

# Grapevine

February 2013 / St Mary's Anglican Church



St Mary's  
is a community...  
Loving God,  
Following Jesus,  
Sharing God's love with all.

## Contact St Mary's

7 O'Shanassy St, Sunbury  
PO Box 2049  
Sunbury VIC 3429

03 9744 1347

admin@stmarysanglican.org.au  
www.stmarysanglican.org.au

## From Gavin's Desk

Written by Rev. Gavin Ward

Greetings everyone and Happy New Year to those I haven't seen as yet.

For those who were able to get away, I trust you had a very enjoyable and restful time and that you are refreshed and recharged for this year. We have had a great sermon series on the miracles of Jesus, so please take the opportunity of catching up with them through the Podcasts on our website.

A couple of matters to bring you up to speed with:-



Gavin Ward

## Vision Development 2013 - 2023

In 2008 St Mary's developed its Mission Statement:-

***"St Mary's is a community loving God, following Jesus, and sharing God's love with all".***

You probably have this on a fridge magnet at home and it's also a feature on the front wall of the church. This Mission Statement remains God's Mission for us.

At the same time in 2008, St Mary's developed a vision for the five years 2008-2012:-

***"By the end of 2012, St Mary's will be growing followers of Christ through an integrated discipleship and training pathway and through the planting of a new congregation."***

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### **The key objectives of this 5 year vision were:-**

1. To plant at least one new congregation by 2012.
2. To develop an integrated and continuous discipleship pathway so that all members have the opportunity to grow in their faith, serve in ministry and engage with the community, sharing God's love with all.
3. To develop and maintain an integrated "curriculum" for the spiritual growth of disciples from 0 – 18 years.
4. To identify, equip and grow leaders for all ministries.
5. To equip people to deal with new issues and crises from a Christian perspective as they journey through life.

### **Achievements**

There have been many achievements associated with this vision, some are:-

- 1) We have two new congregations in the Parish, giving us a total of 5 congregations:-
  - the Sunday morning 8.30am and 10.30am congregations,
  - the Wednesday morning congregation,
  - the 4pm congregation (Families with Young Kids) meeting monthly on a Sunday afternoon with a study group "going deeper" also meeting once a month, and
  - the joint St Mary's/St Andrews Youth and Young Adults Community meet twice monthly.
- 2) The numbers attending each of these congregations and communities is healthy and growing.
- 3) Our children are ministered to through Playgroup and the 4pm congregation, God's Gang for three year olds to Year 6, and Youth United (jointly with St Andrews) for secondary school age children and youth. We also have a vibrant Young Adults Group for those who are post-Secondary School age.
- 4) We have active, strong home groups focussed mainly on Bible study, and a number of discipleship and training programs are held each year. The most significant to be run recently was Alpha, which also had a strong new Christian and evangelistic focus.
- 5) We have conducted some Leadership Training, but more is needed.

Having reached the end of our 5 Year Vision period, now is the time to look ahead and to discern where God is leading us for the next period of our life.

As we do this, we need to be mindful of what is happening around us.



### **Sunbury's Population Growth**

Sunbury is projected to grow substantially as part of Melbourne's Urban Growth Area. In 2006 the population was 32,000 and the population is forecast to grow to over 72,000 in 2036 and potentially to 80,000 – 100,000 under Growth Area Authority forecasts. Development is planned over 7 kms from Sunbury town centre. The number of dwellings in Diggers Rest is forecast to rise to 3,000 by 2031.

### **Buildings and Facilities**

While our buildings and facilities have served us well over the past 145 years, and the church itself is a beautiful building, they have their limitations specifically as we look towards Sunbury's future growth and our ability to serve God in the community with them.

### **Issues**

Some of the issues we have identified that need to be addressed include:-

1. Our buildings are becoming inadequate as we outgrow our current facilities. This is a great problem to have but one that needs to be addressed.
2. Our current buildings have various limitations including poor disabled access, a lack of flexibility and inadequate toilet facilities etc.
3. Worship space is becoming inadequate to accommodate increasing congregation and event sizes, and is unsuitable for some modern worship styles.
4. Other buildings are fragmented and there have been many changes of use from their original design purpose (eg old Vicarage now used for meeting space and some hospitality, meeting room in Parish Centre now used as office space.)
5. Community Store is seeking to expand.
6. Population growth and geographic expansion of Sunbury and Diggers Rest (and potentially Clarkefield).
7. Development of multiple congregations and communities – sense of "one church"?
8. Staffing levels, types (clergy and lay), paid and volunteer roles need to be planned.
9. Leadership for the future – some current key ministry leadership roles are currently unfilled eg Pastoral Care Coordinator, Home Groups Coordinator.

As we think about a plan for ministry for the next 10 years, we will also need to examine various options for our buildings and facilities, and begin the long process of doing something about them.

## From Gavin's Desk

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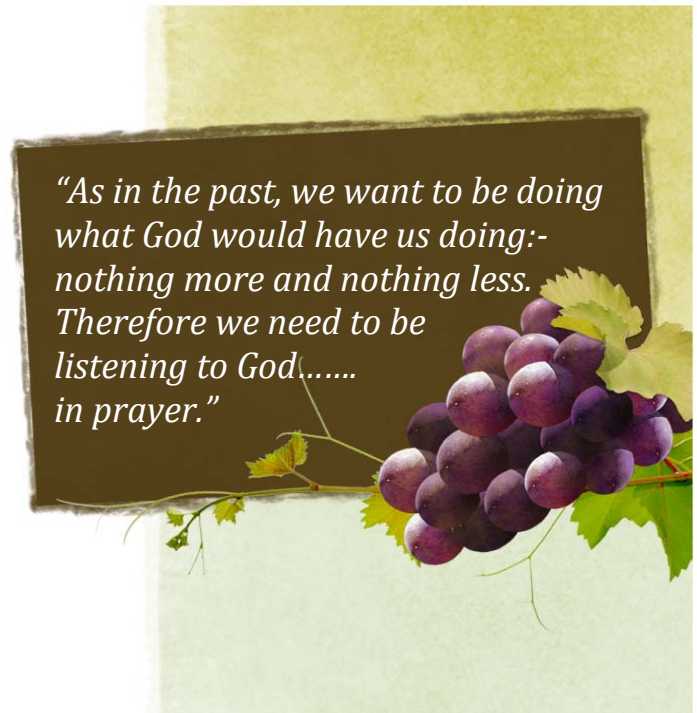
### Strategies

We have contacted a number of Parishes in Melbourne who have faced similar issues and listened to the way in which they have undertaken this sort of task.

As a result, the Wardens, Vestry and I have decided on the following process for developing our understanding of God's Vision for St Mary's for the 10 years from 2013 to 2023.

1. 40 Days of Prayer commencing 11 February, seeking to involve everyone in the Parish in groups and as individuals. Guidelines for the 40 Days of Prayer will be available at our services on 10 February and also from Narelle in the office.
2. During the week commencing 11 March, we will be seeking responses to a short series of questions concerning the life of St Mary's, and your thoughts about some future possibilities and options for ministries and priorities.
3. These questions will be available to be discussed by communities, Home Groups, ministry groups, and at least one open forum for people not involved in a group or community.
4. There will also be the opportunity for individuals to respond to the questions through a web-based questionnaire.
5. Two externally facilitated planning days are being organised, to be held at Bullengarook on Saturdays 20 April and 25 May 2013. Feedback from the questions will be reported and reviewed at the first planning day. A small Steering Committee will then develop further plans and present their proposal to the second planning day on 25 May. The Vision will then be launched to the Parish at a later date.
6. We are also establishing two Committees to help gather information and advise us in two areas:-
  - a **Financial Strategy Committee** focused principally on development of recommendations for managing parish finances with a view to new buildings, and
  - a **Building Research Committee** to investigate options of building on our current site or on alternative sites.
7. We hope to hold a "Reproducing Leaders" workshop to be run by the Bishop Perry Institute to enable us to raise up new leaders, and
8. Throughout 2013, continue to plan for staffing and leadership for the future.

As in the past, we want to be doing what God would have us doing:- nothing more and nothing less. Therefore we need to be listening to God.....in prayer.



That is why I am encouraging everyone to be involved in the **40 Days of Prayer**, and then to continue praying as the Planning Days take place and the Vision developed. The Parish Prayer meeting on Tuesday 12 February will be focussed on the Visioning process, asking for God's guidance as we seek to discern the way forward for St Mary's, for reaching out in God's name to the growing communities of Sunbury and neighbouring areas. We will also be holding extended Parish Prayer meetings in April and May to include a focus on the Visioning process as well as our regular prayer needs.

This is shaping as a very exciting year for our Parish with the development of a fresh Vision and the October celebration of our 150 years as a Parish. In the midst of all this, we continue to serve God in our current ministries and activities.

If you would like to discuss what we are doing, please talk with one of the Wardens or members of Vestry.

### **Humbled**

Finally, I would like to say that Vicki, Emily, Graeme and I have been humbled by your care, support, prayer and generosity towards us as a family during Vicki's illness. We have been overwhelmed by a sense of God's love for us and the love of God's people.

May God continue to sustain and strengthen us all in our collective service of our risen Saviour.

*Gavin*

# Sunbury Youth & Young Adults

Written by Rev. Kim Beales

We have a fantastic program coming up for terms 1 and 2. This includes two camps, a series on Colossians, regular nights at the youth centre and an Easter outreach service. Please book the dates in your diary. We would love to have you visit anytime, and please pass on the details to any youth or young adults who may like to get involved. As well as these gatherings, Youth United meets weekly in term time on a Sunday afternoon, and our young adults meet on a Tuesday night for a meal and bible study.

## Youth & Young Adults Term 1 and 2 dates

<b>Sun 17 Feb</b>	Camp Reunion - Games night	Sunbury Youth Centre
<b>Sun 3 Mar</b>	Colossians 1 - All in All	St Andrews Church
<b>Sun 24-Mar</b>	Easter Service	Sunbury Youth Centre
<b>Sun 7th Apr</b>	Colossians 2 - A Mystery Revealed	St Andrews Church
<b>Sun 21st Apr</b>	Band Night	Sunbury Youth Centre
<b>Sun 5th May</b>	Colossians 3 - Beyond Rules	St Andrews Church
<b>Sun 19th May</b>	Oak Tree Night	Sunbury Youth Centre
<b>Sun 2nd Jun</b>	Colossians 4 - Things Above	St Andrews Church
<b>Sun 16th Jun</b>	Worship Party	Sunbury Youth Centre
<b>Sun 7th July</b>	Second Birthday	St Andrews Church
<b>Fri 12th- Sun 14th Jul</b>	Young Adults Camp (TBC)	(TBC)



## Home Groups @ St Mary's

Written by Rev. Cath Fisher

Home groups are a great way of getting together with a small group of people to read and reflect on God's Word, pray together and mutually care and support one another. They provide a forum for asking questions, discussing different ideas and helping each other in our Christian faith and journey. You are very welcome to join a home group for a short period.

If you have any questions, would like to join a group, change groups, or would like training in leading a group, please chat to Cath Fisher, email [cathfisher@stmarysanglican.org.au](mailto:cathfisher@stmarysanglican.org.au) or call 0404 616 781