

WARRANTYTE COMMUNITY CHURCH PLAYGROUP

26 Years and still going strong

They say that when you have been in Warrandyte for 20 – 30 years, you are almost a local!

The Warrandyte Community Church (WCC) Playgroups has been operating every year without a break for 26 years. So it is truly a local institution.

In 1982 a group of young mums got together and with the help and encouragement of the Community Church, started what has been a wonderful thing for our town. Over 1,000 children [500 Warrandyte families] have benefited from the love and care of the leaders of the playgroup in those 25 years. It has been a great support for parents who from time to time need the help of other mums. 30 – 40 members of WCC have been playgroup leaders over those 25 years and they say they have loved every minute of being able to have friendships and share their lives and faith in Jesus with so many families.

In the 1980's there were 2 groups operating each week, then into the 1990's there has been a group operating every weekday. In that time there has been a number of families who have become part of the church fellowship.

Our playgroup is made up of parents, carers and under-school aged children who meet regularly for their mutual benefit in a Christian atmosphere. It aims to help children develop physically, emotionally and spiritually,

offering families opportunities to play together, while providing time to sit and chat and an ability to help from family to family.

Over the years, along with the playgroup leaders, our pastor Peter Keep and others have willingly provided support at every level, especially rising to the occasion in times of family crisis when we can be Jesus to these families. Over time, there has been serious illness, grief and other sadness in various families and playgroup plays an important role supporting families during those incredibly tough times.

All church activities are promoted through playgroup particularly special services at Christmas, Easter, Mother's and Father's day. Instead of toys, each child is given a Christian book from playgroup, for Christmas. Our playgroup participates in the Samaritans Purse Christmas Shoe Box appeal where families fill a shoebox each to give to a needy child in a third world country nearby.

Playgroup PROGRAM

Free Play: 50 minute -inside and/or outside (weather permitting)

Mat-time: 10 minutes – a planned session led by one of the leaders, including songs and a story of a simple character building nature with a Christian flavour.

Snack: 10 minutes- all children go with their parent to wash before eating then sit at the table all together to have cutup fruit and a cup of water, after singing a simple

thank you 'grace' song.

Activity: 10– 30 minutes - a simple activity/craft for children to participate in, supervised by a parent on roster.

Free Play: – outside (weather permitting).

Pack up: last 10 minutes- everyone helps to put away toys etc.

Several times a year, leaders from each group arrange outings such as Mum's night out, a farm day, a bus ride or a walk to along the Yarra river path to the Bakery and it's adjoining playground is a favourite.

We are blessed with facilities located under the main church building that has steadily developed over the 26 years that include a large dedicated indoor play area, kitchen, toilets and store room and a good size outdoor playground. This enables each playgroup session to accommodate 20 children or 15 families, whichever comes first, led by at least 2-3 church members.

By Jan Bangay,
W.C.C. playgroup co ordinator and denominational representative on CPN committee.