - **Iustinian**

Laughing with my friends on You Are Special Day. - **Arabella**

What was your favourite school camp?

Canberra, because we went to Questacon, and we went to the coin place, and the food at the campsite was really good quality and yummy. - **Arielle**

Canberra, because we got to go to Parliament House. - **Daisy**

The Canberra camp is my favourite because it had really good accommodation and food. I also liked learning in depth about parliament. - **Hamish**

The Canberra camp was my favourite school camp because we got to learn about politics and we got to go to Questacon which was fun. - **Henry**

Wedderburn, because I loved the activities and food. - **Adah**

At Wedderburn, when we did rock climbing and BMX riding, and eating their chicken wraps for dinner was a great experience too. - **August**

Wedderburn is my favourite because it was so fun. - **Eddie**

The 2022 Wedderburn camp (my Year 4 camp). It was the best because it was chill and the activities were super fun, like the water sponge fight and the laser tag. - **Hannah**

What was the best event at school?

Book Week in Year 6, because me and Isla dressed up as PB and J (peanut butter and jam). - **Caley**

Book Week. We got to dress up as characters. - **Estella**

Book Week because you get to dress up. - **Lillian**

Book Week because I love books and I love dressing up like my fave characters. - **Loren**

The Jersey Day because we could tease Mr Brown and Mr Powell. - **Joanna**

Any words of wisdom to share?

Try hard, do your best and trust God wherever your life takes you. And leave it in God's hands if things aren't turning out the way they're meant to be. - **Anna**

Have faith in the Lord. - **Estelle**

Never give up. - **Evie**

Always trust God because he will be there when you need him. - **Noah**

Give all your worries and care to God, for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). - **Kiara**





SPORT HIGHLIGHTS

It's been another fantastic year for sport, with Wycliffe teams going from strength to strength. Our Under 16s Volleyball team won their grand final, and our Girls Basketball team came second overall in the state! Plus, many of our Junior and Senior students have competed at the state, national, or even international level in their chosen sport!



ACTIVITY PAGE

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NATIVITY
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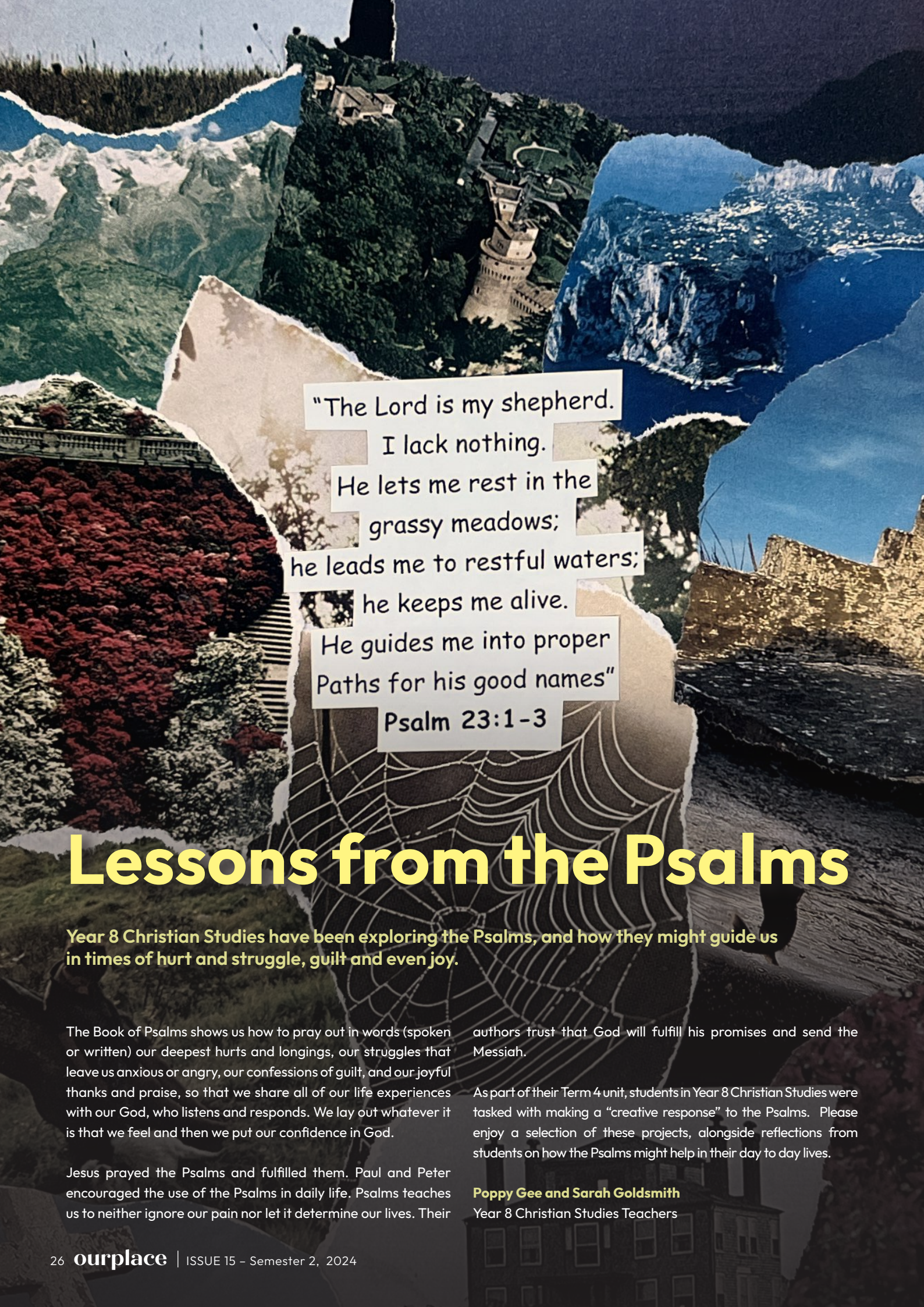
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CAMELS

HOW MANY ANIMALS ARE THERE?

CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER



"The Lord is my shepherd.
I lack nothing.
He lets me rest in the
grassy meadows;
he leads me to restful waters;
he keeps me alive.
He guides me into proper
Paths for his good names"
Psalm 23:1-3

Lessons from the Psalms

Year 8 Christian Studies have been exploring the Psalms, and how they might guide us in times of hurt and struggle, guilt and even joy.

The Book of Psalms shows us how to pray out in words (spoken or written) our deepest hurts and longings, our struggles that leave us anxious or angry, our confessions of guilt, and our joyful thanks and praise, so that we share all of our life experiences with our God, who listens and responds. We lay out whatever it is that we feel and then we put our confidence in God.

Jesus prayed the Psalms and fulfilled them. Paul and Peter encouraged the use of the Psalms in daily life. Psalms teaches us to neither ignore our pain nor let it determine our lives. Their

authors trust that God will fulfill his promises and send the Messiah.

As part of their Term 4 unit, students in Year 8 Christian Studies were tasked with making a "creative response" to the Psalms. Please enjoy a selection of these projects, alongside reflections from students on how the Psalms might help in their day to day lives.

Poppy Gee and Sarah Goldsmith
Year 8 Christian Studies Teachers

I feel like the Psalms help me to express my struggle through set prayers and songs. It helps me to be encouraged and know that I'm not the only one that might be going through things like struggles and being hurt. Overall Psalms was an amazing book. - **Faith**

The Psalms can help you with whatever is happening, it has a lot of verses about almost anything. You can get almost anything from the Book of Psalms. - **Georgia**

The Psalms tell us about all the different emotions, both on the surface and deep inside of us, through David and the sons of Korah. We learn about how to respond to those different emotions and to always turn to God through prayer and song for worship and wisdom. - **Gabriela**

Psalms can help us in our ordinary life by giving us comfort and teaching us how to pray to God for things we've done wrong. It teaches us to not blame and give excuses for things we've done wrong. - **Riley**

The Psalms tell us to worship God and all his good doings. It teaches us how to listen to God and how to live our lives. It teaches us how to pray and respond to God. - **Eliza**

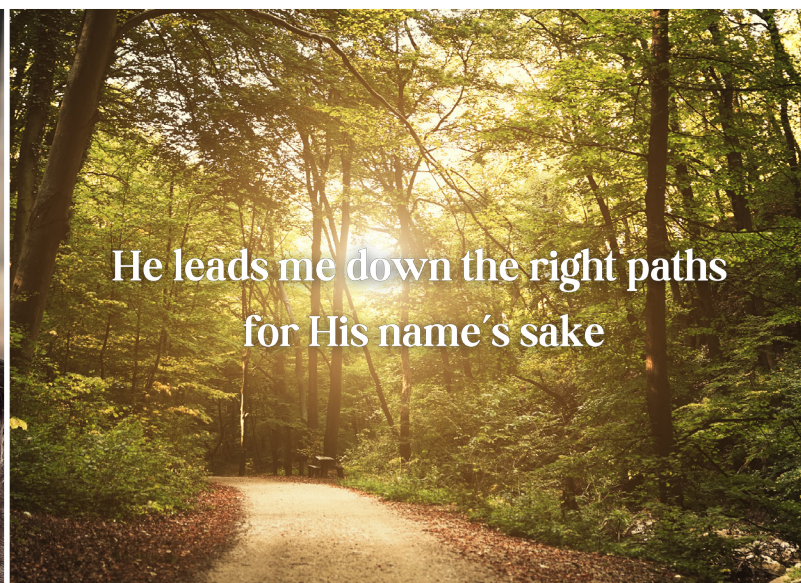
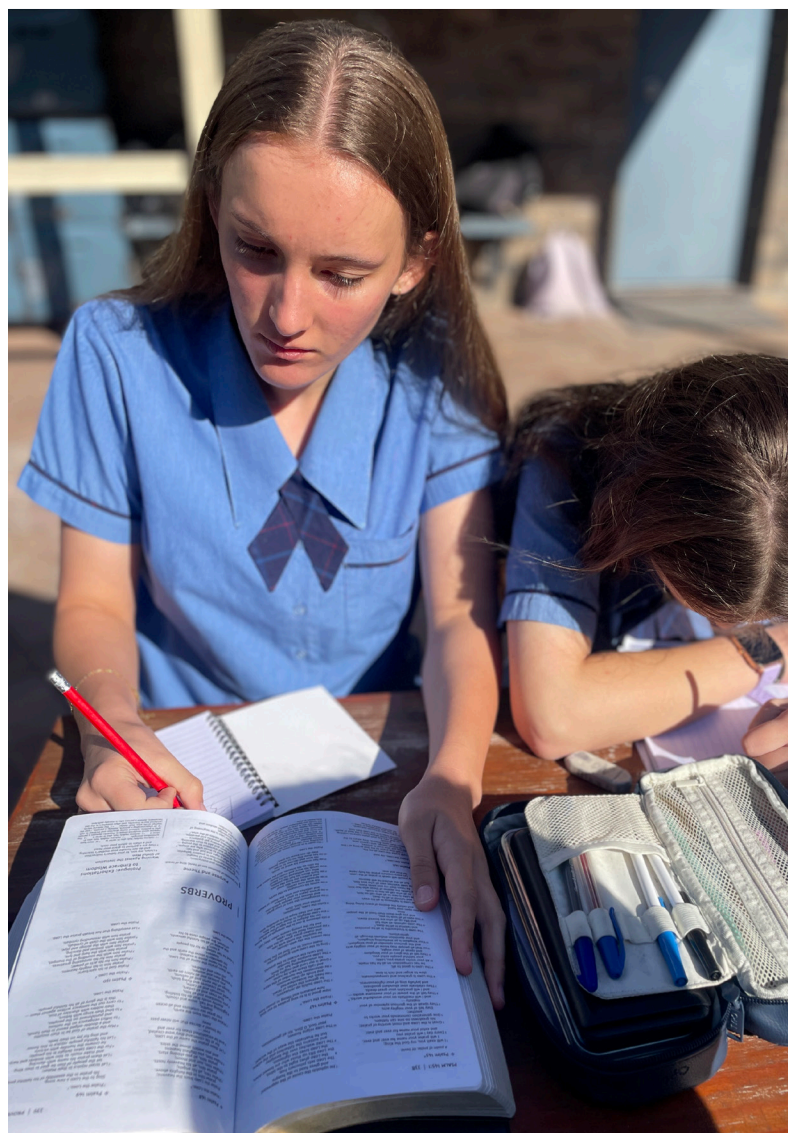
The Psalms help us in everyday life because when we truly

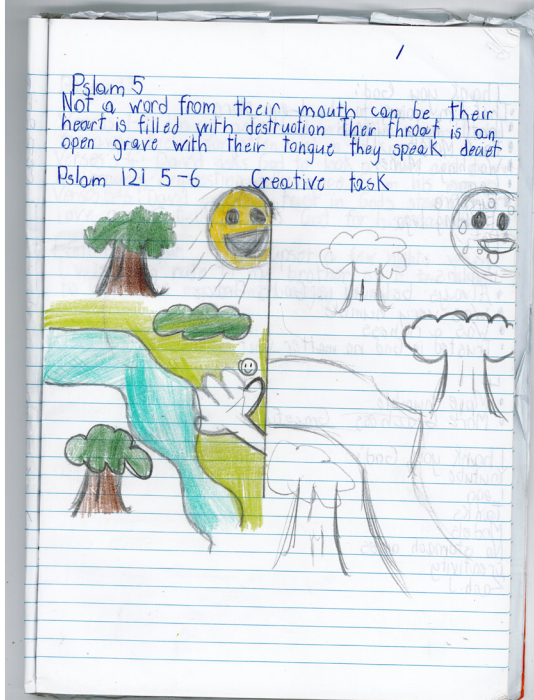
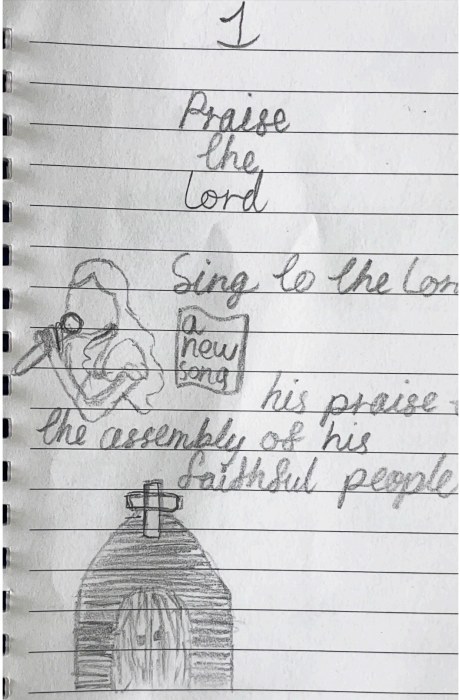
understand them, we can see God's love and heart towards us, and how we can respond to the ups and downs of life. In Psalms we see David's mix of emotions and how he deals with it. He shows us that God's love never fails us, even if we are feeling terrible. Psalms is just one more book that shows how profound God's love is for us. In everyday life we can express how we feel to God no matter the situation, and we can speak out and praise, lament or express all the different emotions we experience as humans. - **Logan**

The Psalms could help you in everyday life because they are very raw and true and show what humans can be like and how even the most important people in the Bible have made mistakes. But God forgives and you just have to ask him to clean and forgive you. It also helps you in the way that no human is perfect but God loves us no matter what. - **Edwina**

There are many different Psalms about joyous topics and about depressing topics. However you're feeling, the Psalms confront those type of emotions. If you're feeling guilty about something you did or said, the Psalms are a great book to read in the Bible and it always reminds us of how great, graceful and loving God is always. - **Ethan**

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you pray, and to make the words of the Psalm a prayer for you. - **Sergito**

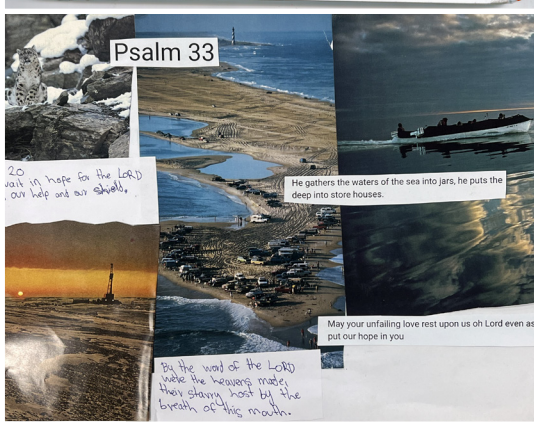
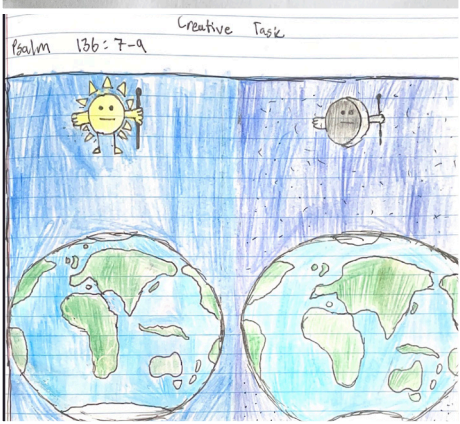




The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them; but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming.

The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to bring down the poor and needy, to slay those whose ways are upright. But their swords will pierce their own hearts and their bows will be broken.

Psalm 37:12-15



SHARING IN SERVICE

Baking can be a good expression of the joy and gratitude found in Psalm 146, which praises the Lord for His love, provision, and care for the vulnerable. Just as the psalm rejoices in God's faithfulness and His work in sustaining life, baking represents a similar act of creation—transforming simple ingredients into something yummy and delicious. Treats, like the blessings described in the psalm, can bring comfort and joy, reminding us of God's goodness. Sharing these homemade offerings can also reflect the psalm's call to care for others, as God "upholds the cause of the oppressed" and "feeds the hungry." Through baking, we participate in God's creative work, offering sweetness and sustenance as a small echo of His larger love and provision.

Leah and Sophia



In PEACE I will
Lie Down And SLEEP
For You Alone LORD make me
Dwell In SAFETY



Called to serve

As part of the Navigate program for Stage 5 students, Year 10 have been participating in fortnightly service activities in the Blue Mountains community. One group headed to Grace Community Services where they welcomed refugees, sorted clothes, and ensured the space was nice and clean. Some students journeyed to Buckland Nursing Home, where they spent the morning engaging with the lovely elderly inhabitants, sharing conversations and singing some early Christmas carols. Meanwhile, at Mama Lana's, another group prepared 300 sandwiches for the homeless and hungry. The final team stayed onsite at Wycliffe to help with painting, mulching, and keeping the school tidy.

It has been beautiful to watch our students modeling Christ's servant-heartedness in their service activities. Below are some reflections from the Wycliffe staff who helped to lead these activities.

Poppy Gee (Grace Community Services)

These students were so great to be with and they embraced the tasks our contact, Lara, gave us. Quite a few refugees came in while we were there, and we were able to welcome them and watch Lara interact in a Persian language as she supported them with clothes and also some help with paperwork and phone calls. We cleaned windows and sorted clothes. This group wanted to tell others it was terrible so they could all go back again and not let the next group go! I was very proud of them. They are now keen to get others at school to donate kitchen items, clothing, craft supplies etc.

Caroline Bartlett (Buckland Nursing Home)

Our students rose to the occasion. On our first trip, we were unsure of what was to be expected of us. We arrived to what was meant to be "garden time", so our students collected the residents from their room and escorted them, many of them in wheelchairs, to the rooftop garden. Our students then sat and chatted with the residents. For many this was a new experience and learning how to engage with the elderly, who are not as coherent as they used to be, stretched them. I myself had one resident randomly start singing to me! It was a lovely morning, and as we went to leave, our coordinator asked for our students to sing a Christmas song. Amazingly, despite being unprepared, our students formed a circle in the middle of all the residents and sang "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" for them. Our coordinator then asked us to escort the residents back to the room! Again, with gentle and compassionate care, our students pushed wheelchairs or walked alongside residents, most of them doing with this without help from the nursing home workers. To finish it off, we got stuck in a broken elevator with two residents in wheelchairs! It was a juggle to not show my stress to any of the residents with our need to get back to school! On the trip home, it was lovely to hear the chatter amongst the students about the different experiences they all had. On another visit, we once again sang carols for the residents. It was a nervous start by some, but by the end of it our carols were in full swing and we sang for over an hour to the residents, decked out in our Christmas hats. It was lovely to see the residents sing along and even dance in the corridors.



Erica Rawlinson (Mama Lana's)

We have had a lovely time volunteering together. On our first morning, we arrived and the kids were welcomed by Lana, Coco and about four other volunteers. The girls sat at tables and made sandwiches; the Mama Lana's team have to make at least 300 per day to hand out at night. Our students got to see how the other volunteers prepare and make the meals—quite the production. Another student spent time out in the yard with Vicki Williams and myself, sorting clothes, shoes and toys. When we left we asked the students what they thought and they said they didn't quite get until the end that 300 sandwiches meant 300 people. They were blown away that so many people in our area were either homeless or couldn't afford to eat. On our way out there was a gentleman receiving some toiletries from Lana. I explained to the students that he had been homeless since he was 11, and he is now about 35... Mama Lana's is his safe space.

Hopefully it gives them something to think about. I suggested they look around next time they are in Penrith—you will see more of the homeless if you take the time. I also said to think twice about throwing clothes, toys, or books away, as they can always be donated.

Chris Parker and Ryan Cliff (Wycliffe Property)

The lovely group of students back at school that served with the Property Team also did a great job. More importantly they all approached the tasks as humble servants. They were all really responsive and were obviously prepared well with the vision. Some of the many tasks the students worked on included painting the chicken shed, painting the trims on the demountable classrooms, planting out the garden near the TAS classrooms, fixing the paving around A10, and doing some odd jobs in the library.



THE NAVIGATE SOLO

LEFT AND BELOW: Our Year 10 students recently attended their long-awaited Navigate Solo camp at Eureka Clearing. Students camped alone for the night, enjoying creation and cooking their own meals, and were invited to spend time in reflection rather than in structured activity.



Learning on the job

God's people are created to live in a pattern of work and rest. We are all created in God's image with different skills and talents!

Senior School students at Wycliffe are invited to consider how their gifts might inform their pathways after school. The Australian Blueprint for Career Development highly values the role work experience plays for young people planning their career direction.

This year, over 60% of the Year 10 students from Wycliffe and Hope took part in our optional work experience program. 100% of the students who participated now feel better prepared to make decisions about their studies and career path. This is what they said...

Audrey, Surveying: The experience of a regular shift length was eye opening. I also think that the work I got to do in and out of office was valuable in providing me more clarity in what I want from a career.

Aravis, Zoo Keeping: I found I enjoy working with animals and found the days there energising and not tiring.

Quinn, Superannuation: What I found valuable about my work experience was that it showed me what a week in the corporate world looks like. I also learned that there are many more jobs in super than is obvious from outside the industry.

Abigail, Childcare: My plan was originally to go to university to become a teacher in primary school. This challenged me to think about whether I wanted to teach primary students or preschoolers/babies/toddlers.

Anna, Health: I valued being treated like an adult and getting to experience all kinds of different fields within the health field.

Jack, Air Force: Spending time at RAAF Base Richmond showed true insight into the everyday lives of the men and women serving our country in the Air Force. Talking to officers about their time

training and what it was like most certainly changed my outlook on my future.

Isabel, Barrister: My work experience provided me with an in-depth perspective on what it looks like to be in courtroom, learning about the different jobs and roles of each person was extremely helpful. The different types of law were interesting, and I enjoyed viewing a wide variety!

Micah, Barrister: I really appreciated the people who were looking after me for taking time out of their own week, even though they didn't have to, to provide an incredible experience for me. It was such a great week, and I am very thankful.

Emily, Solicitor: I found all the work I did relevant and informative of the different choices you have when doing law. However, I found the work I did with the criminal lawyer most valuable and helped define the type of law I'm most interested in.

Gracie, Hospital: I found my work experience valuable because it showed all the different careers that make a hospital function. Another valuable thing was we had different people telling us how they got into their careers, and they told us the pathways to get a job in the hospital.

Ada, Solicitor: It was fascinating seeing the "behind the scenes" of how wills and contracts are made, how court cases are issued, and clients are treated, how cases are carried out and the responsibility that solicitors hold. Learning all this was valuable in how I perceive the world of Law, and how things from a legal perspective happen.

Charlie, Food Preparation: My work experience taught me some new kitchen skills. I can use them at home when I'm cooking. I think I would like a job in a kitchen one day, but I need to learn a lot more first.

Debra Hare
Careers and Pathways Leader





Putting on a show

Every year, the Wycliffe Christian School elective Drama classes in Years 9, 10, 11 and 12 perform in the Annual Youth Theatre Festival, called “The Riff.” Held at The Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, this year’s production was called “Down the Rabbit Hole,” and Wycliffe created a wonderfully magical act titled “The Enchanted Forest.” Featuring lead roles from students in Years 11 and 12, the entire cast created their own forest animal masks, and anthropomorphised costumes to bring their forest animals to life.

The audience was taken on a hilariously fun and wise journey as they examined some of the more important things in life.

Enjoy the photos from 2024, and make sure you don’t miss out on buying tickets for “The Riff” in 2025!

Natalie Maddock
Drama Teacher



Learning Snapshot
Down the Rabbit Hole



Beyond Wycliffe

We caught up with some Wycliffe alumni to hear where their paths have taken them since leaving school.

DEB GRIFFITH (née Horswell)

When did you attend Wycliffe?

I was at Wycliffe from 1980 to 1983 for year levels 8 to 10.

Do you have some favourite memories of school?

Being accepted, a sense of belonging, and safety to be a voice for injustice if required. Lifelong friendships were made there, and some continued into university. Special teachers who helped shape my formative outlook on the world included Glen McCaffery, Barbara Brackenbury, Andrea (married, now Lovell), Kevin Bartley, Geoff Bates and Principal Mr Johnston each etched a special place. It wasn't all roses—I did get in trouble from Mr Johnston for standing on a skateboard at the train station when our train was delayed for an hour and a half. I got off when asked, but forgiveness of those in authority when they get it wrong starts early.

Having varied opportunities—many state sporting events, being part of a singing group, and visiting aged care and palliative care at Buckland Nursing home with a parent of one of my classmates. We didn't have many excursions due to the misbehaviour of previous years so any extracurricular activities were welcomed!

What have you been up to since leaving school?

Enjoying life in the gift of one day at a time. I am married with the gift of four children loving God wholeheartedly. I have been able to study further in Nursing and Midwifery, then continue to my masters and becoming a university lecturer, and then with Baptist Mission Australia, based in Siem Reap Cambodia since 2016. We used to have another alumni, Janelle Windus (née Green), here in Cambodia too.

How have your experiences at school impacted your life?

I learned to be an advocate for what you believe to empower, highlight, and support others. For the last eight years, I have lived and served as a nurse and midwife with my husband Rob in Siem Reap, Cambodia with Baptist Mission Australia.

Could you talk about your faith journey?

God keeps redeeming, restoring and reclaiming his kingdom on Earth, in, through, and even despite me. My biblical identity: I am a chosen, purchased fragrance of God, revealing scents of his goodness. From a dysfunctional family life as a foster child to a flourishing healthy emotionally intelligent woman who values being mentored and mentoring others. God makes all things possible that man cannot conceive or conceptualise — Amen!

JODIE McIVER (née Kaldor)

When did you attend Wycliffe?

I attended Wycliffe for all of high school, from 1998 to 2003. I can't believe over 20 years have since passed!

Do you have some favourite memories of school?

Some of my favourite memories of school relate to the cultural exchange program with Taufa'ahau Pilolevu College in Tonga. I have fond memories of the adventure of going over there with my classmates to experience life in such a different community to our own, and then being able to host some of those students at our home afterwards. Some of my friendships formed at high school have become life-long as well.

What have you been up to since leaving school?

After leaving school I studied to become a midwife and have enjoyed working with women and families during their transition to parenthood ever since. I later studied a degree in theology which has equipped me to work alongside my husband in Anglican church ministry in South-Western Sydney and now Blackheath for the last 10 years. We also have three children, now all at school themselves. Most recently I brought together all these different parts of my life to write a book called *Bringing Forth Life: God's purposes in pregnancy and birth*. I felt there was a real need and opportunity to create a practical, theological and pastoral guide for new parents.

How have your experiences at school impacted your life?

I think that the warm and caring community at Wycliffe (alongside family and church communities) helped lay a stable foundation from which I could embark upon life in the wider world with a healthy sense of self and my place in God's world. It also laid the academic foundations for everything I have wanted to undertake since then.

Could you talk about your faith journey?

During my time at high school my personal Christian faith developed, which has shaped my life and choices since then. Right after finishing school I enjoyed opportunities to serve and minister to others and try to reflect Jesus' love to them. More recently I've felt a strong sense of God's purposes as I explored the spiritual as well as physical and emotional aspects of the transition to parenthood, and was able to bring together my different life experiences in my writing.



TOP: Jodie, with her book *Bringing Forth Life*.

PREVIOUS PAGE AND LEFT: Deb serves alongside her husband Rob as a nurse and midwife in Siem Reap, Cambodia.



The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Psalm 19:1

Our building project

As we finish up the school year for 2024, the building project taking place on site is running to the program of works as the scaffolding and formwork nears completion. The foundations have been laid, some of the walls erected, and all the underground services (including pipes, electrical, fire hydrants and drainage) have been completed. The final ground levels around the building have been established and some landscaping sandstone blocks placed for support of garden beds.

As you read this, we will have completed the final concrete pours for the columns, and the second storey slab will have been poured. In recent weeks approximately 38 concrete trucks

entered and exited the school grounds, with a mammoth effort being undertaken by the Steve Watt team and contractors. We hope to see the steel frames being delivered and erected before Christmas and the roof going on early January.

It's been wonderful to see this project taking shape, and we are all thankful to our community for bearing with us throughout it. We are looking forward to the new opportunities for learning and community at its completion.

Paul Dowse
Property Manager





Farewelling our class of 2024

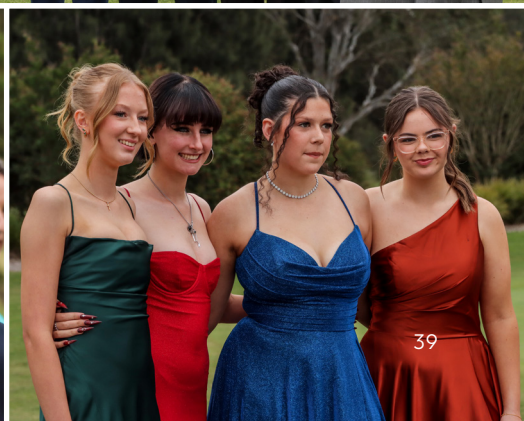
As Principal Dave Johnston shared with our community in a newsletter earlier this year, the graduation of Year 12 is always a bittersweet time in the school calendar: “There is sadness as we farewell students who we treasure and who we have had the privilege of watching grow into thoughtful, mature young adults. Yet there is also excitement and beautiful celebration as they begin new life chapters and step out into the wider world.”

The aspirations read out at our Farewell Assembly and Graduation Evening reflected a group of diverse interests and callings. Some are considering gap years to take a break from study and work, while others plan to jump directly into university or TAFE. Among the 26 students in our class of 2024 are

budding engineers, musicians, artists, lawyers, and educators.

The weeks leading up to graduation are always busy ones, with dress-up days, a barbecue picnic and a water fight giving Year 12 much-needed time to blow off steam. Then, at the assembly and Graduation Evening, we took time to celebrate each individual student, present special awards, and hear some amazing musical performances.

We are so thankful for all the ways these young people have blessed our community over the years, and we know that wherever their paths lead beyond Wycliffe, they each have amazing things in store.





A community of care

1 in 4 Australian school students are currently experiencing psychological distress. How can a Christian learning community respond?

World Mental Health Day, observed annually on October 10th, serves as a global platform to raise awareness about mental health issues and mobilise efforts to support mental well-being. The theme for 2024, “Mental Health at Work”, emphasised the vital connection between mental health and our daily environments, including schools.

As the school counsellor here at Wycliffe Christian School,

working with our beautiful students of all ages and stages, I recognise the critical importance of mental health in our children’s overall development. In today’s world, our young people face numerous pressures: nearly half of all individuals will experience a diagnosable mental health issue at some point in their lives, with 1 in 4 Australian school students currently experiencing high or very high psychological distress (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024).

It's encouraging to see society increasingly acknowledging the importance of mental health, with professionals continually learning how to support those struggling. While significant advances have been made in understanding and addressing mental health, the Christian faith offers unique support. Like every aspect of our lives, our minds suffer the ill effects of living in a fallen, broken world. All of us experience challenges to our mental health. Increasingly, our society is recognising these concerns and talking about them, as professionals learn more about the nature of these struggles and how to treat them.

Even with such advances, I believe the Christian faith offers something unique. Most mental health professionals acknowledge the complex factors that impinge upon our wellbeing. They affirm that we are bio-psycho-social beings: influenced by our biological and genetic makeup, our past experiences and patterns of thinking, and our networks of relationships. Yet they also recognise a spiritual dimension to life, one where questions of meaning and purpose influence us for good or ill. New research shows that some of the attitudes and behaviours I would characterise as the Christian walk actually do us good (Condie, 2019). For example, gratitude and acts of kindness benefit brain function and emotional health. Expressing gratitude positively shapes neural pathways, while being warm-hearted and forgiving builds emotional resilience. These values can genuinely help our children thrive.

By working together, we can ensure your child feels safe, valued and supported

I believe two key aspects of the Christian faith and experience have immense potential to positively impact our lives. First, faith in Jesus Christ connects us to a larger story that profoundly influences our sense of self and our understanding of our purpose. We are given an identity as God's beloved

children, a status that isn't earned through our achievements but is freely given, affirming our worth without conditions. This same God, who created all things and is bringing restoration through Christ, invites us to be part of His grand plans. Scripture assures us that our future is held securely in His faithful hands. These truths offer incredible psychological freedom, enabling us to find joy, even on the hardest days, when they are deeply rooted in our hearts.

Secondly, faith in Christ also places us within a caring community. Connecting face-to-face with others is one of the greatest sources of human happiness, and the supportive relationships found within our school and Christian communities can deeply enrich our lives. We truly make a difference when we take Jesus' words to heart, recognising one another as family (Mark 3:31-35), and when we show love and acceptance to all, especially those who are struggling with their mental health.

As parents, you play a crucial role in fostering this sense of community, both within your own families and throughout the wider school environment. Encouraging your children to show compassion, understanding, and kindness contributes to a culture where everyone feels valued and supported.

At Wycliffe Christian School, we are deeply committed to comprehensive mental health support. We combine evidence-based practices with values that promote emotional resilience and a deep sense of purpose. By working together, we can ensure your child feels safe, valued and supported. Together, we can create a nurturing environment where every student has the opportunity to flourish both academically and personally. Let's continue to build a community of care, where our children know they are loved and can grow into happy, healthy individuals.

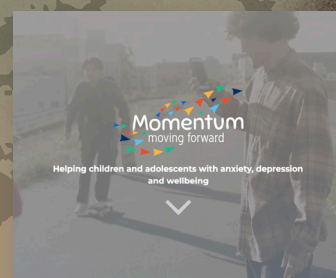
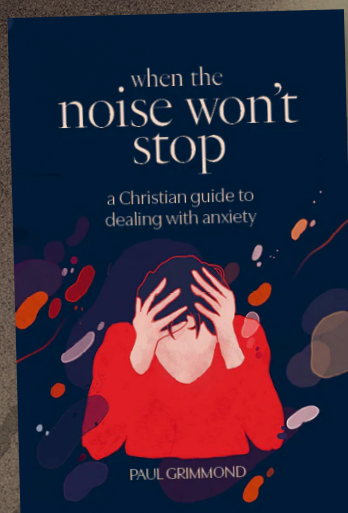
Nicole Clark
Wycliffe School Counsellor

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

When the Noise Won't Stop:
A Christian guide to dealing with anxiety
by Paul Grimmond

The Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute
www.mentalhealthinstitute.org.au

Momentum Program
www.momentumhub.org.au





FATHER'S DAY

Wycliffe celebrated the father figures of our community at our annual community breakfast, once again generously served by student volunteers. We also held a gift stall for Junior students alongside parent helpers.





GRANDPARENTS DAY

In Term 4, the Junior School welcomed hundreds of special visitors to their classrooms for games and activities, and then shared a picnic lunch together. It was wonderful to spend some time showing our appreciation for our grandparents and “grandfriends”!



Find your place, find your purpose

Wycliffe Christian School and Wycliffe Hope School

