



FROM THE RECTOR

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

This year we've been hearing from the book of Exodus, that marvellous template for our salvation in Christ. In Exodus 14, Moses says these words to the people, who are trembling with fear and hemmed in by the sea:

Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today...The Lord will fight for you; you need only to keep still.

This is the great message of God's grace. He is the deliverer. It is by him that we are saved. It is in him that we can safely put our trust, and in him we hope. He will fight for us. We need only to keep still.

Keep still? That makes me do a double-take, because it challenges my pride. I think that surely I must be able to help God out, at least. Or that he needs my capabilities and energy to do his work. But that is not how salvation works in the Bible. We are saved by grace; and we receive God's grace by keeping still and looking to his salvation. We 'fix our eyes upon Jesus', as the book of Hebrews says, who is 'the pioneer and perfecter of our faith'.

This message is the centre of our community at St Mark's. It's brought us together, and made us what we are. We are here together to receive God's grace, and to allow it to transform us. When we really grasp the amazing grace of God, and are still enough to receive it into our hearts, we will be motivated to love one another, to serve our city, and to share Christ.

Quarterly Newsletter March 2019

At the 2018 Vision Sunday, I particularly focused in on how eating together was the visible expression of the spiritual reality that binds us. And that's still true. What can I say about St Mark's? It's a community that eats together at the table Jesus Christ has set for us. And that theme has certainly been at the centre of our life together in the last twelve months or so.

With your help, we've been able to employ Michael Coyne as our Operations Manager, which has enabled a significant improvement in our organisation. We've installed a new and more reliable sound system in the church building. We've appointed Fili Lolohea to be our Youth Minister. And we've been able to appoint Rachael Bell as our Children's Minister. Your gifts are having a real impact.

But there's more to do. In particular, with your help, we are looking to appoint a new Assistant Minister to our team in the middle of this year, with particular responsibility for the 10am congregation.

Keeping still and responding to God's grace will make us very busy! But it will be a joy to be so active, because in this work together we are all strengthened by God himself. It is he who fights for us. And he delights to share his work with us. I am really looking forward to what he has in store for us in the next 12 months.



DIVORCE CARE



'I got my hope back'

At our Christmas services in 2018, we offered people the chance to attend a new initiative at St Mark's – our DivorceCare programme.

Why do we want to offer DivorceCare? St Mark's is known for being a place where many people get married. And we've always been clear that we were interested in promoting healthy relationships and preparing couples for marriage and not just for a wedding. Last year we offered our Marriage Enrichment course, because we know that good marriages take work and good communication.

But divorce can be a shattering experience. What are we doing to help people who are going through it, or have experienced it? If we are to 'Serve our City', then what are we doing about the people who are hurting in this way?



DivorceCare is a thirteen-week programme that enables people who've experienced relationship breakdown to go through the process in the context of wise advice and a caring group. Following a meal, during the first 30–40 minutes of the meeting, each DivorceCare group watches a video seminar featuring top experts on divorce and recovery subjects. These videos are produced in an interesting-to-watch television magazine format featuring expert interviews, real-life case studies and on-location video.

John Best and Trish Howes from our

congregation are providing excellent and compassionate leadership of the group, well supported by our Assistant Minister (Outreach) Erica Oliver. Erica says: *'This has to be one of the most rewarding ministries that I've ever been involved in...it's a privilege to serve our friends in this way'*.

MUSIC TIME



At the beginning of February, we launched Music Time! Music Time is programme for mums and children

which involves singing, dancing, Bible stories, and play. It's meeting on Mondays at 9:30am in the Howard Lea Hall.

It's a great opportunity for us to reach mums in our local area and to engage them in community. There is definitely a need for this ministry – and we are praying that it might be a blessing to those who come.



RACHAEL BELL



This year, with your support, we've been able to appoint Rachael Bell as our Children's Minister. Rachael is working for St Mark's on Thursdays and Sundays while she studies at Sydney Missionary and Bible College.

Rachael is a trained primary school teacher with extensive teaching experience. She has a passion to see kids learn about God's goodness to us in Jesus Christ. She's been thrown in the deep end with Kid's Church at St Mark's this year and has already made an impact.

Rachael says:

'We consistently have more than 30 children attending Kid's Church each week, including children from Creche up to Year 6. In Term 1, we are exploring Exodus, in line with the sermon series for the 10am service. This is an intentional decision with the aim of increasing family discussions about the Bible and encouraging each family member to share what they are learning at church, which is easier if the content is the same.

Special Religious Education ('Scripture') also continues at Double Bay Public School, with the same five classes. We have approximately 80 students attending Anglican SRE this year. Please do pray for our teachers, Anna, Erica, Louise, and myself as we seek to teach the children.'

Please do continue to pray for Rachael's ministry. But you can support ministry to children by offering to help in one of our programmes, or by your financial generosity to St Mark's.

A NEW SOUND SYSTEM FOR ST MARK'S

St Mark's plays host not only to regular Sunday services but to many funerals, baptisms, and weddings each year.

For a while now, we've been concerned that our sound system was overly complex and not up to the standard that the community expects – especially at these incredibly personal occasions.

In 2018, as a result of our quarterly appeal, we received a generous donation of \$10,000 towards the purchasing and installation of new equipment. We've now installed the new sound desk which can be controlled remotely from an iPad. It also has a way of remembering our settings, so that a special service can adjust things to its needs and we then haven't lost our Sunday preferences for sound. It is a much more user-friendly system.

We are also in the process of upgrading the projector, so that the slideshows at funerals can be clearly seen by everyone – as well as the words to the songs at our evening service.

It's all part of making sure that we serve our community as well as we can – as well as making sure that God's word can be clearly heard.



MICHAEL COYNE



We've been extremely blessed these past six months to have Mr Michael Coyne join our staff team from IBM.

Michael has been our Operations Manager. He was charged by the wardens with improving our administration at every level. At St Mark's, our buildings, finances, and ministry needs are complex. In his time with us, Michael has introduced us to the Elvanto database system, which is now an instrument for actively building our community. He's helped us with some very detailed property issues. He's rewired and reconfigured our office. He's helped to shape a new leadership structure. He's tidied up our finances, with the help of the wardens. He's helped us draft HR documentation and a new privacy policy. And this is only some of the things he's done!

Michael says:

'It's been a great privilege to be part of the team at St Mark's these past few months. Thanks for offering this opportunity to serve, and for welcoming both myself and my wife Annie into your community.' Michael and Anne will continue to attend St Mark's, and Michael will be serving us as our Treasurer.

ST MARK'S LECTURE 2019 MR EDDIE WOO



Eddie Woo has become something of a phenomenon – a maths teacher who has made maths interesting! Via his YouTube channel, Eddie has communicated a passion for learning that truly inspiring.

In 2018, he was awarded the Australia's Local Hero Award, and also came in the top ten in the Global Teacher Prize.

Eddie is also a keen Christian. He says:

'We talk about the fact that the universe is designed in this way and you can find all of these patterns; do you think that that's a coincidence? One of the things I love to point out is we call the universe the cosmos which means ordered and structured and designed, as opposed to chaos, and the reason why we can find these mathematical principles is because there was a designer. We didn't just spring into being. It has immense beauty.'

This year, Eddie has agreed to deliver our

St Mark's Lecture for Faith in the Contemporary World. He will be asking us *'Why should we be interested in Education?'* Fri 17 May at 6:30pm

PROJECTS

Supporting individual projects at St Mark's in 2019 is a great way to ensure that your gift makes an impact. There may be something on this list that really inspires you. Why not support it with a donation?

Youth Ministry \$10,000

Children's Ministry \$25,000

Organists and Choir \$30,000

Alpha \$3000

St Mark's Lecture \$1000

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1 Greenoaks Avenue, Darling Point 2027