

Welcome to
ST MARK'S BASSENDEAN
*Discovering and demonstrating Jesus' love
in Bassendean and beyond.*

25 December 2022

Christmas Good News of Great Joy for All

Welcome to St Mark's today, and Merry Christmas.

Christmas is a time of celebration. We stop study and work, gather with others, give gifts, and enjoy a feast. We say even to strangers, "merry Christmas." We sing, "Tis the season to be jolly..."

Or at least Christmas is meant to be a time of celebration. But for many of us it can be a very difficult time. It could be the added Christmas stress and financial pressures. Or loneliness. Or ill-health. Or the reminder that the past year has not been what our new year resolutions had hoped. Or seeing that loved one's empty chair at the table.

And yet in the famous Nativity scene, while the shepherds watched their flocks, the angel appears and declares that there is "good news that will cause great joy for all the people". Jesus' birth is meant to be good news of great joy for all – no matter our circumstances, our bank balance, our achievements or failures, who we're with or even who we're not with. Why? The angel gives the reason: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

The birth of Jesus is good news for all, because he is *the Saviour*. Good news, because he is *not* a Santa. Let me explain. In theory, if you are to get a gift from Santa, what do you have to do? As the song goes, if Santa Claus is Comin' to Town, he's *Gonna find out who's naughty or nice...* So be good for goodness sake! Now the story of Santa might be good fun for young children, but if we're honest a real-life Santa wouldn't be particularly good news for real-life people, in our messy lives, our failings, our sins. I for one wouldn't be getting much from him!

But Jesus came to be a Saviour. He did not come to reward those who have been perfectly good and nice, but – through his incarnation, life, death and resurrection – to save those who are under the penalty and power of sin. He did not come to give breakable, disposable gifts to those who are good enough, but to give forgiveness and life with God to those who recognise we aren't. And Jesus is the Saviour of *all* people who turn to him. His salvation is something we *all* can know, and *all* can celebrate this Christmas.

Whatever your circumstances today, I pray you may know that true reason for joy: that Jesus is our Saviour.
Merry Christmas!

Mark

WELCOME

Welcome to St Mark's. We are an active Anglican church of all ages and walks of life, seeking to grow in the likeness of Christ and welcome new members and visitors. Please relax and enjoy the worship and fellowship. Are you **new to this church**? Please make yourself known to one of the ministers or service leaders. You may also like to complete and return the **Welcome Form**.

The **Order of Service** may be followed on the screen.

The **Holy Communion** is open to all believers. Visitors are welcome to receive Communion if they normally take it in their own church. Gluten free bread is available. Please ask the minister when you come to communion.

Readings for Today

9:30am: Mark
Christmas Day
Bible Readings:
Ps 97
Isa 62:6-12
Tit 3:3-7
Luke 2:1-20

The Prayer of the Week

Almighty God, who gave your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of the virgin Mary: grant that we being born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit, ever one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Our Regular Ministries:

Whether you may just like to begin exploring the claims of Jesus, or you already trust Jesus as Saviour, our commitment at St Mark's is to stand by to support and encourage you on your Christian journey.

Sundays:

Our main family service is **Sunday 9:30am**. In this we pray, learn from God's Word, sing, give thanks, and share in Holy Communion. During school term we have special programs for children in K-Yr 9. After the service we continue fellowship with each other over coffee, tea, and food.

Sunday 5:00pm (in recess during January) is a more informal time of sharing, singing, and teaching, followed by a light meal.

Midweek:

Youth group for year 4-9's meets fortnightly during school term on a Saturday evening.

Bible Study and Prayer Groups are ways to be growing in our love for God and others during the week. We meet at various locations and times through the week, we are sure there will be a group to suit you.

Women Together, held on a Saturday every 2-3 months, and **Men's Breakfasts**, held 8am on the 3rd Saturday of the month, **Coffee & Chat** provide opportunities for a coffee, chat, and chance to hear more about the difference Jesus makes in life.

Contact:

If you'd like to learn more, or ask for prayer, care or other needs, we'd love to seek to help you. Please contact us any time.

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