



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

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



As we emerge from what will become known as 'the COVID years', we have had many reminders of God's kindness to us at St Mark's. Not the least, this has been because of your kind partnership and prayers.

We have been able to maintain our ministry just when it was needed most. Indeed, in 2022 we've been able to appoint Rev Michael Figueira as our new Assistant Minister with particular responsibility for outreach. And God is blessing his ministry! I am pleased to say that we've seen people join our church community and come to Christ in the first quarter of the year through the Alpha course.

Recently, St Mark's participated in the National Church Life Survey which revealed some interesting things about our church. What we've seen in particular is an increase in the number of people who say they read the Bible and pray daily or on most days. I am rejoicing at this, because it is a sign of growing spiritual maturity and engagement. We've also seen a growing number of our members serving at St Mark's and using their gifts. I was also deeply encouraged to see that, under Rev Tim Escott, our Youth Group is now producing home grown leaders - leaders who have come through our Kids' Church and Youth programmes and now want to serve Christ by leading other young people.

## Quarterly Newsletter June 2022

We've also been welcoming a number of new families - which is a testimony to how well Kids' Church is going under Steph Leung's leadership. Things have been difficult for families under COVID, which has meant you are never quite sure who will be there on any given Sunday! But it is delightful to feel the 'buzz' around our ministry to children on a Sunday morning.

It's your help which, under God, has made this possible. But there is so much more still to do and so many opportunities. We've been reminded how vital Christian community is during the period of enforced separation and confusion. We've seen the spiritual hunger in people in our community. Please continue to partner with us in the work of Jesus Christ at St Mark's.

Michael



### **THEOLOGY 101**

How can God be three persons in one, and why does it matter? Why did Jesus have to die? When will he return? All these questions and more are addressed in the Theology 101 course. Theology 101 is a ten week course starting on 17 July on Zoom. Each week involves a bit of pre-reading and a one hour seminar led by Michael Jensen. It's a great way to go deeper with God. It's open to anyone and it's totally free! Contact [michael.jensen@stmarksdp.org](mailto:michael.jensen@stmarksdp.org) to enrol.

## ARCHBISHOP VISIT

On 10 July, St Mark's has the great honour of hosting our Archbishop, Most Rev Kanishka Raffel. Kanishka will be preaching at each of our services on that day. Kanishka, who was elected to the role of Archbishop in 2021, is our first Archbishop of non-European descent. Born in England to Sri Lankan parents, Kanishka came to Australia as a boy. He became a Christian at university when he read



the Gospel of John. After studying law, he entered the ministry and has served in Canberra and in Perth before becoming the Dean of Sydney in 2016. Kanishka is a warm-hearted follower of Jesus Christ and known for the depth

and the insight of his preaching.

We are very much looking forward to his visit!

## EXPLORE COURSES: ALPHA AND SIMPLY CHRISTIANITY

In Term 1 we ran the Alpha course, which explores the big questions of life, meaning and the Christian faith. Over the six weeks of the course, we had 15 guests join us. The relaxed



nature of the course and dinner helped participants to share openly. The video

content and discussion facilitators were all fantastic in guiding people along their journey. One of the participants related: "My relationship with God is closer. Our family now have started together reading the Bible and praying together daily. I have my trust in Jesus. This has been a life changing course for me and for my family. We're blessed to be part of

the St Mark's community." Another group member was able to honestly share: "I have a relationship with God but still need more help in prayer."

What a joy it has been leading the course. I am very grateful for the team that helped make it happen including Michael, Sarah, Megan, Rhys, Jen, Richard, Janine and Judy.



Currently we are running the Simply Christianity course. This course takes a guided tour and reading of the entire Gospel of Luke. Participants have really enjoyed the interactive nature and the opportunity to read and understand the Bible for themselves.

**Michael Figueira**  
*Assistant Minister*

## NEWISH

Every quarter we have a 'Newish' lunch for people who have joined the St Mark's community recently. Our first term lunch was held in the playground on one of the few rainless days that Sydney has had in the first part of the year. About 20 of us shared a great time together with good food and conversation. It was also an opportunity to hear about what being a member of St Mark's looks like - as we seek to grow in God together as disciples of the Lord Jesus. Look out for the next 'Newish' - we love to have any of our members along to meet and welcome those who are new, or perhaps 'newish'!

**Rev Dr Michael Jensen**  
*Rector*

## ELECTION DAY BBQ AND CAKE STALL

St Mark's was an election polling booth which saw about 1,500 people come through our



premises to vote. Many rewarded themselves with the beloved traditional 'democracy sausage'. We sold out with over 500 sausages purchased by the end of the day. This

year we also ran a cake stall with many baked goods provided by our wonderful volunteers. All the proceeds raised will go to Rough Edges and Banksia Women. These are charities that St Mark's has a strong partnership with, supporting those experiencing homelessness and women having escaped domestic violence. Overall, it was a marvellous day to connect and engage with the local community.



**Rev Michael Figueira**

*Assistant Minister*



## YOUTH

We have so much to be thankful for, as our youth ministry continues to be a lively group of young people, keen to grow together as a community of disciples who love each other, serve the city, and share Christ. This term our Friday night youth group has welcomed a number of visitors from local schools, who have been investigating church and Christianity. This has been a fantastic opportunity to reach out to our community with the good news of Jesus. Over the Easter break, our young people

went away to the KYCK youth conference in Katoomba. It was a rich time of fellowship together and growing as we went deeper into the word of God with thousands of other high school students.

Our Sunday morning Bible study for Years 6-9 continues to grow and thrive, as Duncan and Charlotte lead the youth in Bible study and prayer together. New families have been joining us and the group has been one of the ways that we are helping families to grow in the faith. On Sunday afternoons a group of older high schoolers and university-aged students meet to wrestle with the Bible, pray together and encourage each other as disciples. This group also continues to grow in faith and numbers.

Please continue to pray for our young people. Pray that they would be well integrated into the life of our church, having strong relationships with older and younger believers. Pray that our leaders would continue to grow and develop in skills and spiritual maturity. Pray that our young people would grow as disciples and make an impact in their communities as they live out their faith and share the good news of forgiveness of sins and new life in Jesus Christ.

**Rev Dr Tim Escott**

*Assistant Minister*

## ST MARK'S LECTURE

Dr Sarah Irving-Stonebraker delivered the 7th St Mark's Lecture for Faith in the Contemporary World on Wed 25 May. Dr Irving-Stonebraker, Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Western Sydney gave a stimulating and thought-provoking lecture on 'The Death of History and the Hope of Christianity', followed by a lively question and answer time. More than 70 people enjoyed the lecture in the church and at home on-line, and the lecture has been viewed more than 250 times since then.

**Rev Dr Michael Jensen**

*Rector*

## ORGAN RECITAL DELIGHTS

What a treat it was to hear our St Mark's Organ Scholar, Stacey Yang, perform recently at the annual Organ Recital. Stacey showcased her talents performing a variety of compositions from Bach, Bohm and Sweelinck to Purcell and Mendelssohn. All proceeds from the event supported the St Mark's Organ Scholarship Fund.



## MEN'S DINNER

Fil Lolohea will return to St Mark's on Thursday 23 June as speaker at our first Men's Dinner since COVID derailed our regular gatherings. We will be back in the upstairs hall and, for the first time, the chair lift will be available to all challenged by the stairs. Fili is now the Youth Worker at Redfern's Living Waters Fellowship - one of our targeted support missions. This is definitely a night to invite friends. Book at the office - Ph: 9363 3657 or [office@stmarksdp.org](mailto:office@stmarksdp.org)

## MARRIAGE COURSE



If you're looking for some practical tools and techniques to keep the spark alive in your relationship and stay connected, then consider attending the Marriage Course. This year we are offering two courses. Our online course starts on Thursday 21 July 2022, while our face-to-face course commences Tuesday 20 August 2022. We'd love for you to join us! Visit <https://stmarksdp.org/ministries/marriage-course/>

## 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 help with all or part of these items?

### NON-TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

- Youth Ministry Resources - \$500
- Creche Worker - \$1000
- Alpha Resources - \$1000
- Bibles to give away - \$20/each

### TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

- Organ scholarship
- Repairs to the stonework on the church

### 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/>

