



28 JANUARY, 2024

Welcome

Welcome to worship, we hope you enjoy being with us.

Lectionary Readings

This week 28 January, 2024

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

Next week 4 February, 2024

Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

Farewell to Julie and Darryl

Today is Julie and Darryl's last Sunday with us as they move to the Sutherland Shire in the next few weeks. We give thanks for all they have given to our congregation over the last 20 years and wish them God's blessings on this next stage of their lives.

Ladies Bible Study

Ladies Bible study will resume on Tuesday 6th February at 3pm in the chapel.

World Vision Child Sponsorship

You will be aware that our congregation currently sponsors three children with World Vision. They are Stanley, who lives in Kenya, Lojan, who lives in Sri Lanka and Mohammed, who lives in Bangladesh.

Each year we collect donations towards the \$1728 our sponsorship costs us and tax-deductible receipts are available if desired.

If you are able to make a contribution it would be appreciated; you can give your gift to Karen S or transfer money direct to our bank account, the details are BSB 112 879, account number 428 172 081, please put your name and WV in the reference if possible.

Our sponsorship helps provide support for child protection and child rights education, educational support and training for teachers, clean drinking water, farming support, increased access to health education and care and business training for communities.



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St Mark

This year on most Sundays we will hear passages out of Mark's gospel. This book is often recommended as the first point of entry into the Christian faith because it is short, action packed and to the point. Scholars tell us that the Gospel of Mark is the earliest written account of Jesus' ministry, and it serves as a foundation for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, who expand and re-organise Mark's narrative placing more emphasis on Jesus' teaching and Jesus' parables respectively.



Mark tells the story of Jesus in a very down to earth and honest way. Jesus' disciples in Mark are often depicted as slow to understand and we get to see them make mistakes. Mark's Jesus is also depicted as being very human, he hungers, gets tired, and expresses pity, anger, sadness, wonder, compassion, indignation, love and anguish.

Another distinguishing feature of Mark's gospel is his use of the Greek word, *euthys*, which translates to 'immediately'. In this short book, 'immediately' is used forty two times, creating a sense of everything happening quickly, which sweeps the reader along, like any modern day page turner. If you have half an hour to kill, read Mark as it was intended to be heard, in one sitting. Its dramatic, yet anticlimactic ending will then have its desired effect and you will be left asking 'well, what now?'

Mark's abrupt ending (*Mark 16:8: Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.*) caused early Christians to write makeshift endings which appear in most Bible translations as the Shorter ending to Mark or the Longer ending to Mark, how very original!. Mark's seemingly odd ending, however, allows us to consider how we will react to the good news, it is like a literary altar call.

Many of us may feel like we have a handle on this Christian journey, having been baptised decades ago and present in church every Sunday ever since but as we move into this New Year, in what ways can we deepen our faith and grow in wisdom and understanding? What mistakes can we put behind us, just like the very human and hapless disciples? Can we also move on to speak out and act out the good news?

In the first chapter of Mark, Jesus says, "The time has come, the Kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

May we hear Jesus proclamation anew as we continue growing into the Body of Christ throughout 2024.