



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

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

The sad surprise of 2021 has been, of course, the lockdown because of COVID19. St Mark's has been closed for services for a second extended period. Like everyone in the community, we've been adapting to this new way of life, and grieving what we've lost for now.

But we have a great hope in Jesus Christ. Peter reminds us to be ready to 'give a reason for the hope that is within you' in 1 Peter 3:15. Now especially, the Christian community has an opportunity to show that we put our trust in God, because he cares for us.

And so, with your kind help, we're not stopping the work of the gospel in Darling Point. Our livestream services have meant that we can continue to gather around God in his Word each week. Connect Groups are meeting together for mutual encouragement on Zoom. Youth Group has continued to meet via Zoom with Rev Tim Escott and his team. Our Children's Minister Stephanie Leung is continuing to engage children and their parents with the Bible.

And we've been looking to support those who've been doing it toughest, through the work of Banksia Women and Rough Edges. St Mark's has generously supported these ministries in our neighbourhood during the lockdown period.

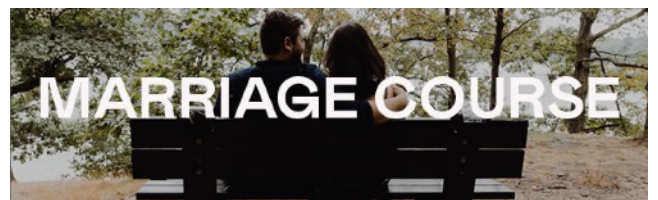
Quarterly Newsletter September 2021

We also need to take this moment to think about what God is calling us to do when the era of COVID is past. Your support now will help us as we build for the future, in which we will continue to hope in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Michael Jensen

JOIN US FOR CHURCH ONLINE
www.stmarksdp.org



ONLINE MARRIAGE COURSE

If you're looking for some practical tips about how to improve your relationship, then consider attending the online Marriage Course. Starting on Tuesday 14 September 2021, the course runs over seven sessions, 7pm – 9pm, via Zoom. The course equips couples with tools and techniques to keep the spark alive in their relationship and stay connected. For more information, please visit <https://stmarksdp.org/ministries/marriage-course/>



KIDS' CHURCH

Little Wins

Much of life is about just keeping things ticking over: getting the car serviced, keeping the house under control, doing our regular walks with the dog. These Covid hiatuses from life's regular forward stride really do make us feel as though maintenance mode is the flavour of life right now. Life has become a series of little wins.

There's some boredom, but there are also benefits to Maintenance Mode. Here's three benefits, and the little wins they've given us in this season of Kids Ministry at St Mark's.

2. Appreciate what you have

We've been focusing on doing what we can, and have enjoyed encouraging responses to our support from church parents and kids. The Do-From-Home packs for Infants/Primary kids allowed one family to worship God while driving in the car, while Creche Worker Bronte Heslehurst's fun filled videos have helped parents invest in the faith of our youngest children. They're small ways of continuing to build trust, but they're a win.

2. Time to reflect

Taking a step back to see an artwork or ponder a point of creation helps shape a better product. A little win has been the think about how our Sunday and Special Religious Education (SRE) ministries operate and possible directions for future development.

3. Room to create

Little innovations or unexpected avenues can go a long way in creating something new. Perhaps a child-led online cooking class for other kids could be a way to encourage children to serve and care for each other.

Perhaps having "waiting music" at the start of a Zoom meeting makes the atmosphere just that more inviting for children. Perhaps tweaking the title of the people who serve in Kids Ministry could shift the way people view discipleship amongst kids.

Maintenance mode makes us aware of the little things. But we know it's the little things, and the little wins, that often matter the most.

Stephanie Leung

Children's Minister

STAYING CONNECTED

Despite the lockdown, our church community has continued to grow together and support one another. One fundamental way is through our Connect Groups. With over 140 people in our groups, these are a lifeline for many of our members. Each time they meet (currently via Zoom), the participants reflect together on God's word, turn to God in prayer, and support each other with words of encouragement.

We also recently held an online Trivia Night. Around 50 people joined us for an hour and a half of team trivia and community connection. Please pray with us as we look for more ways to keep connecting like this.

Our youth are continuing to meet together on Zoom for our Friday night group and for our Sunday afternoon Bible study. We have been playing online games, praying for each other, and hearing about Christian wisdom from the book of James. One night recently we heard from the team at Rough Edges and how we young people can support them. We are also looking forward to having our link missionary, Sophia Cameron, tell us about her work in Nepal, and help young people think about how they can be involved in supporting world mission.

Rev Dr Tim Escott

Assistant Minister

ORGAN RECITAL - A REAL TREAT

Members of the St Mark's community and friends turned out in force on a cold, rainy afternoon in June to attend an organ recital. We were rewarded with an hour of



superb music performed by our gifted organ scholar, Nico Tjoelker, who recently departed for Yale to pursue

his Master of Music in Organ Performance.

The program was beautifully constructed, providing stylistic contrast between classical and contemporary pieces and a careful balance of light and shade. The recital opened with the force and complexity of Bach's "St Anne" Prelude, providing a stark contrast with



Twist's *Organ Music for Quiet Moments* composition which followed later. Nico's love of jazz shone through in his rendition of Fagiani's *Veni Creator Spiritus*, while his double-peddalling in Bruhn's *Praeludium in G Major* was awe inspiring: as one member of the audience commented, his feet moved as though he were dancing on the pedals!

This recital enabled us to thank Nico for his wonderful contribution to music at St Mark's, to recognise his extraordinary talent, and to wish him well for the future. It also gave us the opportunity to reflect on how blessed we are to have a wonderful organ and enthusiastic supporters of the organ scholarship fund.

Perdita Morgan

CHORISTER SHARES JOY OF SINGING

The joyous voices of our choristers are greatly appreciated, and our Choir members value their shared love of music, mentorship and strong friendships. Consider Helen Hoffman, who recently retired from the St Mark's Choir after 40 years of incredible service.

Helen reflected: "Music is a universal, non-lingual language, well understood by any culture as we adjust and react to sound. Done well, we can draw the church together, lift spirits, bring out poignancy, declaim triumphantly, draw people into contemplation, engender due and righteous fear of God our Father (the first commandment). It is, therefore, deliciously pleasurable when you give your best and it works for all those present and is, hopefully, pleasing to God ...I can't recommend highly enough the happiness I receive in serving our congregation. It satisfies a basic human need to nurture; helping others injects us with a burst of joy; it conforms to the second commandment (to love others) - and we all benefit, the giver and the receiver."

Fellow chorister, Rachel Wilson, shared: "Helen has always been there, whether for a quiet chat or some much needed encouragement or support. When she sang "Brother, sister, let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you" they were never empty words. It is no wonder that so many of us count her as one of our dearest friends. She is one of the best examples of someone who lives Christ's command to love her neighbour...Helen's legacy at St Mark's is of a sublime voice raised in worship, of compassionate care and connection with others, of a heart set on understanding God's love and showing it forth to others."

[Click here to read the full article](#)

FAREWELL

After four years with us, our Youth & Outreach Minister Erica Oliver is leaving us. Erica will be moving to the United States with her husband James and her two sons Tedi and Judah.



Since coming to St Mark's, Erica has pioneered our Alpha course and led us in developing the Marriage Course and other outreach events. She was the congregational minister for our 5.30pm service and, since 2020, our Youth Minister. Erica and James have run excellent Connect Groups and are known for their outstanding hospitality. We're really hoping to build on Erica's legacy and to keep on being active in reaching out to our community with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Erica has been a caring and inspiring member of our ministry team. Her love for Jesus and her desire to make him known have been an example to us all. We pray for Erica and James and their boys in their new venture. We will certainly miss her!

CHAIRLIFT INSTALLATION

Thanks to the help of the State Government, we have installed a chair lift in the Parish Hall. This means that functions upstairs are accessible to everyone - and we can use our



facility for hospitality!

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

JOIN WITH US TODAY

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

Could you please help with all or part of these items for 2021?

NON-TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

We've really been focusing on our Youth and Children's Ministries. Can you partner with us?

- \$1000 for Scripture Teaching at Double Bay Primary School
- \$500 towards Youth Ministry Resources
- \$500 to support our Creche Minister, Bronte Heslehurst

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

You may like to make a tax-deductible donation to St Mark's National Trust to support The Organ Fund (maintenance and tuning).

HOW TO DONATE

To find out more about our finances and about how you can share in the ministry of St Mark's through your financial giving, please visit <https://stmarksdp.org/giving/>

