



Jenni does MTS!

<https://www.jennimurraymts.com>

January Update: Kicking off 2026!



Hi friends,

2026 is now well underway and I wanted to give you an update on what I've been up to over the summer and what's coming up in the second year of my MTS apprenticeship.

I also want to thank you again for all you are doing to support me. My 2026 fundraising target is around \$15 000, so please take a look at end of this newsletter or my website (link above) to find out more, and please share my website with those you think may be interested in supporting me on this journey.

I've made a [short video update](#) of what I'll be doing this year, so please take a look to hear about the exciting things ahead! I was also asked last year by MTS to be interviewed for their 2025 Impact Report, which was released in January, and you can find my interview [here](#) if you'd like to have a read.



Getting crafty with the nativity set design.



December marked my first Christmas as an apprentice, and that meant it was time for my first experience with the Christmas nativity! I helped Sam, our Director of Family Ministries, as the assistant director. One of the many things I'm loving about this apprenticeship is the chance to step outside my comfort zone and do things I normally wouldn't do, and even though I had a year of experience teaching Year 2 SRE under my belt, that's quite different to helping co-ordinate a large group of children from creche right through to primary school age in putting on a play – and it was some of the most fun I've had all year! The joy, dedication, and courage with which the kids played their roles was amazing to witness, and the love in the room as families crowded in to watch was clear to see. The plan is for me to take over directing it at the end of this year, so it was great preparation for my upcoming debut as nativity director for Christmas 2026!

January was a quieter month, which gave me a great opportunity to prepare for the year ahead. I was able to invest more intentionally in my quiet times with God, spending some time in 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings. I've also been given the chance to try my hand at planning the youth teaching programs for Terms 2 and 4. At Youthworks in Semester 2, our New Testament unit was on the Jesus and the Gospels, for which I'd done an assessment on planning a Gospel teaching program, so this was a great chance to put into practice what I'd been learning! While I chose Matthew for my assignment, our Term 2 youth focus is on Mark, and it was so wonderful to be able to deep dive into Mark as I considered what would be a good main theme and what ten passages would work best to explore this theme with our youth. It's still a work in progress but I'm really excited to keep collaborating with the staff team as they help me refine it, and I'm looking forward to seeing it in action in Term 2! My next project is to help with planning our Term 4 program on Ecclesiastes, which again works out well as the Year 11 and 12 girls Discipleship Community studied this book throughout Terms 3 and 4 of last year. This will be more of a topical series that our one on Mark, so I'm getting lots of practice at writing different kinds of programs across different Bible genres.

As I write this, I'm reflecting on the past three days, which have been very busy! On Saturday we had our annual Youth Leader's Retreat. We started off the day with scavenger hunt through Glenwood, where Norwest will be starting a new congregation later this year. It was another first for me as I got to plan this

scavenger hunt, and as a Glenwood local, I had a lot of fun on my walks around the suburb plotting out clues and tasks for our leaders – which led to some great photos and videos! We then spent the day together, reading the Word, praying, and re-focusing on our vision, goals and plans for the year ahead.

We then moved into Vision Sunday, our annual service to kick off 2026 together as a church family. I'm continuing to hone my skills in service leading, co-leading at four services throughout the day. It's a privilege to serve in this way, and I'm so grateful for the opportunities I'm being given to grow in confidence in being up front on stage. Monday was Staff Vision Day, where we meet together as a staff team to refresh and relaunch the plans for the year ahead. It was another reminder of the privilege of being part of our wonderful team, and I continue to be so thankful for their daily guidance and encouragement. It was then off to our first Leadership Team Colab for the year, where M-reps and team leaders from ministries across our church meet together to grow as disciples as we reflect, learn and grow together, so our leadership skills and efforts flow from a growing relationship with Jesus. As you'll hear in my video, I'm taking on a M-rep role this year as the Membership rep for our 10:30 service, and this was a great time of collaboration with the other M-reps and team leaders involved in Membership across our church.

There's a few other changes coming up for me this year which you can hear about in my video, and I'm very excited for what's to come in 2026! Youth at Norwest kicks off again this Friday, our Discipleship Communities start up on Sunday, the SRE Conference is on Saturday and then it's back to Youthworks College next week – it's all happening and I'm keen to get started!

If you'd like to support me through prayer, here's some things you can be praying for:

- Thanks for rest and quality time with family over the summer.
- Thanks for the committed and enthusiastic youth leader team and the time we spent together at our Leader's Retreat and pray for a great start to Youth at Norwest 2026 this week as our youth return from holidays.
- That God will continue to develop my skills in leadership and pastoral care throughout this year, particularly as I move into roles more focused on team leading and membership – that I will be a leader fuelled by the gospel, and that all I do in my leadership roles will flow from Scripture with Jesus as the foundation.
- For God's peace, wisdom and sustenance as I move into new areas of responsibility and as my regular responsibilities start up for 2026 – that I will be able to balance my ministry, my time with God, time with family, Youthworks College, and rest.
- For my youth talk planning as I begin working on my two youth talks on Ephesians for this term.

So here we are on the start of a new year! Thank you as always for your support, and a reminder of the details for my fundraising:

Account name: NWA Ancillary Fund

BSB: 062 000

Account number: 16441018

Please add the reference: "Jen Murray 4-1240 Ministry Training"

I'll be back with more updates throughout Term 1!
God bless.

*Grace and peace,
Jenni.*



Fun with Rach as we film the weekly video (top) and the Youth Leader's Retreat 2026 (bottom).

