



# **The Anglican Parish of Wollongong**

## **Annual General Meeting**

Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2018

### **Ministry Reports**

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## 8am Congregation

*Peter Kell*

The 8am service is a gathering of God's people committed to our Parish vision of seeing 'more and more disciples of Jesus shining as lights in the City of Wollongong'. We use the Archbishop of Sydney's Liturgical Panel prayer book 2012. There are 3-4 communion services and one service of word and prayer each month.

Attendances vary from 45 during the winter months to 65-75 in the summer. The congregation is a dynamic one and has seen a number of new people joining in 2017.

Those attending are active in many aspects of the life of St Michael's including growth groups, High 5 Plus, walking groups, EFL, the Court ministry, adopt a block and Friendship Service. Some are active volunteers for Anglicare.

Pastoral care is exercised by many members of the congregation visiting those who are either unwell or are former members of the congregation whose health no longer allows them to attend regularly. On these visits the Bible is read and prayers are shared.

The members of the 8am congregation have been well taught and have continued to grow in Christian maturity in 2017. They care for each other and are active in caring for those less fortunate than themselves.

There is a wide web of contacts in the Wollongong community among those who attend the 8am service. They are involved in an extensive range of community activities. In 2017 folk were encouraged to use these "third place" relationships to develop opportunities for gospel outreach.

## 9:30am Congregation

*Liam Shannon*

It has been less than a year since 10am Church changed to 9:30am in order to make room for the Easy English service. This was a change mixed with both sadness and joy... Sadness that we would no longer be regularly meeting with some of God's people... Joy at the prospect that there would be another avenue for new people to come and find out more about Jesus as well as for God's people to grow with a service better suited to those who struggled to understand all that was done at the old 10am Church, to grow.

I'm thankful for people's generosity and gospel hearts in their willingness to sacrifice for the sake of God's Kingdom. And as a result it has meant a much smoother transition from 10am to 9:30am than I could imagine. Of course, there have been some difficulties with logistics and other things but on the whole the change in time has gone well. I also want to thank our 9:30am leadership team (Garry & Mia David, David & Nicole Pirie, Gavin & Andrea Lowcock, John & Jodie Madry, Rob & Helen McPaul) for all their work over the past year.

It still remains such a privilege to serve the body of Christ alongside Reg Piper. We are incredibly blessed to have such a godly man ministering to and among us. I praise God and give him thanks for the many people who serve in upfront roles as well as behind the scenes. We have a fantastic kid's ministry at 9:30am which is led by a wonderful team. I love the Church family that God has put together at 9:30am with all its diversity and unity.

## 11am Congregation

*Joe Radkovic*

Highlights of 11am so far...

- We started on 30th April last year, and have averaged about 73 people each week: about half from Non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB).
- 11am will have people come for a limited time then leave, more than other congregations. We will find out if God brings even more people to us as the year moves on.
- We have about 30 highly committed people who were (and still are!) willing to make this venture successful
- 8am and 10am congregations made wonderful adjustments for us at 11am!
- Everything we do is new for us.
- Our key inviters (people who are naturally skilled at inviting others) were expected to leave at the end of the year, but in God's kindness some have remained, and others in the congregation have become inviters. We did not expect that a number of our NESB newcomers are inviting people to come soon after arriving themselves. Many come from the university ministry or English Classes.
- It is not easy to be easy English! It is more work to say something using simpler language without dumbing down the content of the teaching.
- New things are planned for this year: introducing question time after the sermon, and strongly encouraging 1 to 1s, where our members pair up and meet during the week to chat, read the Bible and pray. I think these will help people understanding more of what is taught, especially the delights of our wonderful rescuer Jesus Christ.

## 5pm Congregation

*Sandy Grant*

We delight to see families of different shapes and sizes, along with a range of others at this congregation. We're grateful to the kids and youth ministry teams who teach God's word to the different age groups.

And we're thankful for those who volunteer during the meetings, and those who help with kids meals and light refreshments for adults and the tidy up afterwards to enable our fellowship to linger on.

The 5pm ministry team has included Stacey Chapman, Ian Swainson, Jenni Williams, Mel Conner, Michelle Gajus Read and Jeff Robinson and met several times in the last year. We are considering a portfolio approach for team members and recruiting an extra younger member or two.

This congregation is now 20 years old, and alongside morning congregations now having stronger ministries to children that a decade ago, gradually that has shown up in the average age of attenders and their children at 5pm rising, and less new people joining.

To review this and plan for the future, we have scheduled a Congregational Meeting for Sunday 6th May in the hall after the 5pm service, with a special pizza night and jumping castle for kids. Please plan to stay that night (at least one spouse in case of couples with kids). More info to come.

## **7pm Congregation - Night Church**

*Liam Shannon and Andy Stevenson*

7pm Night Church is a community of youth, uni students, young adult workers and a handful of parents and the young at heart! The service is a welcoming and energetic group of brothers and sisters in Christ where there is a strong culture of looking out for one another, meeting up regularly in smaller groups and one-to-one. With a 10-20% annual turnover of people, due to getting jobs and moving away, finishing study or life and family change, it is crucial that members of 7pm connect quickly and this in turn enables many to have friends for life.

We have increased the frequency of our 'fresher' nights for newcomers for connection and vision with people encouraged to join growth groups, service ministries and get on mission! The Wednesday night ministry is simply an extension of our growth groups with a strong focus on community, having dinner every week, larger group talks, question and answer segments, guest speakers and interviews. This has now in its second year and is worthwhile ministry that helps people feel like part of the family at Night Church.

There are now a large number of volunteers taking up various ministries, 50% of the congregation are on some sort of roster, which is super encouraging for Liam and me as we lead the people at Night Church

## **Cathedral Chapter**

The Cathedral Chapter is the regional advisory body for St Michael's in its 'Cathedral' function. It comprises local representatives from our congregation, as well as regionally elected and appointed clergy and lay persons. The Chapter does not meet often, but it reminds the local members to think regionally, especially as a voice to the city of Wollongong.

But the Chapter's most important function is crucial: to act as the search committee in the case of a vacancy in the Senior Minister's role. Unlike most parishes, the Archbishop makes the appointment here, but his choice must be confirmed by the Chapter. So in practice they have an important role in choosing a future replacement.

## Church Soccer

### Men

*Murray Barker*

St Michael's was happy to put forward 2 teams into the local Illawarra Christian Soccer Association also known as 'Church league' or 'ICSA' (Found on Facebook or at <http://www.icsa.org.au/>) in 2017. St Michael's men were looking to reach out to those already attending our church, new students and those looking for a church. Using our FOCUS link and various other sources we were able to gather international students, members and others from the community to play.

Our goal was to reach by making friends through sport. Our hope was that it would be a chance to bring glory to God in how we played and interacted with each other, and other teams in the comp. We were able to get guys between 16 and 50+ years of age to play and always had strong sideline supporters of all ages come along on a weekly basis.

We thankfully saw some wonderful results both on and off the field and will God willing continue to see results in the future. We are proud to say that our A team was able to make a late run in the season and make it to 3rd place with stacks of help from our B team! Our B team, while unfortunately not achieving the same result, showed great enthusiasm in every game and were a massive encouragement at all times.

Particular thanks to Jeff Robinson for Team Chaplaincy and for all of our weekly supporters!!

### Women

*Alyssa Vaartjes*

In 2017, the inaugural women's church soccer league began and St Michael's entered their first team in the competition. We aim to help develop fellowship between the women of the church and outside the church through playing soccer together. 2017 was a great year in which great relationships were grown between the members of the team, which included non-Christian members and those who had been irregular attendees at church. St Michael's also made it to the grand final in 2017 and demonstrated excellent team spirit and sportsmanship throughout this game and the season. In 2018 we have been able to expand to two teams, and these will be coordinated by Alyssa Vaartjes and Lauren Russell.

## Courthouse Ministry

*Michael Hickman*

As an outreach ministry of Christian care, the purpose of the Court Ministry is to be available to provide hospitality in the form of morning tea for those required to attend Wollongong Court – this service is provided at no charge but we do seek a small donation where possible.

The ministry volunteers are required to be -

- friendly and caring
- non judgemental and discreet
- willing to listen
- willing not to question, advise or preach - although there have been the odd occasion where a short prayer has been well received.

We are always on the lookout for extra volunteers for this ministry. Could you help some time on a Tuesday or Thursday morning, even perhaps when one of our regulars is on holiday or ill? Phone if interested on 4229 7519 ...

## English For Life – Tuesday 10am & 7pm

*Stacey Chapman*

In 2017 Tuesday mornings continued to be a hive of noisy and happy activity in the church hall, as around 40 students and 10 helpers each week gathered for English for Life classes. Over the year we continued to work with classes at four different levels, and an additional class focusing on literacy. After the classes each week, Sue Radkovic led an easy English Bible study. The evening class also continued, with a focus on conversation.

In 2018, Penny Barclay and Divya Varghese have started an easy English Bible study at WOW, giving students an additional opportunity to study the Bible and get to know other Australian women. A number of those involved are students from EFL. The 11am Easy English Service has seen a large number of students also visit St Michael's on a Sunday morning, and we are very thankful for the opportunity and easy transition that it provides. A number of our EFL teachers are involved with the 11am service and they have done a wonderful job of inviting students and getting alongside them.

It has been an encouraging and exciting year and we have much to be thankful to God for. We have had the great privilege of making friendships with people from all over the world, and seeing students make deep friendships with each other. We have seen the gospel explained, and helped people to wrestle with the truths of the Christian faith. We have again seen people come to faith in Jesus as Lord and grow in him.

I am grateful for those who have served the ministry faithfully over many years, and for those who have joined us more recently. If you love Jesus and have a heart for people we would love you to join us, and to pray for our ministry.

In term 2 of 2018 we intend to start an additional conversation class for adults alongside a homework club for school children. Please speak to me or to one of the other teachers if you are interested in being involved in either aspect of this ministry.

Please continue to pray for the ministry at St Michael's and the students who come. Pray that they will come to know Jesus as Lord. Pray that we will love and teach them well.

## **Friendship Service**

*Sheila Stockdale*

The Friendship Service has continued on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month in 2017 (except in December being on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed) and with a break in January.

It is always a very encouraging service which provides a time at church for those less able to attend other services and for those who support them with such love and care.

We are blessed as Sandy Grant leads the service on most months and thankful to those who step into the breach if Sandy has to be away.

Thanks too are extended to those who provide such care and transport to the less able folk and to our dedicated team of helpers who provide a delicious light lunch and the birthday cake each month.

If you are aware of anyone who would benefit or like to come to the Friendship Service but needs transport please let the office staff know so transport can be arranged.

If you have not attended a Friendship Service please make a point of coming to a service this year. I think you would find it a great blessing.

## **Growth Groups and Maturity**

*Liam Shannon*

Wouldn't it be great if everyone at St Michael's grew deeper in their understanding of God which overflowed into a deeper love for Him? This is what we hope will happen through the regular systematic expositional preaching of the Scriptures on Sundays, the informal word and prayer ministries and, of course, through our Growth Groups.

I am very thankful to God for all of our hard working Growth Group leaders. They are very precious to this church and do incredible ministry in teaching the word faithfully, praying and caring for God's sheep in their groups. Last year we trained our leaders to help our Growth Groups grapple with the key ideas of the Reformation. We also had the privilege of hearing from Paul Grimmond (Moore Theological College) who helped us to better look after those who struggle anxiety. This year we're focusing on starting some new initiatives in order to better care for and develop our leaders as well as refining how we go about recruiting new leaders.

Of course the maturing of God's people isn't just in our Growth Groups and so I'm very thankful to all those who participated in last year's Term 3 'Bible Reading Challenge'. I hope lots of people found it helpful to be reading as a Church community those 25 readings from either the first half of Romans or the book of Galatians. I especially want to thank Stacey Chapman and Lauren Russell for all their work to get that up and running.

## **High 5 Plus**

*Faye Kell and Lyn Kenrick*

High 5 Plus is a social gathering for Christians to encourage each other in our Christian walk in our every day lives. We welcome all who are looking for fellowship, aiming toward over 55 years -- retirees.

2017 we met bi/monthly for lunch either in the hall or a picnic. We generally have 30 - 40 attendance.

We all appreciated the talk Sandy shared at our June gathering.

## **JBS – Sunday 5pm**

*Eltham Cook*

Junior Bible Study (JBS) meets to study the Bible during the 5pm Sunday Service. It is for children and young people in Years 6 to 8 of families in church. Whilst the youth are encouraged to bring friends, the focus of JBS is to develop Christian maturity. The leaders of JBS for 2018 are Eltham Cook, Robert Anderson, Courtney Mead, Joshua Thomas, Daniel Pritchard, Amelia Burke, Maddy Tola and Emma Whitelock. Daniel and Maddy have newly joined the team for 2018.

Through Bible study, discussion and prayer, JBS aims to challenge and encourage the youth to take on their faith seriously, including reading the Bible and praying by themselves during the week, being an active part of the church community particularly through service, and to discuss their faith with their peers and parents.

JBS have continued this year on the youth and children's ministry wide teaching plan. During first term JBS have been studying Zechariah. During 2017 JBS studied 1 & 2 Kings and Matthew 1-16. We thank God for the rich teaching we enjoy at Church and are constantly reminded how great it is to teach the Bible to young teenagers as they seek to grow in the knowledge of God and faith in him.

## **Kids & PK1 @ 9:30**

*Meaghan Gates and Ellyn Parker*

Kids at 9.30 is a ministry held during the 9.30am Family service which provides biblical teaching and encouragement for the kids that are a part of the 9.30 congregation. At kids church we to hope to both direct the kids towards Christ from biblical teaching and establish them in fellowship within the church.

We serve any kids, from preschool to year 6. The team meets at 9am for a short devotion together and then planning before heading into church at 9.30am and then heading back out to the hall with the kids at the service leader's request.

In the past year, Meaghan and Ellyn came along side the existing leaders to help build kids church and encourage those who were running it previously. Together, with the support of parents and the congregation, the team revamped the program and, once the kids adapted to the change, the team were able to work out what was most engaging for the kids. This is an ongoing process of reflection and growth.

Our favourite mornings were the Pyjama Party and our Banquet with the whole church. With continued support from the congregation, parents and pastoral staff, we hope to have encouraged growth in the culture and support around Kids Ministry.

Thank you to Sandy Lowcock, Matt Robinson and Daniel Pritchard who have moved to other ministries this year. We would also love to acknowledge the huge contribution of Sandy and Amanda to Kids @10/9.30 and others before us in serving this ministry.

## **Kids @ 11**

*Andrew and Michelle Read*

It was a great privilege to be part of the birth of a new congregation. When the Easy English congregation was started at St Michael's in 2017 it was decided that having a specific ministry to the children of the 11am congregation was very important. A team of leaders shared in this ministry throughout the year. The helpers included Christine, Melody, Jason, Varun, Divya, Emily, Andrew and Michelle.

The word to describe Kids@11 was 'range'. The number of children ranged from 4 to 13 on any Sunday. Their school class ranged from kindergarten to year 6. They came from a wide range of birth-places, including (but not limited to) Australia, Syria, New Guinea, China and Nigeria, and their knowledge of English ranged from zero to excellent.

Our time together consisted of singing, story telling, games and craft. We looked at the Bible and prayed together. Through the books of Ecclesiastes and Luke we saw God's message to the world. We ended the year making a nativity scene for the children to take home.

We enjoyed our time with the children and we hope they did too. Sadly for us, many of the children went back with their parents to their birth countries. We hope and pray that in some way the children might remember what they learned, the friendships they had and that they might walk closely with the Lord wherever they are in the world.

## **Kids @ 5 – Sunday 5pm**

*Stephen Dewhurst*

At Kids@5 we catch up with kids in years 2-5 from the 5pm service to play games, do craft and grow with Jesus! We are focused on walking beside the kids of St Michael's as they grow,

develop and mature in their walk with our Lord and Saviour Jesus. We aim to help the children learn and think through the word of God, to pray regularly for themselves, for their friends and the wider church, and to encourage them in their relationship with God.

In 2017 we had a great opportunity to have small consistent discussion groups. Leaders could follow up with the same kids each week and build on what had been discussed before both in terms of the Bible passages and their overarching theme but also could discuss what was happening in each kid's life.

In 2017 we looked at Luke, 1 Samuel and 1 Corinthians, a personal highlight at the end of term 2 was the children telling the leaders their favourite parts of 1 Samuel and what it was about (unsurprisingly a lot of them loved David and Goliath!). Each term we combined with PK1 which was so well received both by the children and leaders that we are looking to further integrate the programs in 2018!

Thanks to Tom Chin who is leaving us to help out with the Kids@11 program and we will also be welcoming Amy Wearing, Jordan Kipps and Joel Trotter who have kicked off 2018 with a bang!

## **Kids' Club – Thursday 4pm**

*Andy Stevenson*

Kids' club is a ministry that seeks to "Engage" and "Evangelise" kids in our local community from primary schools through Scripture connections, friendships and neighbours. Our aim and vision is to show kids and families in the community the wonderful news of Jesus. We meet at 4-5:30 every Thursday afternoon for kids in years 2-5, play some games, eat some food, and hear from the Bible!

For 3 years this ministry has been steady in growth until a plateau in numbers last year. We would love more new connections and for our Church families to get behind it and Invite friends as it's an easy invite. Kids' club is an important stepping stone ministry to Church, kids Church and eventually youth groups, this has worked well for us in the past.

Our leadership is great and has a range of leaders from the experienced Kerrie Luscombe to young trainee high school students in Jonty, Charli and Kate. We thank God for them and pray for their growth and sustainability in leadership over a long year of kids ministry.

We thank you for your prayers, and thank those people who have been kind enough to provide afternoon tea. We would love prayer for continual growth (both in numbers and spiritual maturity), godliness as a leadership team that we would continue to selflessly love the kids, and for kids to come to know Jesus!

## **Marketview Consultative Committee**

*Sandy Grant*

Marketview is a student accommodation residence operated by University of Wollongong (UOW) on land adjacent to our site, held by the Anglican Church Property Trust on behalf of St Michael's.

The parish earns significant lease income (now ~ \$225K p.a.) which is distributed according to ordinance (Anglican law) passed by Standing Committee of our Diocese. A large amount of the rent goes into a Conservation and Maintenance Fund to help pay for our very expensive conservation obligations on our heritage listed buildings, especially the Cathedral. 15% of the balance is shared with the Diocese more widely to help fund diocesan mission expenses. Some of the remainder can be used by the parish for general expenses, and some is tied to property expenses.

We have quarterly meetings with UOW on the "Marketview Consultative Committee" to ensure we remain good neighbours. One change from last year is that Marketview will no longer operate as a hotel in the summer months of December and January. Instead from this year student contracts at this residence will be for 52 weeks, i.e. favouring students who wish to remain substantially in Wollongong over summer holidays.

UOW engages an external company to manage the maintenance of the facilities, and there is a regular reporting, inspection and maintenance cycle plus a capital works program for redevelopment over time. We receive reporting about this at quarterly meetings.

Marketview again expect full occupancy of approx. 140 beds available. Student ratios are well balanced between female and male, and Australian and International students from over 20 nationalities. The program there includes residential peer tutoring, organisation of charity support, plus social activities. UOW residential services has what seems to be a strong drug and alcohol education and behaviour approach, and also a campaign to work on awareness and prevention of sexual assault.

## **Men's Ministry**

*Mark Middleton*

The last twelve months of Men's Ministry events followed a similar pattern to the previous year. The inaugural 'spit roast dinner' looks likely to be a regular event and a wonderful way to start off the year by re-establishing connections and discussing ways of being involved - and yes like in 2016 a surprising amount of salad was consumed!

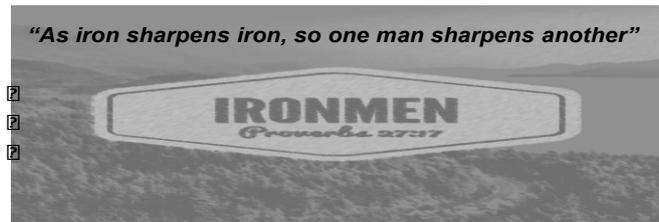
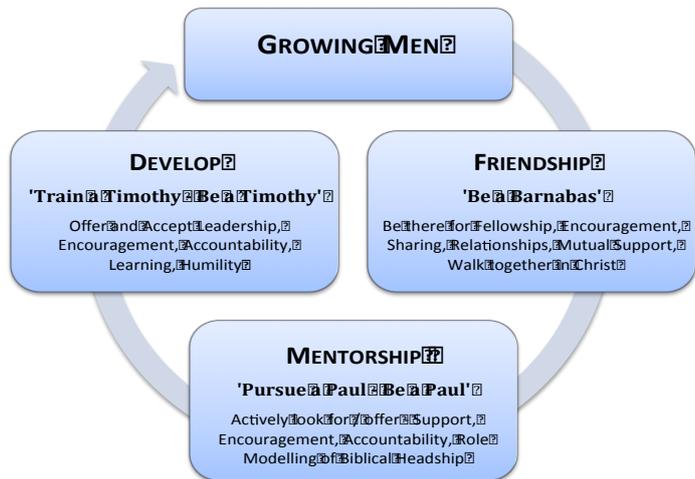
Smaller informal activities occurred throughout the year including a sports afternoon, mountain biking and watching sporting events together along with the running, walking and cycling groups. These all provided the chance to meetup and get involved in peoples chosen pursuits as well as trying new endeavours.

The major events; 'The Gong Men's Day' brought like-minded men from the Illawarra together around The Word, and Basecamp saw around 30 blokes make the trip up to Katoomba, and share houses, food, prayer and fellowship. The theme 'LIVE WELL' had us delving into the practical wisdom of Proverbs. The winter weather was perfect - a cold night warded off by wood and gas heaters whilst a beautiful day was welcomed on Saturday. Don't miss out on this special 24 hours of fellowship in 2018.

A special shout out to the blokes involved in 2017 who quietly went about making the variety of opportunities happen. If you are new to St.Michael's or to the Men's Ministry, the focus is to connect and engage men by providing opportunities for conversations, encouragement and service. We will continue facilitating opportunities to connect and work on friendship, mentorship and development. Figure 1 is an outline of what the Men's Ministry at St.Michael's is about.

**StMicksmen's Men's Ministry**

We are about **connecting** the many existing Men's ministries within the St.Michael's community and coordinating key events each year and a number of smaller StMicksmen Meetups.



We are all busy and have many competing demands but we would love if every bloke could get involved in some capacity so prayerfully consider how you can get involved.

**Mini Mike's Playgroup – Thursday 9:30 - 11am Liz Shannon**

Mini Mike's Playtime is a group for children from 0-5years and their parents, grandparents and carers meeting on Thursday mornings during school terms. In meeting together, we hope to encourage families of this age and stage to know God as we teach our little ones about the world around us, play, read, sing and eat together. It is our prayer that people from the community might be shown the love of Christ (in word and deed) and come to know Him as their Lord and Saviour, that people from church might be encouraged in teaching their children about God and encouraged in being witnesses to God's transforming grace.

2017 started more quietly for us than usual, which was both a welcome break from the organised mayhem that is naturally associated when many children and adults gather together, and an opportunity to be reflective, prayerful and to give more attention to some relationships within the group. Throughout the year we had the privilege of getting to know more people through their connections with EFL and through the enthusiastic invitation of one of our community contacts.

We are thankful to God for the opportunities to invite some of our contacts to church, Kid's Club and Christmas events at St Michael's and have them come along, as well as for His generous provision of servant-hearted leaders (Morwenna Baird, Chantell Willis, Nicole Pirie and Lyndal Cook) and helpers (Gaye Robinson, Jenni Williams, Mae Solomons, Jennifer Willis, Julie Clark, Emma Kipps, Kylee Kerr, Megan Engel, Tracy Childs, In Sook Cho, Nada Milicic and Isabella Madry) without whom the ministry would not function.

Looking forward to and appreciative of your prayers for this year.

## **Mission News**

*Sandy Grant*

Many from St Michael's actively engage with the global mission work of CMS (Church Missionary Society), by direct financial, prayer and letter-writing support of our link missionaries, but also by attending and serving at CMS Summer School, and their MMM and Milimani youth and children's camps. This helps inform and motivate us about the part we can play in global mission.

In 2017, we hosted a deputation from new links, S & K (with their daughter JJ), before they left to commence a new ministry to 'gospel-zero Buddhist Asia. St Michael's is the primary supporting church for S & K. We are also linked to D & L (with their son M) in Asia, and Mal and Charissa Forrrest (with their children Aidan, Sasha and Toby) pastoring an international Anglican Church in Amman Jordan. Where missionaries serve in secure locations we only ever use missionaries' initials, and never mention their names or countries of service in public or in writing.

It is also tremendous that many of us support AFES (Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students) on campuses in Australia. Pray for people like Richard and Jeanette Chin, Rob Copland, James Kerr and Jon Baird at Wollongong, and Pete Sorrenson at Deakin Uni and Pete Boyd at RMIT, in Melbourne, etc.

Parish Council allocated 2018 Missions of the Month as follows (covering direct evangelism, and development aid, along with ministry training, education, and Scripture promotion, local and international):

- January Church Missionary Society
- February Anglicare
- March AFES (for Uni Bible Group @ UOW)
- April Moore College, & Anglican Aid: Overseas Ministry
- May Tim & Siew Mun Nicholls (Equip Malaysia)
- June Church Missionary Society
- July Bible Society, & Scripture Union
- August Wollongong Combined Churches Education Board
- September Church Missionary Society
- October Regional Indigenous Ministries
- November Youthworks
- December Church Missionary Society

Just use the 'mission of the month' side of your offertory envelopes. For electronic funds transfer, just write 'mission' in the description.

Parish Council's policy is to only promote these Christian ministries adopted as a Mission of the Month. Apart from that as a parish we do not promote other missions or charities. This is simply to focus giving, prayers, and promotional energies on these groups, to avoid diluting our impact. But Parish Council also enables an annual opportunity to support a few other projects via the one-off Annual Thanksgiving Day in September.

## Pastoral Visiting

*Cindy Hickman*

It's a rewarding commitment to give our time to visit those in need – often just to share friendship but the most humbling of all is the opportunity to talk of Jesus. Our purpose is to visit people, so that we can encourage them to trust in the words from the Bible – to know and to love Jesus.

There is a team of visitors, who willingly communicate with those who find it difficult to get to our Sunday services or to the monthly Friendship Service – they visit parishioners when they are in hospital or even home visits or to some who are in Nursing Homes. Reading the Bible, listening, chatting and praying – can be very worthwhile – it also can develop a pleasant friendship to the benefit of all.

We thank those who have faithfully visited for many years – for the care that they have shown – for the prayers they have said, the Bible verses they have read out aloud – to experience the peace and comfort that takes over peoples lives, when they realise that they can truly trust in God for their heavenly home.

If this is something that you feel you would like to do and know that you have a listening ear and the desire to share God's word - please leave your details at the office or on a comment card – it's an important part of fulfilling our mission to proclaim Christ.

## **PK1@5 - Sunday 5pm**

*Lara Hilliard*

PK1 is a ministry designed for children in Preschool, Kindergarten, and Year 1, who attend our 5pm service, with the hope that they will learn more about God, His character and how He works in our lives, hearts and world. Part of our aim is in helping them to grow and develop their relationship with their heavenly Father through a faithful teaching of the gospel in a way they understand, with our team working in a complementary partnership with their parents.

This year we are continuing with the Kidswise ministry program, and will be covering the book of Mark in Term 1, followed by 2 Samuel in Term 2, 1 Peter in Term 3, and Matthew 14-20 in Term 4. This year we will be building upon core elements of our program, such as prayer groups, where we split into small groups and help teach the kids how to pray. For this we adjusted the TSP (Thanks, Sorry, Please) prayer format, focusing particularly on saying “thanks” to God, and “please” when we need help.

The team from last year will be continuing on for this year, with Lara Hilliard as Head Leader, as well as Lachlan Moodie, James Wearing, Lili Copland, Ned Pratt, Rachel Grant, Shania Pearl and a new addition of Jemma Copland. This year the team will be providing two leaders for crèche, to help create more continuity for both the children and leaders.

## **Primary SRE**

*Andy Stevenson*

Our Church has teachers in 12 different schools in and around central Wollongong with 20 SRE ('Special Religious Education') teachers who serve faithfully and are very good at teaching children the Bible and the Christian worldview to students in our classes with varying backgrounds and faith commitments. We consider this a vital front line ministry in the community and public sphere. Over the past year student numbers in most schools have stayed the same, some have dropped a little but others have grown. This is as a result of a few things but chiefly the teachers' credibility among students, parents and staff and their ability to teach good, fun and quality SRE classes.

I am very thankful to our SRE team and note that none of our teachers have finished up, although a couple are having a break, some have moved around schools, and we have recruited a couple of new, younger teachers who are seeking to connect students with our wide variety of youth and children's ministry programs. We are very thankful for this! Some

of our teachers teach 2,3,4 classes per week and this truly inspires me and is a gospel testament.

We continue to pray for the provision of SRE in our local schools. We ask you will partner with us in supporting this great ministry in whatever way possible. A healthy SRE program in every high and primary school continues to be the goal, we are well on the way!

## **Safe Ministry**

*Mia David*

It is a requirement from the Diocese that anyone who is involved in any ministry with Children and Vulnerable People undertakes accredited training. The main changes this year have been that the Professional Standards Unit of the Sydney Diocese now runs the training, and most of the Safe Ministry Training is now online, giving greater flexibility to anyone who needs to access it.

Training in our parish was offered by Nicole Pirie and Mia David.

In the light of evidence presented to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Professional Standards Unit of the Sydney Anglican Diocese has mandated that where an individual is more than 30 days past their SM expiry date, the whole Essentials course must be completed before the person concerned can re enter any ministry with Children and Vulnerable People.

Additionally, it is a government requirement that anyone involved in ministry with Children or Vulnerable People has a valid Working With Children Check number, (issued by the Office of Children's Guardian) which must be verified by our parish. To date St Michael's has verified over 160 people as being available to work with our children. St Michael's has resolved that this WWCC number MUST be verified before anyone can join in with any ministry within our parish. The only exceptions are young people who have not yet had their 18th birthday.

WWCC numbers are valid for 5 years. The scheme was implemented in 2013, so we are now awaiting information from the Office of Children's Guardian about the renewal process.

We are thankful to God that so many people in our parish are willing to engage in such a ministry.

## **Walking Groups**

### **Men**

*Michael Hickman*

This group meets at North Beach at 8am each Wednesday morning, regardless of what the weather might be doing. If it rains, then we cut out the walk and head straight to the coffee shop. Before leaving we always commence with a Bible verse and a short time of prayer. The walk is for around 30 minutes. We then head to either Mud Cat or Bombora coffee shops, where we have time to enjoy a coffee/tea and to recognise birthdays and to chat together,

often in a manner that is quite supportive of each other. It's amazing how many medical conditions are discussed. Being a men's group, there is naturally also a little "sledging" - but all harmless fun. We have an enthusiastic group - one week we had 19 starters, but our average is 16. We aim to have 2 breakfasts a year when we hang around a little longer.

The Cycling Group which meets at 9.15am has 4 regulars, and have had as many as 8 on one occasion, the majority being non church-goers - isn't that great! The offer is to any male to consider joining us, we are not Tour de France Lycra types just plodders who enjoy the ride along the track to Bulli, marvelling at the beautiful coastline God has blessed us with. Phone me on 4229 7519 for further information.

## **Women**

*Cindy Hickman/Joan Napper*

Meeting up together at North Beach each Wednesday morning at 8am – if you think you would enjoy walking, whilst getting to know others from our Church and elsewhere, come along for this walk down near the seaside and the lovely grassed area of North Wollongong. We meet together by waiting just south of the Surf Club near Diggies. No matter what age you would be made welcome – the younger, more fit ones can pace it out together – but there is always someone who will help you if your walking is a bit hap hazard. Or you could even come along at about 8.45am to share a coffee at the Lagoon Restaurant Deck. It's a pleasant way to meet with those both young in attitude and get to know each other. Each year, we also gather together for a special breakfast.

## **WCCEB (Wollongong Combined Church Education Board)**

*Andy Stevenson*

2017 was now the 4th year that 3 of our teachers had been teaching the gospel and Christian worldview to high school students faithfully in their local high schools in the Wollongong area. Heather Grant has now completed that first year of SRE teaching at Illawarra Sports High School and it has been a very fruitful, rewarding, yet extremely challenging ministry that she has done.

As life and opportunities come and go, sadly Deborah Groth and Edward Sowden both moved at the end of 2017 to take up other ministry opportunities which are very exciting. So we are sad to lose them but know their new ministries are pioneering and are all about the growth of kingdom of God as they stretch the geographical boundaries to go out and make disciples.

All our teachers have had slightly larger student numbers attending SRE classes in our 4 high schools. We praise God again and again for his provision and protection in keeping SRE well and truly on the agenda for local churches to teach the Bible in an educational setting to students seeking to know more of the Christian faith.

Once again I thank you for your tremendous support, prayer and giving towards this great public ministry that reaches so many. Please continue, we are always growing class numbers, year group additions and will be starting work in Warrawong High School soon, Lord willing.

## **Wednesday Young Adults**

*David Russell*

**Our Goal:** To Intentionally disciple young adults in community.

**How we plan to move further towards this goal:** Engage with young adults at St Michael's, evangelise to our community, establish believers in Jesus, and equip (train) them for ministry and community.

Our target group is young adults, which is loosely defined as anyone from 18-40. However, we are intentionally targeting uni students and young workers - both groups that are sometimes overlooked in church ministries.

We meet weekly on Wednesday nights from 7pm - 9pm in the church hall, or occasionally at other locations for social nights.

We first launched "Wednesday Nights" at the beginning of 2017, and had an average of 35-40 people attending each week. On a typical night, we start by eating dinner together before breaking into small groups and studying the Bible together. In Term 1, 2018 we are studying "Jesus Is \_\_\_\_\_." topics.

We have a great team of leaders for this ministry who seek to plan, pray and be involved in this ministry. Leaders include Ian Parker, Matthew Vassallo, Angelo Ranasinghe, Alyssa Vaartjes, Paul Vaartjes, Brendan DeMeillion, Liam Shannon, Lauren Russell and Dave Russell.

If you would like more information about this ministry feel free to contact Dave or Lauren Russell, [daveandlauren russell@gmail.com](mailto:daveandlauren russell@gmail.com).

## **Women on Wednesday (WOW)**

*Jenni Williams*

For the past 20 years Women on Wednesday has been the main St Michael's' ladies' Bible study, where women from all congregations can meet together to study the Bible and pray in order to grow in godliness and be encouraged in their walk with Jesus. We are able to offer a crèche for preschool children so that new mums can study without distraction. Jodie Madry has been our Crèche Director for several years, serving faithfully. We pray that she will be happy in her new role in the church office and that we will find a long term replacement for her.

Through the year we studied Matthew 21-28, some Psalms, Galatians and "Ideas that Changed the World". Approximately 35 women attended throughout the year. We also

supported some projects outside the parish including Share the Dignity, Miracle School, Operation Christmas Child and Anglicare.

## **Womens' Ministry**

*Stacey Chapman*

Over the last year I have been wrestling with the question of what women's ministry really is, and I have come to the not-very-earth-shattering conclusion that it is the same as any other ministry, but involving women. One of the great blessings of being at St Michael's is the way in which women minister to others in many and varied ways - reading the Bible and praying together, encouraging each other in Christ, caring for one another and walking alongside one another in good times and in bad.

It is this regular service of one another that is the heart of women's ministry. But in addition in 2017, we have again held and attended a number of events that have attempted to draw together women of different ages and from different congregations. One of the great benefits of this is the opportunity to be with people we might not otherwise have the opportunity to be with, and be encouraged from God's word together.

A personal highlight for me was the dinner in November, which was something we had not attempted for many years. It was so encouraging to see people's willingness to be there, to bring friends, and to serve one another in the planning and preparation.

I am enormously thankful for the support and the hard work of so many in serving the women of St Michael's. It is a particular privilege to have Skye Walker join the staff team this year as an MTS trainee, and to work alongside those who give so much of their time voluntarily to serving the gospel with us.

I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel.

## **Youth Groups**

### **Senior - Thursday 7-9pm**

*Andy Stevenson*

This ministry is a wonderful privilege to lead and I am always thankful for the amazing leaders and youth that we have coming week in, week out, who are very committed and faithful in coming.

Each week our team leads the youth in Bible studies, talks, prayer groups, games and activities, along specialized segments with varying focus. We look at missionaries, the 4 E's have a rotational teaching spot or sharing interview, many different Christian organizations and more. 2017 saw the cake competition at supper scale great heights and they were tested, scored and enjoyed always.

Our team from 2017 has stayed the same for 2018 with only the departure of Josh Hayward, our much loved and missed assistant youth minister, who is now working full time as a youth minister in St Ives. Jake Ashley has taken up the head leadership role with Rachel Lindeback continuing as our longest serving youth leader across the team. I particularly thank God for her strength and service over many years now.

The youth ministry year is jam packed, with Leaders in Training camp kicking things off in January, Christ for the Coast youth event in March, then KYCK in April, combined junior and senior events in term 2, GRACE schools outreach event in term 3 and our annual youth camp to Kaloona. It is such an encouragement that so many go to all these camps and events and the fruit has been so many youth growing in their faith in Jesus and living for him.

### **Junior– Friday 7-9pm**

*Matt Shannon*

Over the last year we have seen our youth grow in their love and knowledge of Christ, grow in relationship with each other, and spur each other on to love and follow Jesus. It has also been great to see many new faces among our youth this year!

We had a several exciting special events this year, including a Q&A night with guest panellists Stacey Chapman and Jeff Robinson, a Guys/Girls night, and a combined night with the senior youth. Another highlight of the year was our Survivor-themed Youth Camp (our biggest yet!) with Liam Shannon speaking from 2 Timothy.

St Mick's Junior Youth were extremely sad to farewell Josh Hayward at the end of the year as he takes up a Youth ministry position at Christ Church St Ives in 2018. Josh has played an integral role in this ministry and we are immensely grateful for his leadership and service. He will be greatly missed by all.

Our leaders for 2018 are Matt Shannon, Geoff Miller, Sami Engel, Ali Miller and Megan Greaves, and this year we welcome Matt Robinson and Sandy Lowcock to the team. We are excited for a big year ahead as we look at the books of Mark, 1 Peter and 2 Samuel, and look ahead to KYCK and Youth Camp 2018.

Please pray for our youth this year as we focus on engaging with the community and encouraging the youth to be witnesses in their schools. Please also pray that our leaders would continue to model Christ and teach God's word faithfully each week.

ST MICHAEL'S  
**4ES**  
STRATEGIC  
GOALS UPDATE

REFLECTING ON OUR 2016  
NCLS SURVEY RESULTS

 <b>ENGAGE</b> To participate in one new church plant by 2020.	 Achieved! 11am Easy English Church.
 <b>EVANGELISE</b> To increase the number of our members willing to talk intentionally about their faith from 16% to 22% by 2020.	 Achieved! Increase to 22% in 2016.
 <b>ESTABLISH</b> To increase the number of growth group and youth group leaders from 75 to 105 by 2020.	 Almost! Increase to 100 leaders! (2018)
 <b>EQUIP</b> To increase the number of members reporting their use of gifts to 'at least some extent' from 49% to 60% by 2020.	 Almost! Increase to 52% of members.