

MISSION 2020

St Mark's Anglican Church, Berowra



- OUR MOTTO** To grow disciples of Jesus
- OUR VISION** To be a church which glorifies Jesus Christ by growing as his disciples, who also grow others as his disciples.
- OUR MISSION** To be a people who, in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit, glorify God and love our neighbours by proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ, calling people to repent and living lives worthy of him.

OUR VALUES Our values flow from our identity in Christ. We are created in God's image and redeemed by Christ's blood for the glory of our heavenly Father.

We therefore value and cherish:

- The centrality of the cross of Christ and his resurrection in our proclamation and in our lives
- God's Word, the Bible, as our ultimate authority and guide
- The reading and explanation of Scripture as the basic method of our ministry
- Lives of holiness and humility that adorn the gospel
- Prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit for power to speak and hearts to change
- An urgent love for people who, apart from faith in Jesus Christ, face certain condemnation under the righteous judgement of God
- Selfless flexibility and creativity to reach the many different peoples in our community with the gospel
- Repentant hearts and renewal by God's grace

A **disciple** of Jesus Christ is someone who is *committed to following Jesus Christ* in their lives; which shows in:

- Regular daily time spent listening to God (from His word the Bible) and speaking to God (in prayer);
- Weekly attendance at church;
- Self-sacrificial giving of self (and what we are and have) to/for Jesus;
- Helping others grow as disciples of Jesus;
- Other-person centredness in thought, motive, word and deed; and,
- Love which seeks the lost in our community and beyond.

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OUR 5 PRIORITY AREAS

PRIORITY 1: Sunday services

a) Why?

Our Sunday services are key opportunities for us to grow as disciples of Jesus – as we welcome others; hear, are taught and reflect on, God's word together; pray together; praise God together through music and song; encourage one another during and after the service; grow as a community through appropriate announcements; and serve one another in many ways. We want them to be significant places of spiritual growth for Christians; and places where those who are not yet Christians can come and hear the gospel in an appropriately helpful and welcoming environment

Key factors include:

- Ensuring congregational gatherings are significant places for spiritual growth for Christians;
- Ensuring those who are not yet Christians who come to St Mark's can hear the gospel without obstacles; and,
- Engaging with, and creating opportunities for, evangelism in our local community

b) How?

The specific steps we will take to achieve these goals include:

- i) Providing more opportunities for congregational engagement through use of testimonies, inviting appropriate questions, allowing reflections in services;
- ii) Create a heart culture of coming to church to 'serve' amongst members of the congregation;
- iii) Providing more opportunities for people to 'discover' their gifts and use them as appropriate;
- iv) Instill a desire for excellence in serving God;
- v) Training of more service leaders, and others involved more formally in services (eg Bible reading, prayer, welcoming, etc);
- vi) Be firmer on timing of services; and,
- vii) Greater opportunities/encouragement to pray together before, during and after the service;
- viii) More regular guest/outreach services services and other opportunities to bring non-Christians to hear the gospel (including providing opportunities to respond to the gospel for commitment/re-commitment to Jesus);
- ix) Organise a Moore College Mission to help us with reaching out to our Parish

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- x) Develop more Christ-centred, biblical thinking on current issues (sex, drugs, abortion, euthanasia, asylum seekers, etc) by running sermons/seminars, etc on these subjects; and,
 - xi) Providing times to focus in detail on one missionary/mission support partner each term – including opportunities to be involved and/or give financially;
- c) Goals?
1. *To increase our members reporting they 'always/usually experience inspiration during church services here' from 65% in 2011, to 80% by 2020;*
 2. *To increase our members reporting 'much growth' in faith from 39% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 50% by 2020;*
 3. *To increase our members reporting they 'always/usually experience joy during church services here' from 62% in 2011, to 75% by 2020;*
 4. *To increase our members reporting they 'always/usually experience a sense of God's presence during church services here' from 66% in 2011, to 80% by 2020;*
 5. *To increase our members reporting they 'always/usually experience growth in understanding of God during church services here' from 82% in 2011, to 90% by 2020;*
 6. *To increase our members reporting they 'always/usually experience being challenged to take action during church services here' from 62% in 2011, to 75% by 2020;*
 7. *To increase our members reporting a "'strong and growing" sense of belonging to the congregation' from 56% in 2011, to 70% by 2020; and,*
 8. *To increase our members reporting their use of gifts 'to a great extent' from 19% in 2011 to 50% by 2020.*

PRIORITY 2: Welcoming and integration
(or 'Hospitality, Connection & Engagement')

a) Why?

Disciples of Jesus are called on to make more disciples for Jesus. This means we can never be wholly satisfied with the numbers coming to our services and ministries, until we reach our whole Parish and see them connected to Jesus. To do this effectively we need to do more than just greet people and smile nicely – we **all** need to intentionally practice hospitality and inclusion to all newcomers (we cannot leave this up to just a select few), seek to connect (ourselves and/or others) with them in meaningful relationship, and engage them fully in the life of St Mark's, so that they too can come to know Jesus and grow as his disciples.

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Key factors include:

- Strengthening our invitation, welcoming and integration;
- Mobilising more people to share Christ's love in word and deed; and,
- Equipping members so they have confidence in sharing their faith

b) How?

The specific steps we will take to achieve these goals include:

- i) Set up a 'welcome desk' to be used at each Sunday service as an initial point of contact, an information area and sign-in area (where needed);
- ii) Prepare a 'welcome pack' for giving to newcomers;
- iii) Set up a system for recording information from newcomers;
- iv) Identify and train volunteers in following-up newcomers;
- v) Train specific people as welcomers/ushers/pew missionaries;
- vi) Train whole congregation in hospitality;
- vii) Providing regular (once/term) opportunities for newcomers to come and meet staff and regular members;
- viii) Have regular 'Simply Christianity' groups available for newcomers;
- ix) Ensure our website is guest-friendly;
- x) Ensure our language during services and in printed material is not 'in house';
- xi) Get adequate signage so newcomers know where to go;
- xii) Seek feedback from visitors on what we can do better, etc; and,
- xiii) Consider 'new member' classes; outlining expectations and responsibilities

c) Goals?

1. *To increase our members reporting their willingness to talk intentionally about their faith from 16% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 30% by 2020;*
 2. *To increase our members reporting that they have invited someone to church in the last 12 months from 36% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 50% by 2020; and,*
 3. *To increase newcomers* in church from 8% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 12% by 2020*
- (*'Newcomers' are members aged 15 or more who were not regularly attending any church 5 years ago, as defined by the NCLS)

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PRIORITY 3: Small groups

a) Why?

Small groups provide significant opportunities for Christians to grow as disciples of Jesus. As people meet together they seek to better understand and apply the Bible to their lives, pray with/for one another, and urge one another on to love and good deeds (including ministry, mission and evangelistic concerns). Focussed personal disciple-making can occur better in a small group than in a large church meeting, where such groups are Christ-centred and intentional about growing disciples.

Key factors include:

- Strengthening leadership skills of those overseeing our various ministries;
- Training and developing appropriate new leaders;
- Providing appropriate spiritual and pastoral oversight of group leaders;
- Identifying and unleashing the gifts of church members;
- Encouraging risk-taking and new initiatives in outreach and discipleship;
- Helping one another strengthening our personal and family devotional lives through prayer and Bible reading; and,
- Ensuring that every person at St Mark's is linked into a 'disciple-making' relationship

b) How?

The specific steps we will take to achieve these goals include:

1. Train existing leaders (including providing clear expectations of leaders and members), including some differentiated training for new leaders and more experienced leaders;
2. Identify, and develop, suitable new leaders (including leaders-in-training within each group);
3. Provide more sermon-linked study material for groups (and individuals) to use;
4. Allow easier pathway for entry into groups;
5. Ready availability of details of groups with vacancies;
6. Encourage group members to invite others into their groups;
7. Encourage every group to split at the end of 2015, and re-start new groups in 2016; thereby providing fresh opportunities to minister to/be ministered by different people, so as to help all people to continue to grow as disciples, and allow easier access to groups by newcomers; and,
8. Identify and equip a new small groups team to oversee this ministry

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c) Goals?

1. To increase our members being involved in 'small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups' from 64% (NCLS 2011) to 75% by 2020;
2. To increase our members reporting time spent in prayer, Bible reading, meditation, every day/most days from 40% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 80% by 2020; and,
3. To increase the number of small discipleship groups

PRIORITY 4: Children's ministry

a) Why?

At St Mark's we long to see people of all ages grow as disciples of Jesus – including children.

Recent research suggests 57% of Christians made their decision to follow Jesus as a child. Whilst God does also choose to save people as teenagers and adults, humanly speaking much work is done by the age of 13. A child's decision to leave church is often made by the age of 11, although it may be several years before that is seen. Effective ministry in these formative years is critical!

The primary responsibility for bringing up children as disciples lies with their parents –so we want to help parents fulfil this God-given role by equipping, enabling and encouraging them.

As parents bring their children to our ministries we want to use those opportunities to help these children grow as disciples of Jesus.

We are thankful to God that we can minister to children from both Christian and non-Christian homes, and so:

- i) For those children not from a Christian background, we will seek to love them; to clearly present the gospel to them; and to encourage them by showing and teaching them about who Jesus is, why we follow him, and how this impacts our lives. We want those children who have not yet made a decision to follow Jesus to do so, and to stay with us as they flow through our children's ministries and on into our youth ministries.
- ii) For those children from a Christian background, we will seek to work with them and their parents to love their neighbours (those whom God has put around them) by using the opportunities they have in these relationships to make God known to them, and connect them with Jesus and his church.

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Key factors include:

- Strengthening leadership skills of those overseeing our various ministries;
- Training and developing appropriate new leaders;
- Providing assistance to parents in helping their children grow as disciples; and,
- Equipping children for their own devotional lives (of prayer and Bible reading)

b) How?

The specific steps we will take to achieve these goals include:

1. Apply our preaching at 10am church so parents understand their role in discipling their children (and are shown how to do it), and see their opportunities to love the lost by reaching their children's friends (and families);
2. Encouraging our parents to be Christian role models and examples to their children of the priority of the kingdom of God, through regular attendance, giving and involvement in ministry;
3. Provide training courses on parenting e.g. 1,2,3 Magic;
4. Give children in our ministries take-home knowledge to share, so parents can normalise talking about God at home;
5. Encourage all our children's ministries to 'graduate' their Year 6 students into Club Reg during Week 2 of term 4 each year (and mention this at the Term 3 end-of-term 10am service);
6. Have Club Reg leaders visit all children's ministries with Year 6 students in them during early Term 4, to promote Club Reg and develop relationships; and have junior leaders of those ministries at Club Reg at the start of the year when new Year 7 children start;
7. Identify, recruit and equip new leaders for Children's ministries, providing a "Sunset Clause" so that they take on this ministry for a period of time and then review their involvement;
8. Provide appropriate and regular training for all children's ministry leaders and helpers (including training on class management and disciple);
9. Make opportunities in all our children's ministries for church families to connect with non-church families, so they can build relationships, and be introduced to church and to Jesus;
10. Use our Year 6 rolls to help track and encourage individual children into High School ministries;
11. Provide appropriate resources for parents and children through our bookstall; and

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12. In all our teaching opportunities, continue to teach the Bible faithfully and clearly, in age-appropriate ways, with application on how to follow Jesus and grow as his disciple.

c) Goals?

1. To see 100% of children from church families flow from our Children's Ministries to our Youth Ministries, at the relevant ages (ie *to increase the retention of our members' children in church from 63% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 100% by 2020*);
2. To see families publically and privately embrace their role as ministers to their children, as they learn about God from each other, and hold each other accountable for the way they live as God's children (*as seen in the NCLS Children's questions on 'growth in faith' and while family attendance at our Sunday services*);
3. To see 75% of the Year 6 students from non-Christian families who attend our Children's Ministries flow into our Youth Ministries;
4. To see at least 5 new families come to Christ each year and become part of our Children's ministries and congregation; and,
5. Grow our 'pool' of children's ministry leaders.

PRIORITY 5: Youth ministry

a) Why?

At St Mark's we long to see people of all ages grow as disciples of Jesus – including youth.

God has given us many teenagers who need to know Jesus and to grow as disciples of Jesus; yet we also recognize there are many teenagers in our community who don't know Jesus.

Given the research done on when people commit their lives to Jesus, the focus of our youth ministry is on helping our youth be disciples of Jesus who make disciples (through their relationships with others); and on helping those who have chosen to leave church to reconsider Jesus' claims on their lives.

As with our children's ministry, we want to work with families – for research shows that parents have a more significant influence on youth than their youth leader or youth pastor.

Key Factors:

- Discipleship is the goal of our ministry to youth (not just entertainment or socializing) – which requires quality, focused ministry (especially quality, targeted Bible teaching); and can only be evaluated by long-term trends and growth;
- We need to help parents disciple their teenagers;

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- Youth need older Christians to help them grow as disciples of Jesus (the latest research suggests that all-age church services are good for teenagers in growing as disciples – where such services are truly 'intergenerational' (all ages working together to disciple each other) rather than just 'multigenerational' (different ages in the building for church)); and,
- We want to encourage youth participation in our ministries, to help them grow as disciples and help others grow as disciples as well (it is a long-term investment in our church's future).

b) How?

The specific steps we will take to achieve these goals include:

1. Organise two parent nights each year which will them practical help in being parents who help make disciples of their children;
2. Sermon applications to help parents understand the priority of discipleship (and ministry);
3. Develop more Christ-centred, biblical thinking on apologetic issues (to help youth express any areas of doubt and constructively deal with such areas);
4. Establish a fund or provide money in our budget to subsidise our youth and young adults leaders for serving on church youth camps and attending leadership training conferences;
5. Consider ways to maximise growth in discipleship at our 2 evening services, including how to provide effective intergenerational discipleship, (whether through sharing resources between the 2 services, providing mentors, combining into a new 6.30 service, or other means) - preceded by discussion and input as to why this is necessary and helpful, and how it could best be achieved;
6. A day-long 'conference' with our Year 11 students to help them prepare spiritually for year 12, to stay strong as disciples through that year, and how to then transition into our young adult ministries, university/TAFE settings or another church (if they are likely to move away from Berowra);
7. Teaching our youth how to help each other grow as disciples;
8. Run training nights for teens in how to share the gospel with a non-Christian; and,
9. Run a weekend away each year with every Year 12 teen to discuss 'what's next' in their discipleship journey

c) Goals?

1. Increase the retention of our members' children in church from 63% (NCLS 2011 statistic) to 100% by 2020;
2. Combine our two current evening services into one intergenerational service, and provide opportunities for youth to minister to adults and adults to minister to youth, such that all attendees grow as disciples of Jesus;
3. BUILD - the teenagers up in their faith as growing disciples of Jesus;
4. REACH - equip every teenager to reach out to their friends with the gospel, and have each teenager invite someone new to church each term;
5. FLOW - help teenagers flow into our youth ministry, then into church and Young Adults;

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6. Help our parents be disciple-making disciples to their children (and teach our young adults these skills and habits before they start having children);
7. Work with our year 6 ministries to help children to leave their programs at the beginning of term 4 each year and to flow into the youth ministry;
8. Ensure that all young adults who move away at the end of year 12 (especially for university) are linked to local Christians and flow into AFES groups within two weeks of starting university;
9. Give opportunities for teenagers to express and deal with doubts in their faith, and help them through these times so they can continue as disciples;
10. Help parents, youth and children understand that our goal (and God's goal) is discipleship (not just entertainment or anything else), and have this as their own goal;
11. Provide avenues for Christian youth to serve in ministry with appropriate training and supervision;
12. Identify, recruit and train new youth ministry leaders;
13. See at least 5 unchurched teens come to Christ each year and become part of our youth ministries and evening congregation;
14. To have 100% of our teens come to a camp or conference each year;
15. To see 75% of our Club Reg and E3 attendees in evening church, and 60% involved in Youth Bible Study groups; and,
16. To run a St Mark's 'schoolies' trip by 2020.