

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

**Christmas 2023**

Welcome to St Mark's and Merry Christmas.

"It's the most wonderful time of the year." Or at least so the song goes. And the idea of gathering with close family and friends, enjoying great food, and sharing gifts is wonderful. But so often for so many of us Christmas can instead feel more like, "the most *stressful* time of the year." Or *expensive*. Or *lonely*. Or *unhappy*. Perhaps we can be reminded of who we're *not* gathering with, the food we *couldn't* buy, or the gifts we *aren't* giving or receiving this year.

Yet whatever this Christmas has in store for us, the events of the first Christmas do tell us something truly wonderful. In the part of the Nativity account read out for us today, Joseph is understandably upset to discover that his fiancé Mary "was found to be pregnant" "before they came together". There's an unwanted Christmas surprise! So he has in mind to quietly but firmly end the relationship, until an angel is sent to tell him that this is no normal baby. No, there's something wonderful about who he is – he is in fact none less than "Immanuel, God with us" (Matt 1:23). The wonder of Christmas is that God would come to us, in all the ups and downs and muck and mess of our lives, to be with us. Every other relationship, even the best, will end. But in Christ God has come near, that we might have a relationship with God that'll never break or end.

And this relationship will be possible because of the wonderful thing this child will go on to do: "you are to give him the name Jesus" (which means 'God saves') "because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus would not only live but die, to give his life for our sins, that we might have forgiveness and be reconciled to Holy God.

As we sing today,  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

So this Christmas, whatever your circumstances, I pray you would know more of this truly wonderful gift of Jesus: God with us, to save us. 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 Christmas Eve:

Ps 89:1-4,19-27  
2 Sam 7:11-16  
Rom 16:25-27  
Matt 1:1-17

### Christmas Eve - Sentence of the Day

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15)

### Christmas Eve - The Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you make us glad with the remembrance of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### Readings for Christmas Day:

Ps 98  
Isa 52:7-10  
Heb 1:1-12  
Matt 1:18-25

### Christmas Day – Sentence of the Day

The angel said, "Mary will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

### Christmas Day – The Prayer of the Day

All glory to you, gracious God, for the gift of your Son, whom you sent to save us. With the angels, let us praise your name, and tell the earth his story, that all may believe, rejoice, and proclaim your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, 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, Men's Breakfasts, Coffee & Chat** are some of our other groups.

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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