



Albury Presbyterian Churches
growing followers of Jesus

welcome!



Who are we? What are we doing? Where are we heading? Why do we do the things that we do?

They're all important questions to be asking as you connect with us at APC.

• the gospel

The gospel is the good news message concerning the saving rule of Jesus Christ. It is quite simply the most important, most wonderful news anyone could ever possibly hear.

Everything we do & think at APC centres on the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.

By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you.

Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...**”*

(1 Corinthians 15:1–8 NIV11)

• the gospel and church

God regards the gathering of Christians as very important.

This importance arises directly from the message of the gospel of Christ Jesus.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

(Hebrews 10:19–25 NIV11)

• our mission

Our mission statement is **growing followers of Jesus.**

It's who we are and what we are doing together under God by his power and for his glory.

It's an awesome responsibility, privilege and joy!

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18–20 NIV)

• our values

In growing followers of Jesus we hold these core values:-

hearing

We delight in hearing God speak to us in his living word, the Bible. We hear and obey the Word of God as the Bible is read, preached, taught and spoken.

(Psalm 19.7-11, Psalm 119, Colossians 3.15-16, 2Timothy 3.14-17, Hebrews 1.1-4)

praying

We delight in praying to God our Father expressing our dependence on his gracious sovereignty. We find great joy in approaching God our Father with confidence through Jesus by the Spirit in adoration, confession, thanksgiving and request.

(Matthew 6.9-13, Ephesians 6.18, Philippians 4.4-7, 1John 1.8-9)

gathering

We delight in gathering as God's family to worship him, hearing and responding to his Word. We gather to encourage one another to grow as followers of Jesus. In our gathering we anticipate the eternal gathering before the throne of God as a great multitude from every tribe, people, language and nation saved by Christ Jesus.

(Ephesians 4.11-16, 1Thessalonians 5.11, Hebrews 10.23-25, Revelation 7.9-17)

speaking

We delight in speaking God's powerful Word to each other and to outsiders. As followers of Jesus we are called to speak the truth in love reaching out to the lost and building up believers.

(John 3.16-18, Romans 1.16-17, Romans 3.21-26, Romans 10.9-15, Ephesians 4.15-16, Colossians 3.15-16, 2Timothy 4.2-5, 1Peter 3.15, 1Peter 4.11)

loving

We delight in loving others and so reflecting the God who is love. God calls us to use our gifts, our time and resources to serve and care for one another and the world. As followers of Jesus we prize love, justice and mercy.

(Luke 10.27, 1Corinthians 13, Galatians 6.10, James 1.27, 1Peter 4.7-11, 1John 3.16-18)

living

We delight in living out the new life that Christ Jesus has won for us through his death and resurrection. We live by his Spirit as he transforms us into his likeness, producing his fruit in our lives.

(John 10.7-11, John 11.25-26, Galatians 5.22-24, Ephesians 2.1-10, Ephesians 4.21-24, Colossians 3.12-14)

training

We delight in training each other to better serve Jesus and his people. We deliberately equip followers of Jesus to be disciple-making disciples both here and afar.

(Matthew 28.18-20, Ephesians 4.11-13, 2Timothy 2.2)

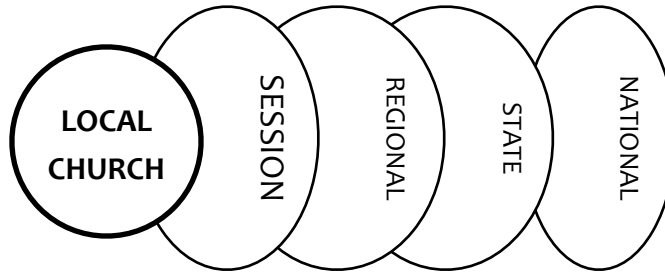
multiplying

We delight in multiplying our gatherings of God's family. We are committed to 'growing big by staying small', planting and nurturing new family gatherings as God's Word and Spirit brings growth.

(Matthew 9.37-38, 1Corinthians 3.6-9, 1Corinthians 9.19-23, 10.31-11.1, Colossians 1.28-29)

• our organisation

Presbyterian organisation



APC organisation



Albury Presbyterian Churches
growing followers of Jesus

A collage of church-related cards and boxes. At the top, two dashed-line boxes are labeled "church plant". Below them are several cards for different church services:

- church@nine** (9am 402 Wagga Rd)
- nightchurch** (6pm 402 Wagga Rd)
- morningchurch** (10:30am 402 Wagga Rd)
- fresh start church** (10am Albury TAFE)

Each service card lists associated roles and ministries:

- church@nine**: church elders & pastor
- nightchurch**: church elders & pastor
- morningchurch**: church elders & pastor, church ministry leaders
- fresh start church**: church elders & pastor, church ministry leaders

Below the cards are three boxes describing organizational structures:

- the Session** elders
- committee of management** church reps
- cross church ministries:** eg. evangelistic events, ministry training, Junior Jivers, Yoop (Youth group), Craft n Chat, Scripture teaching, Child Protection, etc.

At the bottom of the collage, two cards list **church ministries** for each service:

- church@nine**: Sunday gatherings, growth groups, training, evangelism, kids, etc.
- fresh start church**: Sunday gatherings, growth groups, training, evangelism, kids, etc.

• our leadership

the elders

church@nine:	Phillip Cations, Norman McLean, Cade Whitbourn
fresh start church:	Bruce McLean , Keith Wiencke, Peter Whitbourn
morningchurch:	Anthony Johnston, Peter Kirkwood
nightchurch:	Graeme Castle

the pastors

Mike Wong (church@nine)
David Powell (morningchurch)
Paul Sheely (fresh start church, nightchurch)

• our Sunday gatherings

Our Sunday gatherings in our churches are our most important gatherings across APC.

We gather in the name of Jesus to have God address us in his Word and to respond to him together humbly & thankfully.

The reading & preaching of the Word of God is the centre piece of our gatherings. We seek to have the Word of Christ dwell among us richly (Col 3.16). Our main practice is work our way through whole books of the Bible. We occasionally have topical teaching series. The same Bible talk by the same preacher is delivered at all 3 of our churches.

We respond to the preaching of God's word in prayer & singing & conversation. Our aim is the strengthening, a encouraging and comfort of all.

• our growth groups

Our gathering in growth groups is our second most important gatherings across APC. Each of our churches has its own network of growth groups.

We encourage everyone to commit to a growth group.

Unsurprisingly, our growth groups are all about us growing as followers of Jesus. So, in each of our growth groups we will look at the Bible, pray, share, train & evangelise together.

Our growth groups are the centre of our pastoral care.

Anyone can commit to a growth group at any time.

• some of our cross church ministries

Junior Jivers

Junior Jivers is a fun music and movement program for children and carers. Its an outreach ministry.

Thursdays & Fridays 10.00 am - 11.00 am (during NSW school term time).

Craft & chat

Craft 'n Chat is a great chance to pick up that project, or learn new crafts, while chatting with other crafters. Its an outreach ministry where over arvo tea someone shares something of their journey as a follower of Jesus. It's all really relaxed, friendly and fun. All women welcome!

Tuesdays 1-3pm (every second week)

Yoop

Yoop is the name of our high school aged youth group. Yoop is growing teenage followers of Jesus. We have heaps of fun together checking out the Bible together with games, food & friends!

Fridays 7:30-9:30pm (during NSW school term).

Carols for our community

In the week leading up to Christmas we invite our community onto our patch for a free BBQ, games & activities for the kids, some great carol singing followed by a big supper.

• our website

www.alburychurch.org.au

Download Bible talks & Bible studies etc, view the church calendar & much more

On the home page you can subscribe to email updates to help you keep track of when the website is updated with new sermons, discussion questions or news.



[/alburypresbyterianchurches](https://www.facebook.com/alburypresbyterianchurches)

• our vision¹

Recognising humbly that as we labour, it is God who gives the growth:-

By the end of 2017 we will have employed a fourth pastor and planted a fifth church in Thurgoona.

• our church planting adventures

a brief look back (& forward)

In 2009 a long-serving pastor of APC took a call to serve in another city. This presented the church leadership with an opportunity to prayerfully think through the long-term direction of APC. With David Powell's guidance the elders considered the tactical pros & cons of various models and chose a 'many-church' model'.

From 2010, after Paul Sheely accepted a call to APC, the eldership of APC invested in formulating our mission, values and vision statements. Our first vision statement was published in March 2010. From here we launched our mission statement – 'growing followers of Jesus'. This is a statement of both, who we are and what we do. At this time we also formally reorganised into 3 interdependent churches including the planting of nightchurch (April 25, 2010). Two slogans also became prominent in articulating our 'many-church' tactic:- "1 church 1 pastor"; and "grow big by staying small".

Throughout 2010 the leaders continued to invest time in understanding & articulating who we are at APC and so next produced a statement of our core values that as adopted by the churches. Most relevant to this discussion is the value of multiplying:

multiplying

We delight in multiplying our gatherings of God's family. We are committed to 'growing big by staying small', planting and nurturing new family gatherings as God's Word and Spirit brings growth. (Matthew 9.37-38, 1Corinthians 3.6-9, 1Corinthians 9.19-23, 10.31-11.1, Colossians 1.28-29)

Having established our mission and values it was then time to project a vision. In March 2011 the elders were united behind a vision for APC and this was launched to the churches in April 2011. It was headlined as follows:

Recognising humbly that as we labour, it is God who gives the growth:-

By the end of 2014, we will have employed a third pastor and planted a fourth church

God gave the growth more quickly than we anticipated and we were delighted that Mike Wong could join the staff team in January 2013.

In 2013 the leadership team invested deeply in prayerfully thinking through the strategy of church planting. There was much research, brainstorming and prayer. Paul, Mike and Dave visited some church-planters in Hobart, Tasmania. The elders attended a Geneva push church-planting conference and read a comprehensive book from a leading church-planter & researcher. In 2014 Paul and Margie were assessed as church-planters.

This culminated in the second vision statement launched to the churches at a celebration Sunday, March 9th 2014.

Recognising humbly that as we labour, it is God who gives the growth:-

By the end of 2017, we will have employed a fourth pastor and planted a fifth church, (Thurgoona)

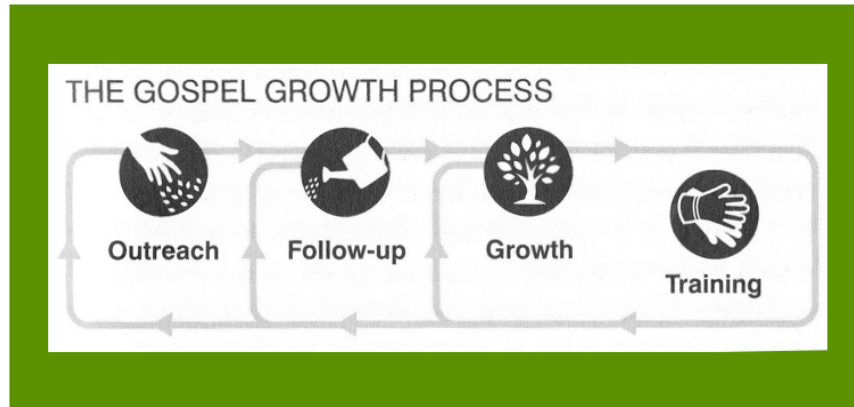
The associated vision paper also announced the launch of 'Fresh Start church' in 2015 and the training & recruiting of its core team throughout 2014.

NOTE: The Vision Papers mentioned here can be accessed via the web site (alburchurch.org.au/resources) as can a history of APC from 1947-1997.

• your growth

This diagram is helpful in capturing the growth we prayerfully hope happens to everyone connected & committed to APC. From hearing the gospel of Jesus for the first time & being converted & followed up & disciplined, growing as a follower of Jesus & being trained & equipped to serve others in outreach, follow up & growth.

We're excited by the possibilities!



The Trellis and the Vine, Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, page 85

• your commitment

Committed to growing

We encourage you to be committed to be growing as a follower of Jesus yourself as well as helping others grow as followers of Jesus too.

Committed to one another

Being a part of a church family is not to be a spectator but to be on the field playing in the team.

We encourage you to commit to a growth group, sign up on rosters, invite people over to your home... get involved and don't stand back!

We encourage you to be committed to the others in your church family in love & service.

Committed to gathering

Our Sunday gatherings and our growth group gatherings are very important because we gather together to hear God address us from the Bible and to encourage & spur each other on in trust & obedience.

Being committed to our gatherings is a vital part of belonging to APC.

Committed to giving

God loves a generous giver (2Cor 9.7) and we encourage you to invest generously in gospel ministry including the ministries of APC. All of our ministries are funded by the giving of our people. We encourage direct debiting to aid constancy. You can find out more details about these matters from the monthly Committee of Management updates.

Membership matters

As a Presbyterian church we have 2 types of formal membership :-

- An adherent member is someone who calls APC his or her church and is committed to gathering with us.
- A communicant member is someone who calls APC his or her church, is committed to gathering with us and on profession of faith in Jesus Christ has been admitted by the Session into communicant membership.

When someone joins our church they are included on the roll as an adherent member.

However, communicant membership is important as only communicant members have a role in determining whom the elders and ministers are within APC.

For that reason we encourage all Christian people committed to APC to consider becoming a communicant member. More information on this is available in our Membership Matters leaflet.

• faqs

What do Presbyterians believe?

The statement of faith of the Presbyterian church of Australia is the Westminster Confession. You can access a copy of it at :- <http://www.presbyterian.org.au/index.php/about-the-pca>

In APC, what's the place of experience, reason & tradition in shaping our belief & practice?

All 3 are helpful but none have the authority of the Bible.

What ultimately shapes our belief & practice is God's Word, the Bible.

What we experience & what reason & tradition teach us must submit to the authoritative truth of the Bible.

(For more:- <http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/1988/05/four-ways-to-live/>)

What is APC's practice with regards to baptism?

As a Presbyterian church we baptise believing adults and also the children & infants of believers. Its important to recognise that baptism is only a sign of the salvation available through faith in Jesus.

How does APC celebrate the Lord's supper / communion?

Within the churches of APC Jesus' death is remembered & celebrated every time we gather in our prayers & our preaching & speaking & our singing. It is particularly remembered by sharing communion. We use ordinary bread and ordinary grape juice to remember with thanksgiving the extraordinary sacrifice of our Saviour King. The frequency of communion varies from church to church.

In APC gatherings, what's the place of spiritual gifts?

The risen Lord Jesus equips his people by his Spirit to serve him and his people with a variety of gifts. The use of these gifts is to be determined by love. The gifts are given to build up the church family. APC is not a pentecostal church but does encourage all of its members to use their gifts Biblically.

Does APC teach “predestination”?

Yes. The Bible resounds with the glory of the sovereignty of God in all things including those who are saved.

“In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,” (Ephesians 1:11 NIV11)

This in no way diminishes the need of people to respond to the gospel message with faith & obedience. There of course is mystery in the compatibility of these 2 truths but according to Jesus both must be held (John 6.35-40).

What’s the place of music & singing in the gatherings of APC?

The truths of God are so great and so wonderful that they conquer both our minds & our hearts. Singing is the inevitable consequence of believing the gospel of Jesus!

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.” (Colossians 3:16 NIV11)

Its clear from this verse that the words that we sing are very important. More important than the style music. We strive to sing songs whose words reflect the great & wonderful truths of the Bible.

We sing not to draw near to God, but because God has chosen to draw near to us in his Son the Lord Jesus.

• your questions

• what’s next?