



6 October 2022

Wayside Chapel disappointed to cancel the Long Walk Home physical event scheduled for Friday, 7 October 2022

Statement from Rev Jon Owen, CEO and Pastor, Wayside Chapel

Given the extraordinary weather of the last few days, and having taken expert advice, we have reluctantly reached the decision that we must cancel the 28km Long Walk Home tomorrow between Parramatta and Kings Cross.

We exist to keep our community as safe as possible. The same care that we extend to the people who walk through our doors seeking help must be applied to our 370 strong community of walkers who registered.

The ongoing and severe wet weather forecasted for tomorrow night means we do not feel we can adequately meet the conditions required by NSW Police to keep event participants and volunteers safe. We also feel it would be wrong of us to potentially add to the demands that will inevitably be made on the community support services.

One of the hardest factors in making the decision to cancel is the fact that many of our visitors don't have the choice to stop walking the streets in search of services and a safe place to sleep during bad weather.

As hard as it is, we know in our hearts and heads that the decision to cancel tomorrow's event is the right decision.

So, while tomorrow won't go ahead as scheduled we have other plans!

Please stick with us! Anyone who was registered to take part in the physical event can instead walk 28km in their local area from Friday 7 to Friday 14 October, in the safest way possible.

Our Long Walk Home Ambassador, Byron Gray, is committed to seeing this challenge through and he's inviting you to do the same.

In the wake of the cancellation, Wayside is also calling on anyone else to [sign up too](#) and show people sleeping rough on our streets they are loved and not forgotten.

We know this cancellation will be disruptive for some participants, and disappointing for us all. We are so grateful for the enthusiasm, generosity and love everyone has shown towards this event and Wayside Chapel. Thank you.

Rev Jon Owen
CEO and Pastor
Wayside Chapel

To register or donate visit: longwalkhome.com.au

This year's event is proudly sponsored by Credit Suisse, PwC and Schroders.

#ENDS#

About Wayside Chapel

Wayside Chapel has provided unconditional love, care and support for people on and around the streets of Sydney since 1964. Each year, thousands of people visit Wayside's two centres in Kings Cross and Bondi for assistance in gaining equitable access to essential health, welfare, and related services. Wayside Chapel is well-known for its community services centres, Wingspan Project, outreach service, mental health program and Aboriginal Program. Under the banner of 'Love Over Hate', Wayside's programs and services are designed to ensure that the most marginalised members of the community have access to essential health, welfare, and social and recreational services.

For further information on Wayside Chapel:

<https://www.waysidechapel.org.au>

About Jon Owen

Jon Owen became a Pastor and CEO of Wayside Chapel in July 2018. He initially joined Wayside Chapel in 2016 as an Assistant Pastor and also became Head of People and Culture based in Kings Cross. Jon is of Sri-Lankan and Indian heritage. Jon is a qualified Social Worker and for 20 years was a member of a community organisation dedicated to living and serving amongst the poor. Jon heads up Wayside Chapel and continues Wayside's mission of creating a community with no 'us and them'. As an immigrant, Jon's life is a testament to the power of hospitality and he is passionate about working alongside people who are socially excluded as they seek reconciliation, welcome, justice and healing and believes that Wayside's power lies in its proximity to the street.