



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

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



I am sure you've felt the relief of a somewhat more normal year after the travails of 2020 and 2021. That's certainly the feeling at St Mark's. It's been a real cause of thanks to God to see the community back gathering together in person and to meet the numbers of new people that have joined us.

We were able to host our new Archbishop, Kanishka Raffel, and his wife Cailey - the first time a sitting



Archbishop has visited St Mark's since perhaps the 1980s. It was a really blessed day, with the Archbishop sharing the

simple and beautiful message of God's grace to us in Jesus Christ.

This year, we've been focusing on *Going Deeper with God* - deepening our relationship with God by going deeper into the word, and by learning about the great things he has done in people's lives. This term we hosted Dr Ian Maddock as he took us through the extraordinary lives of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, and John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement. On 22 October we are holding our first in house St Mark's

Quarterly Newsletter September 2022

Conference on the theme 'The Power of Grace'.

I'd like to thank you for your ongoing support of our ministry at St Mark's. The recent census figures showed a decline in numbers of Anglicans in Australia. The decline is steepest amongst the young - and that's where our need is particularly urgent. Our team is working very hard to minister to children and youth, but a whole generation needs to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ afresh, for they are not hearing at home or at school. Without it, they are lost. Will you continue prayerfully to help us pass on the hope of Christ?

Michael

ALPHA COURSE



Is there more to life than this?

Explore the big questions of life, faith, and meaning during the internationally renowned Alpha course held at St Mark's. This is a great opportunity to consider these important questions yourself or invite someone you care about to consider doing the course.

Our next course starts Thur 20 October at 7pm at the church and will run for seven weeks. For more information, visit www.stmarksdp.org

CONNECTING WOMEN

Whether we're 18 or 80, we all have 'our people': The ones we share jokes with, drive across the Bridge to see, confide our hopes in and ask for life wisdom. Even at church, these



relationships ground us, refuel us and gives us a safe harbour amidst the hubbub of life. Often we find this love in a beloved, close circle. But

what wealth might we discover if those in that circle crossed age, stage, status and life experience? What might it look like to cultivate the kind of trust, openness and unity that Christ calls his church to?

Often it begins by knowing who is in the room. In July we did just that by hosting our first large women's event post-Covid. Over 45 women from across all three St Mark's congregations met over afternoon tea to get to know one another and hear about God's work in one another's lives. Some saw one another for the first time. Many were



astounded at how many women make up our church family. Everyone was encouraged by Claire Fern's story of how God had used a

local church and a community of gospel-hearted women to bring her from spiritual death to life. It was exciting to think of how God, by the gospel, could work through a community of women in a similar way.

One of the exciting things this afternoon tea did was connect younger women with older women. Seeing them begin sharing life as

sisters in Christ is an important step not only in laying foundations for friendships, but for love for God and vivacious discipleship in their lives in a way that could help remedy the great loneliness amongst young and old alike in our current cultural moment.

Our vision is to see people transformed by grace through loving one another. Sometimes we long for a wider circle of people to walk the Christian life with us. It turns out, the opportunity is sitting right next to us.

Stephanie Leung
Children's Minister



MARRIAGE COURSE

Reflecting St Mark's commitment to promoting healthy family relationships, we decided to offer two courses this year - one face to face at The Sheaf Hotel in Double Bay and the other online. Both courses were capably facilitated by Trish Howes and supported by her team of helpers. We are grateful to them all for their commitment, enthusiasm and expertise.

Five couples attended the face to face course, while four couples attended the online course. Feedback has been very positive. Participants found the course content helpful, with comments such as: "We have really been enjoying the course so far and are both really committed to learning more about how to communicate feelings and understanding more about our relationship". Another couple shared: "While the course did not solve our issues it was a great opportunity for both of us to commit to our relationship and work on it. We were forced to communicate and deal with some issues...I would definitely be keen to do this course again in a few years."



ST MARK'S YOUTH

St Mark's Youth continues to thrive and grow. Our Friday night group has seen a few new people join us, and our youth have been challenging themselves with fresh Bible reading goals. Our Sunday Bible study groups continue to wrestle with God's word, with our senior group members having a go at leading the Bible discussions themselves. Please give thanks for God for our leadership team. Pray especially for Madison Thomas as she steps up into a pastoral role with the other more junior leaders, and also as she prepares to have a baby in November. Also give thanks for our weekend away at KYCK (Katoomba Youth Convention) in April, where we spent the weekend with hundreds of other youth to learn and grow together. Please pray for me (Tim Escott) as I plan and prepare for 2023 and beyond, particularly when it comes to appointing and training leaders in the ministry.

Rev Dr Tim Escott
Assistant Minister

MEN'S DINNER

As Covid fears faded with full vaccination, it was time to hold the Men's Dinner again. Forty men gathered in June over a good meal to hear former St Mark's member Fili Lolohea. Fili has become the Missions Pastor and Youth Minister at Redfern's Living Waters Fellowship, a largely First Nations church. Fili's style is to walk the streets of Redfern, Waterloo, meeting many locals, becoming well known and talking about Jesus.



The kids have named his old people mover the "Jesus Bus" as his influence spreads around the area and more and more young ones are pointed towards Jesus as best companion in life. Living Waters Fellowship is one of the missions St Mark's supports.

Rev David Crain
Assistant Minister

5:30 MUSIC COORDINATOR

Brian Leung is our new 5:30pm Music Coordinator and is responsible for leading worship, selecting music and coordinating musicians. Brian shared: "Increasing our participation in music is something I aim to do. I



hope that it is a joy to sing together to our God and to one another. We strive for excellence, but we aren't perfectionists - it's more about the

togetherness of the experience than it is about flawlessness. It is encouraging when we see members of the congregation offer up their various gifts to worship God and to build one another up."

Brian has been encouraged by the 5:30pm congregation and said: "It has been a joy to see people step a little out of their comfort zones to sing in front of church or play guitar or piano for our congregation. And it's fun to think about new music we might introduce and to try to choose music that will point people to the truths and beauty of God."

When asked what he values most about St Mark's, Brian reflected: "I love that St Mark's is full of people who are earnest about following Jesus. I value the great teaching and preaching we get from our pastoral staff, and I see lots of people serving one another through inclusion, conversation, hospitality, and many little acts of service."

BELL RINGERS:

The St Mark's Society of Change Ringers is expanding, and we want to hear from you! Bell ringing does not require musical ability, nor a great deal of strength so come as you are. We have regular practice sessions and resources to help you learn a new skill and a fabulous team of dedicated teachers and experienced ringers to help you along the way. Get in touch with us today to learn more at our email address: bellringers@stmarksdp.org



See you in the tower.

SAVE THE DATE: CHOIR CONCERT



Visit <https://stmarksdp.org/whats-on/> for all the details closer to the time.

SAVE THE DATE: ST MARK'S CONFERENCE

Join us for a conference for our whole church on Saturday 22 October. Michael Jensen is speaking on 'The Power of Grace' and how to apply the transforming power of God's grace to our work, our relationships, our church, and the world. He will be drawing from the wisdom of the book of Romans. The conference starts at 9am and concludes at 3pm. Visit <https://stmarksdp.org/whats-on/> for all the details closer to the time.

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 delegates to the Leaders in Training conference - \$400 x 6 people
- Church parenting room refresh - \$1,200
- Bibles and Christian books to give away - \$1,000

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PROJECTS

- Choir scholarship - \$3,500
- Organ Scholarship - \$7,500

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/>

