



Autumn 2022

Issue

St Mark's Matters

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This year the pastors of our zone decided not to hold the regular mid-week preaching rotation during Lent. This presented an opportunity for individual congregations to run a variety of services and studies appropriate to their context. I saw it as a good excuse to finish reading a book that I was given last year, 'Christ and Calamity,' and share some of its insights.

We had over 60 people express an interest in the course and 40 attend on the first night. Our numbers fluctuated throughout, but we were consistently blessed with meaningful times of devotion, discussion and fellowship. We grappled with some difficult topics, including the origin of suffering and pain. We also heard a number of first-hand accounts of how our fellow members have endured personal calamities, grief and near-death experiences, with faith, endurance and hope.

The book itself is a treasure and I would recommend it to anyone. Harold Senkbeil, an American pastor and author, weaves short anecdotes with theological insights and biblical references on a range of themes. The chapters are short and readable. Even I managed to stay on top of my own reading plan!

The short story is this: 'Christ and Calamity go together... when calamity strikes, you need Jesus' (*ix*). It's a simple thought, but what follows in the book, is a catalogue of calamities, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual, and the way each calls us back to a reliance on Christ.

Senkbeil encourages us to 'look for the helpers' in our lives, those people God has placed to offer us comfort and relief. But his lasting encouragement is to look for the good physician, Jesus, and find our ultimate assurance in him. He recommends the practice of lament, found often in the Bible, as well as highlighting the danger of human isolation and the importance of Christian company.

All in all, I think the book is a good prelude to Holy Week, when we are once again brought face to face with the suffering and death of Jesus for us, his own darkness and distress, as well as his glorious resurrection. Our own calamities link us to his and find their ultimate meaning in him. I look forward to another Easter season together, as we walk with Christ and one another under the cross

Christ AND CALAMITY

The world is full of calamity, catastrophe, crisis, conflict, contention, combat and confrontation. These are just some of the 'C' words that describe the times in which we live. The screens and pages we view bring the pain and suffering right into our living spaces. The reality is overwhelming...Not to mention our own personal challenges!

Here are some reflections from participants in the 2022 Lenten studies on Christ and Calamity...

If you could see my little book, Christ and Calamity, you'd realise how much I've valued the words inside it, because almost every second paragraph is highlighted. For such a tiny book, it sure packs a punch.

The book speaks reminders of Gospel truths that we all need. I found it so relevant to any trial that I have or will face in my life

I think my biggest take away has been that God is faithful even when we are not (chapter 2) 2 Timothy 2:13 (Jane Hill)

Every chapter spoke to me personally in a very meaningful and thought provoking way. When our own faith wavers, we are encouraged to focus on God's faithfulness. Our friends and family may give up on us, but our loving God doesn't. What reassurance when in life's tight spots. Happiness is temporary but joy comes from knowing we already have eternal life through Jesus. (Val Schild)

I learned lamenting is calling God's attention to what he already knows; this is a cry of faith. Others have questioned my inclination to retreat when struggling, but I find strength and peace in my alone-ness with Jesus and that's okay.

We can find grace and gratitude in times of calamity when we see that Christ himself is the helper rushing in. ('Lyn Marshall)

A great study series that puts into perspective the current concerns of the Pandemic and Ukraine war as temporal events, directing the focus to our faith walk, relying on the certainty God has given us through Jesus death on the cross. In the midst of suffering and uncertainty our normal response is of complaint, we are prone to see only darkness ahead but to God "even the darkness is not dark" Psalm 139 v 12.

Christ and Calamity is a great resource book to add to your library, providing comfort in troubled times, easily read and clearly defines our concerns and redirects the focus to God's promises and His ever present hand upon us.

The author summarises "*what matters isn't the amount of faith we have, it's the object of our faith*"

I have been pleased to journey through this Lenten season by participating in the Christ In Calamity study series. The questions for small group discussion have been thought provoking – sometimes challenging – but I have appreciated the times of open discussion and listening to and learning from others each week. (Bev Gogel)

What a wonderful way to affirm and celebrate our collective perspective of the Victory we have in Jesus!

Joy

Joy and sadness are as close to each other as the splendid autumn leaves are to the soberness of the barren trees. When you touch the hand of a returning friend, you already know that person will have to leave you again. Joy and sadness are born at the same time, both arising from such deep places in your heart that you can't find words to capture your complex emotions.

But this intimate experience in which every bit of life is touched by a bit of death can point us beyond the limits of our existence. It can do so by making us look forward in expectation to the day when our hearts will be filled with perfect joy, a joy no one shall take away from us. The mystery of death and life is the essence of the Easter and Christmas celebrations that proclaim the victory of life over death. We have not been promised a life free from sorrow, but one in which joy shall have the last word. Henri Nouwen

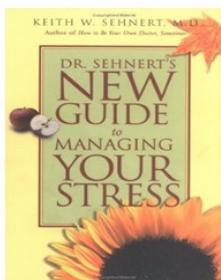
Continued from page 2

*I*solation is your worst enemy when going through hard times. Go to Jesus and speak out loud your prayers, petitions, worries/stress, and thanksgivings. Never be afraid to give voice to your deepest distress when in the darkest valleys of your life. Lamentations helps us to be aware that all humans are the same in that we need to 'get it out'. Saying it out loud is heaps better than stewing about it in our minds which makes the problem/s bigger. We have a Saviour who wept at Lazarus' grave. When we don't know what/how to pray, the Holy Spirit will speak on our behalf.

(Margrit Friebel)

Confidence, courage, certainty, conviction are more 'C' words that describe an alternative lifestyle, a life where Christ (the big 'C') brings hope and joy in the midst of suffering. Yes, the pain and reality are still there, the grief and remorse are very real. Yet there is a way forward. Jesus is described in Isaiah 53 as 'A man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity...wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities!' Jesus the Wounded Healer, the Saviour, the Way, the Truth and the LIFE! Therefore, live confidently, courageously, with conviction and certainty as a dearly loved child of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Church Library — New Additions

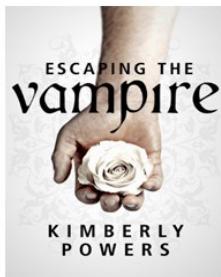


Dr Sehnert's New Guide to Managing Your Stress

by Keith W Sehnert, MD

Found on the 'Nurture' shelf

Dr. Sehnert assures us we can take charge of our lives with new stress-management techniques including nutrition, exercise, lifestyle changes and prayer. *Dr. Sehnert's New Guide to Managing Your Stress* provides reliable advice and spiritual wisdom.

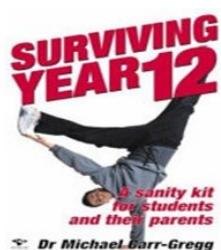


Escaping the Vampire

by Kimberly Powers

Found on the 'Young Adults' shelf

After working with teen girls for more than ten years, Kimberly Powers understands that at the centre of every young woman's heart is a longing to be truly, madly, and deeply loved. She's filled *Escaping the Vampire* with true-life stories, advice, and the vital truth of Christ's unconditional love.

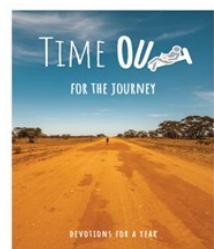


Surviving Year 12

by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg

Found on the 'Family' shelf

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Australia's leading adolescent psychologist, gives advice to parents on how they can help their child cope with the pressure, work smarter and actually enjoy their final year of school.

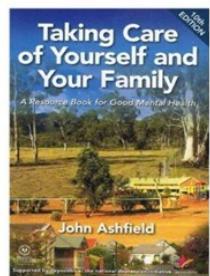


Time Out for the Journey

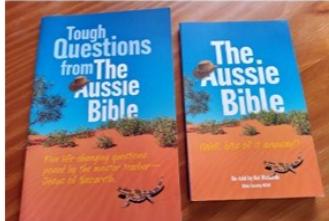
Found on the 'Devotional' shelf

Each meditation is a "time-out" of about 3-5 minutes, and consists of a Bible reading, some thoughts on the passage, a "faith talk" question to challenge you, and a short prayer. The devotion writers' thoughts are life-related and centred on the message of God's love for people shown in Jesus Christ. The devotions can be used for individuals, families and groups.

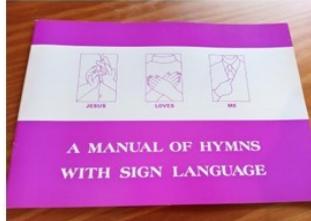
Check out these other new resources:



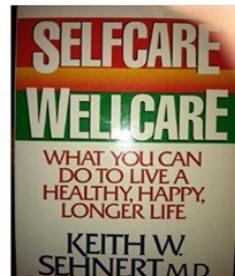
Nurture



Bible Reference



Worship



Nurture

**God has no phone but I can talk to him
He has no Facebook but he's still my friend
He does not have twitter but I still follow him**

Name the churches from last issue

Woodside Peep Hill Tanunda

Mount Gambier Denial Bay

Name the minister at these parishes..

Port Lincoln

Remark

Greenock

Yalata

Southern Flinders





Mount Barker Show E&W Children's Easter Stall

On Saturday the 26th March 2022, the Evangelism and Welfare Committee provided an Easter Stall, for the children as part in the Clover leaf Trail. We provided 130 gifts, consisting of a bouncy ball and a balloon, both with the words "Jesus loves me" on them. An Easter Tract with some activities was also included in the packs. They also enjoyed choosing a "Jesus Loves Me" sticker

We provided Easter themed colouring sheets and tables and chairs for those who wished to sit and have a bit of quiet activity. This was also much appreciated by the parents

Jane Hill also brought along the Mainly Music banner and we had some enquires about the program, from the community.

We thank God for such a beautiful weather day. It was a great opportunity to show our presence in the community and share Jesus, love. Many thanks to the helpers on the day.

Kathy Golder

Chairperson E&W Committee



What Easter means to me.

No doubt it is a reflection of my age but a couple times lately I have felt a sense of excitement at the thought that heaven might not be just too far off for me. Perhaps this excitement has also related to my growing awareness of the corruption and pain that taints all the good things of this world.

I sometimes wonder what it is like for a non-Christian to contemplate their mortality. I presume the atheist believes he must make the most of this poor sorry world and then just cease to exist.

In Papua New Guinea (where we lived for many years) the people were animists before the coming of the Gospel, and many still are. They believed when people died they became spirits and hovered around their villages bringing sickness, trouble and death. The living needed to placate them until they wandered off to reside in a mountain or stream or cave. One's father's spirit was the most feared. When Christian evangelists told them about the resurrection, the old people would laugh with joy at the thought that they would have strong *bodies*, pain-free joints, sharp eyes, keen ears and all their teeth again! Missionaries have reported similar reactions among Aboriginal people.

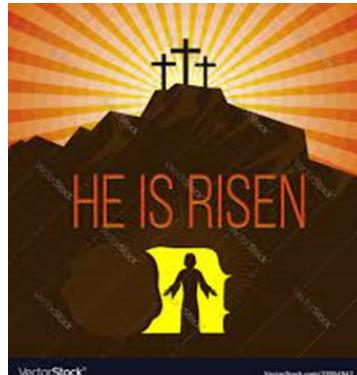
In 2016 Greg and I were in Thailand where Greg taught a course at the Lutheran Seminary in Bangkok. The then director, Visanukorn, had been a Buddhist monk. Buddhists believe in reincarnation. Your experience in your next life depends on how you live this present life. Visanukorn found no peace, only emptiness. He grew weary of the unbearable burden of doing meritorious work to atone for his sins, not just of this life, but the sins of all his past lives. He became a Christian and then a pastor to share with others the freedom that salvation in Christ brings.

In 2017 we visited missionary friends in Myanmar. There, Buddhism is evident everywhere. At the Shwedagon pagoda complex you see people praying, meditating, lighting candles, bathing statues of Buddha, honouring their ancestors and making offerings. One Yangon woman earns merit by daily cooking food for street dogs. After all, the dogs may have been people in a past life. People also collect money for the monasteries to earn merit. The receiving monk earns merit too for giving donors the opportunity to do a meritorious deed. (Such offerings made it possible for monks on our plane to travel first class.) Theravada Buddhism, practised in Myanmar, says there is no God. Nevertheless, meritorious acts are performed so that in their next reincarnation devotees will have a good life and not return as animals or paupers. Their goal is enlightenment; then they can escape from the wheel of endless reincarnations in a world of suffering. Instead, they will be absorbed into the universe and cease to exist. Their goal is nothingness.

Because of Easter I needn't fear the spirit world, or endless reincarnations, or the burden of earning my salvation, or my own inadequacies and insignificance, or the judgement of others, or climate change, or the destruction of the world. My future is secure. I have a wonderful inheritance awaiting: eternal life with a new perfect body in a new heaven and earth.

As a child, I was often bored and the thought of eternal life bothered me a little. What would I *do* all that time? But then I thought – if God could make a world as interesting and amazing as this one, surely he could make an amazing new heaven and earth with many interesting things to do! Besides, I will be with all the wonderful people God has brought into my life from his family around the world.

Christine Lockwood



St Marks memories

Pastor Eckert had many qualities, but driving skills were not in the mix. His various cars often revealed the scrapes with church walls at Salem, Callington and St Marks. Extracting his car from fence posts, gutters and then panel beating the vehicle to allow him to allow him to drive home were often post agenda items for the chairman. Colin Schultz

Re Youth ..our group were a close group and we did many activities together. We went to Batts farm at Tintinara and picked stumps. The Foyle truck broke down after we had filled it with stumps. I impressed everyone by cooking my Humbug scrubber Hamburgers. Michael Pfeiffer

Youth



Mount Barker Youth fellowship Youth Sunday 1978

Back row Pastor Eckert, Graham Foyle, Darryl Foyle, Ian Pfeiffer, Gloria Matthias, Paul Paech, Leonore Melbourne, Brenton Mann, David Matthias, Bob Muster, Steve Jaensch, David Kuchel, Steve Matthias, Dave Brittain, Jenny Veale, Lorraine Matthias, Michael Pfeiffer, Deidre Smith
Middle row: Karen Foyle, Pamela Bart, Vicki Clark, Gail Muster, Judy Batt, Barbara Grabowski, Kaye Schiller, Lynette Clothier, Ros Kuchel
Front row: Bronwyn Pfeiffer, Allan Foyle, Jeff Henke, Leanne Jaensch, Leanne Paech, Maree Paech, Dianne Thiele, Lisa Peach?, Joanne Hartwig

JESUS OUR SOURCE OF JOY

"Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit". Psalm 51:12

Many people in the world have or are experiencing the hardest times of their lives. From Genesis to Revelation and everything in between there are dark valleys of despair, along with God's heart-warming restoration through his loving presence. It's the human and spiritual history of God's people and we're all part of it. There's nothing new under the sun!

As the war in Ukraine erupts into ever-higher casualties and soldiers and citizens die, the cry of one becomes the cry of many. How long will this carnage continue, the cause of so many broken lives, relationships torn apart, and homes and livelihoods reduced to rubble by the ravages of war! COVID-19 sucks the joy out of so many lives in so many ways however individuals might regard it. You may feel like you're no longer living on planet earth, but some hell on earth with no escape route. Death and illness have taken their toll on older and younger people alike. You may feel like you're on an unending roller coaster ride! We may become immune to the worldwide suffering, not to mention the floods in the Eastern states affecting so many lives, yet be absorbed in our own bubble of daily life.



So where can joy be found in such places of pain and suffering? As a dearly loved child of God, held in Jesus' grace embrace, you have the source of comfort and joy. Like the hen covering her chickens, so Jesus cherishes you in the midst of your trials and tribulations, covering you with his wings of grace and mercy. As a child, I attended Sunday school where I learned little texts, and this one stands out to me to this very day; 'God is love.' Each of us will have a season in our faith journey challenged by circumstances of the time, but God is always love!

I felt drawn to the symbolic embrace of this cross, obviously carved from a log of wood. It stands in the former manse at Carlsruhe, now a place where people can stay.

Joy comes based on the spiritual knowledge that the world appears shrouded in darkness and despair yet God has overcome the world. Jesus says it loudly and clearly: 'In the world you will have troubles, but rejoice I have overcome the world.' God's light is more real than all the darkness and despair, more powerful than human lies. God's love in Jesus is stronger than death.

Good Friday is a dark day when God forsakes Jesus-but that's not the end of the story... The glorious light of eternal life breaks out of the darkness of death as Jesus stands victorious on Resurrection Sunday. There's hope, there's life, there's celebration of Jesus, your source of joy in every situation. You will mourn, you will grieve but you can embrace Jesus' victory over darkness, destruction and death!

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice. Not in the prevailing circumstances but in the Lord who is God our Saviour Jesus, our true source of joy. Easter joy in Jesus to you all.

Joy Christian

God be praised

Jesus , Lord in heaven above
Protect us by your mighty love
Your grace and mercy set us free
To live oh Lord and stay with Thee

When hearts are torn and bodies worn
Help us not to feel forlorn
But look to you in utmost trust
Your precious love envelope us

God in His grace for you my friend
His peace and comfort to you send
When pain and trial seem too much
He'll comfort you by gentle touch

He knows your tears and all your pleas
Sustained by Him, on bended knees
I pray to have your spirits raised
God be with you, God be praised

The General Church Board has authorised the launch of a flood appeal to help alleviate the suffering of people and communities in south-east Queensland and northern New South Wales.

While it appears that the properties of Lutherans and Lutheran communities have largely escaped long-term damage, many are aware of immediate needs in their neighbourhoods. In addition, as with most natural disasters, support is required for the medium- and long-term, as people struggle to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

On behalf of the Queensland District, District Administrator Trevor Ruthenberg has thanked everyone who responded when the call for donations was first made. Some of these funds have already been approved for distribution to affected people and communities.

Mr Ruthenberg points out, however, that the longer-term impact will only be discovered as Lutherans get back into their neighbourhoods and help with the clean-up and restoration efforts.

'This is going to be a long-haul healing process for many people', he says. 'This is why funds are going to be needed, not only for emergency support now but also for longer-term hardship relief and psychological assistance.'

Sunday School Wrap Term 1, 2022.

The aim of Sunday school is to build Biblical knowledge, nurture faith and provide children with opportunities to make connections within the church. COVID limited some activities this term, but we endeavoured to reach our goals by adapting what we offered.

An 'at-home' resource was prepared each week and posted online through the Church's website. These resources focused on a set Bible reading and included questions, prompts for engaging one another at home and an activity idea.

We also prepared thirty Lent packs, which we distributed through the Church and Mainly Music. The Lent pack contained tracts from the Lutheran Church and a few simple ideas that families could use to mark the season of Lent.

When morning tea resumed at church, we trialled making games available between services. Soccer was a favourite, with giant Jenga and ten-pin bowling well received too.

Wishing you a blessed Easter. May God's love be with you (John 17:26).

Meghan Pfeiffer.



CHURCH REGISTER

Pastoral Acts from December 2021 – March 2022

Baptisms

Date	Name	Born	Parents
5/2/22	Brady Nicholas Leane	5/1/21	Andrew & Amanda Leane
5/2/22	Marni Anne Leane	5/1/21	Andrew & Amanda Leane
20/3/22	Levi James McArdle	12/12/21	Reece McArdle & Siobhan Kleini

Membership In

Date	Name	From
20/3/22	Gary & Jenine Altmann	St Michael's Hahndorf
20/3/22	Victor & Nadia Forbes, Abagail & Louis	Bethlehem, Adelaide

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School harmony Day

Out & About At St Marks



*It has been a privilege to publish
St Mark's Matters .*



Baptism Levi McArdle

*The Editor
Thanks You!*



THANKSGIVING SERVICE



Confirmation Class L to R:
**Zack Schwarz, Louisa Synwoldt,
Vicky Matthews, Isla Norris, Siena
Lang, Jessica Saliba, Samuel Marsh.
Absent were Luke Borgas & Breanna
Luxon**

