



***Transformed by Grace to Love
One Another, to Serve the City,
and to Share Christ***

**FROM THE RECTOR -
Rev Dr MICHAEL JENSEN**

There is no doubt that losing something precious makes you value it all the more.

The COVID19 restrictions separated us from one another. We've had church cancelled for a period; we've had to wear face masks; we've had to not sing praise to God.

But what I've noticed is that there is now an even deeper appreciation for what Christian community means! As the restrictions have eased, we've found in one another the joy of Christ and the blessing of the Holy Spirit. We can also look back at 2020 and see how wonderfully God has been at work even through the difficult times.

And he's given us wonderful opportunities to share Christ. Researchers are telling us that people have turned to prayer more frequently in the pandemic than before. There certainly seems to be a willingness to discuss eternal issues more than before. With your support, our Alpha Course has had a really good uptake of 17 people. More people than ever before have joined our Connect Groups. And every single week, we welcome in visitors and new people. Our live streamed services are getting quite a following!

This year we are particularly praying for our Kids and Youth ministries. 2020 was very difficult for our younger people and ministry to them. In

Quarterly Newsletter March 2021

2021, with your help we are working to see these ministries re-established and consolidated. Already, we've seen more than 40 kids coming to our Kids' Church each week, and St Mark's Youth has got off to a flying start on Friday nights. Your support is vital to passing on Christ to the next generation - and we are seeing so much blessing already.



Please do continue to pray for St Mark's, that God would enrich our fellowship in him and produce in us the fruit of the Spirit, so that people would see his love in action.

ALL HIS PATHS ARE PEACE

Easter at St Mark's

GOOD FRIDAY 2 APRIL

8am - Morning Prayer with Choir
10am - All Ages Service
12pm - 3pm Jesus' Words from the Cross

EASTER DAY SUNDAY 4 APRIL

8am - Choral Communion
10am - Communion with sausage sizzle and Easter egg hunt
5.30pm - Communion with sausage sizzle

REGISTER AT:

<http://stmarksdp.org/whats-on/>



All services will also
be live-streamed

ST MARK'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH DARLING POINT
1 Greenoaks Ave, Darling Point
stmarksdp.org | 02 9363 3657





CONNECT GROUPS

In 2020 we were reminded of the importance of community. Our Connect Groups are a vital way that many of our church community stay connected with each other and nurture their connection with God. Churching together during the week like this, either in person or over Zoom, is a flexible, safe environment to meet with other Christians and deepen our faith as we seek to be transformed by grace together.

In 2021 we have over 15 groups that meet during the week at various times and places, with about 150 people involved in a group. Over the course of January, we have had nearly 20 people join Connect Groups for the first time.

Grace Aulakh joined Michael Lawrence's Connect Group in late 2020. Grace says that her group "has been a very important part of my life and helped me grow in my faith during the Covid crisis. We learned how to pray better and constantly communicate with God."

Geoffrey White was a nominal Christian for many years until his close involvement with Christianity in recent years. He is now a part of the Seniors group on Tuesday mornings and said it is the first time that he has been in a Bible study group over a long period of time. Although he realised his own "lack of



knowledge of the Bible," he has loved having our Assistant Minister, David Crain teach the group. He has also appreciated making new and deeper friendships.

We also have a new group especially for mums who are free on Monday mornings. Jen Law says this about it: "It has been so deeply encouraging to meet with other Christian mothers to read God's word and share our parenting experiences and prayer points". For her, it is "very much a highlight of my week!"



Diane Green attends two different groups each week. For her, "my connect groups provide a weekly discipline for me to explore God's word more deeply and meaningfully than I am able to do on my own". She also finds that her groups give her confidence in her beliefs and courage to speak to others about the good news of Jesus Christ.

Please pray with us that God will continue to use our Connect Groups to develop the faith and relationships of those in the St Mark's community.

Rev Dr Tim Escott
Assistant Minister





ST MARK'S KIDS

"It just makes me so happy!"

I remember quivering a little as I picked up the phone to call Di Green to ask her about being involved in Kid's Ministry. Who would say yes to a new opportunity offered by a person they'd never met in the height of a pandemic? Di laughs when I tell her that story. She's been a keen Special Religious Education (SRE) teacher since July last year, joining the team down at Double Bay Primary School on Thursday mornings.

SRE has its own challenges, one of which was a change of classes for Di this year, but she embraces them all with characteristic positivity. "SRE isn't smooth sailing all the time – I have to keep working at getting better at it – but teaching these kids about Jesus is just such a joy. What an amazing opportunity we have right in front of us."

Amazing opportunities are everywhere in Kid's Ministry. New families are coming and making St Mark's their home, which means more kids joining in on Sundays. We welcomed over 45 children in our first week back at Kid's Church this year, even after Covid last year, and the numbers have remained fairly consistent. Bronte Heslehurst has joined us to minister to our youngest kids, while our fabulous Children's Ministry team are discipling our kids this term.

Since opportunities birth opportunities though, we need more help. Do you love inquiry and engaging people with ideas? Could you be a Kid's Church or SRE teacher? Do you thrive at encouragement and caring for softly spoken

people, or have experience in leading discussions? Could you be a helper? Do you enjoy tinkering? We have room for you.

Children are adventurous, curious and fun, and bursting with ideas and questions. "How is it that God could know that he loves us before he'd even made us?" one child in my Kindy SRE class asked last week. She's fitting life together. Will you help her do it?

Stephanie Leung
Children's Minister

WELCOME TO OUR CRECHE WORKER, BRONTE HESLEHURST

We are thrilled to have Bronte Heslehurst join our team as Creche Worker. Bronte shared: "I am passionate about ministering to and caring for the youngest members of God's family. My plan for the crèche ministry is to create an environment where the kids feel loved, welcomed and included as a part of the wider church family. I plan to teach them God's love and grace in ways that they can understand and connect with and am looking forward to seeing the children grow in their love and knowledge of Christ."



Outside of this ministry, Bronte is studying a Bachelor of Advanced Science, majoring in Neuroscience at UNSW. She works as an Engineer Officer in the army reserve.

Bronte has "been encouraged by how welcoming St Mark's has been" and encourages people "to come and say hi as inter-generational community is so important within a church."

**ST MARK'S
ANNUAL LECTURE
LAURA RADEMAKER**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
AUSTRALIA'S FIRST NATIONS
AND CHRISTIANITY**

WHEN
6.30pm, Thursday 27 May 2021

WHERE
St Mark's Church, 1 Greenoaks Avenue,
Darling Point



Register here: <https://stmarksdp.org/whats-on/>



ST MARK'S YOUTH

Friday nights

Praise God, we've had a great start to the year. We've welcomed five new Year 6 students and they've been an absolute joy to have. We've been exploring a 'Big Questions' series tackling important topics such as, 'How can Jesus be the only way?', 'Doesn't science disprove God?', and 'Is God Against My Freedom?'. We've also been enjoying fun activities such as tie-dying shirts and blindfold taste testing generic versus branded snacks.

Sunday mornings

On Sundays we have a Youth Group Bible Study in the upstairs hall. We've been discussing the story of Job and the topic of suffering and trusting God in difficult times.

Growing the team

Tim Escott will be acting as Youth Minister when I go on maternity leave in May. We've been actively working on building the Youth ministry team to partner with us in the discipleship of young people at St Mark's and appreciate your prayers.

Erica Oliver
Youth & Outreach Minister

JOIN WITH US TODAY

St Mark's relies on the generosity of our community to fund the ministries within our parish and beyond. We would be grateful if you could consider just giving whatever you can contribute on a regular basis to help secure our ministries.

Please consider making a gift to St Mark's. Donations can either be directed towards non-tax-deductible projects or tax-deductible projects. Could you please help with all or part of these items for 2021?

NON-TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

Suggestions include:

- Support Bill Clark and the Choir - \$6,000
- Support Children's Ministry - \$2,000
- Support our Youth Ministry - \$2,000
- Purchase a Bible to give away to newcomers - \$50 each

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

In the past, tax-deductible offerings have enabled us to purchase new carpet and revitalise our sound system. Suggestions include:

- The Organ Fund (maintenance and tuning)
- Maintenance of the stonework.

HOW TO DONATE

To make a donation to St Mark's please visit

<https://stmarksdp.org/giving/>