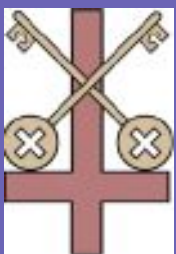


Cross & Keys

Christmas 2023 – Newsletter of
Saint Peter's Church



Anglican
Church
Saint Peter's East Maitland

The Anglican Parish of East Maitland
Saint Peter's Church
49 William Street East Maitland



Serving the Communities of Ashtonfield,
East Maitland, Four Mile Creek, Louth Park, Metford, Pitnacree, Tenambit and the Hunter Region

Telephone: (02) 4934 5303 | email: office@eastmaitlandanglican.org | website: www.eastmaitlandanglican.org | mailing: PO Box East Maitland NSW 2323

Scott's Spot

The transition from the season of Advent into Christmas is a little bit tricky this year. In the blink of an eye the Fourth Sunday of Advent turns into Christmas Eve. Our focus turns from preparation to celebration in a matter of hours. If we're not ready it might take us by surprise. From the perspective of the sheer number of church services in a twenty-four-hour period it literally takes your breath away.



On the Fourth Sunday of Advent the gospel passage takes us to Nazareth in Galilee to hear the story of the Annunciation – Mary's encounter with God's heavenly messenger, Gabriel. Now I can only imagine that for Mary this was a serious 'take your breath away' moment. I am always amazed at how the story is portrayed by Luke in such a calm and serene way. I imagine myself in the same position and I think that I would not be quite as calm. In fact, I reckon I'd be terrified. Mary, a young woman who is already being recognised and commended for her faithful devotion to God must have had at least a small gasp for air as the full gravity of the situation became clear. And yet her response to the big news being delivered shows no evidence that she was struck speechless or inactive for very long. Instead, Mary moves into positive action and utters those immortal words, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

Each of us have likely had a 'take your breath away' moment or two in our lives. Perhaps the result of a scare or a fright, perhaps some difficult or confronting news involving ourselves or someone close. Perhaps we've also been aware of 'take your breath away' moments in our lives that have been God moments. When God has caught us by surprise, and we've noticed ourselves taking in a little gasp of air. Those moments can be beautiful because they are a gift of grace. They are an invitation and opportunity to pay attention. To listen and look carefully. They are also often moments which require a definite response from us as well. Where like Mary we are called upon to give our "YES" to God.

In the midst of our all of our activity this Christmas let's allow ourselves the space to be open to the God moments that take our breath away. Let's pay attention to what's happening around us and within us. And let's pray that we can accept the gifts of grace that allow us to add our YES to Mary's YES and say to God, Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word!

I pray that you have a happy and holy Christmas season.

Your Priest and brother in Christ. Scott

If you are a user of Facebook please like and share our pages:

- East Maitland Anglican
- Op Shop St Peter's East Maitland



Parish Office hours are as follows;

- **Tuesday 9am – 1pm**
- **Thursday 9am – 1pm**
- **Friday 9am – 1pm**



Outside of these hours messages can be left phone (4934 5303) and will be responded to as promptly as possible during opening hours. The office is closed 22nd December and will reopen Tuesday 9th January 2024.



Op Shop Christmas Market and Toy Sale

2nd December 2023

The wonderful team of volunteers were at it again servicing our community and raising funds for St Peter's. It was a very busy day with lots of happy customers purchasing toys for children and other bargains from our fabulous Op Shop.

With the BBQ fired up the team cooked up a storm whilst the weather did the same! Even a bit of rain couldn't dampen anyone's spirits and there were smiles all round with the amazing results. Well done to everyone who worked so hard to make this such a success.

The Op Shop will be closed over Christmas and will reopen on Wednesday 17th January 2024.

To finish off the year the Op Shop ladies celebrated a well-deserved Christmas lunch together at The Windsor Castle.



St Peter's Parish Pantry 2023

It has been a very busy year at SPP, we started the year helping around 35 to 40 families a week and we peaked in November helping over 70! Sadly we cannot see any reduction in the demand for our assistance occurring in 2024.

Firstly we must thank each and every parishioner for your continued support throughout the year, put quite simply, we would not have survived without your generous donations, so from all of the SPP team **THANK YOU!**

Here are a few statistics to give you an idea of the scope of the ministry;

- ◆ Average of 50 pantry items received from parishioner's each week, that equates to almost 2,500 tins, packets or boxes of food!
- ◆ nearly 3,000 families helped by the end of this year which includes 143 emergency packs handed outside our weekly Wednesday pantry window
- ◆ 40 tonnes of food received from Oz Harvest plus donations from the U1R Patisserie each week
- ◆ almost 4,000 frozen meals donated by Amorelle Demster's team at the Slow Food Network
- ◆ 70 Christmas hampers distributed to our vulnerable community with the help of Lions and Rotary



The team setup donated toys for inclusion into the Christmas hampers





Carols on the Hill



Friday 8th December 2023

After considerable planning this special date marked the return of the much-loved **Carols on the Hill** in the grounds of our beautiful St Peter's Church.

It was a very hot day, and our volunteers, stage and sound team from Equip Multimedia worked tirelessly throughout the heat to set up and get ready for the arrival of the first crowds at 4pm.

Whilst we all waited for Carols to start the children were entertained and delighted by the antics of 'Willie Woodrop' who rode his tricycle, made balloon animals and played sword games with the kids under the supervision of mums and dads who relaxed in the shade of our glorious fig trees.



We were blessed with a nice breeze early on to cool things off a little, unless you were on BBQ duties of course where our volunteers sizzled just like the sausages they were cooking!



For everyone's safety we had the wonderful St John's Ambulance team on hand all evening to ensure no one fell ill of the heat and it was wonderful that they were able to sit back and enjoy the evening with any incident. A huge shout out to them as they give their time freely to community events.



We were also joined by our neighbours from the cluster Parishes of Maitland and Telarah-Rutherford who had a very busy time selling all sorts of delicious homemade cakes and cookies which proved to be very popular.



The Reverend Scott Duley was our host and compare for the evening.



With the crowd and anticipation building, our compare The Reverend Scott Duley and Mayor Penfold kicked off the main event at 6pm.

First up were the Maitland Pipes and Drums who put on a great show of skill with the sound of bagpipes filling the grounds. In their Clan Maitland tartan they were a sight and sound to behold!



Next kicked off the community singing and Carols were sung throughout the evening. We all gave our tonsils a good workout singing loudly and joyfully to a big setlist played and sung perfectly by the Maitland Brass Band and The Maitland City Choir.



- ♪ Joy to the World
- ♪ Deck the Halls
- ♪ Once in Royal David's City
- ♪ Silent Night
- ♪ Away in a Manger
- ♪ While Shepherds Watched
- ♪ Santa Claus is Coming to Town
- ♪ Jingle Bells
- ♪ Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer
- ♪ Hark the Herald Angel
- ♪ Come All Ye Faithful



When Murray Mayday and The Australian Tenors hit the stage they received a very warm welcome and delighted the audience with popular classical arias from some of the best known Operas including the magnificent 'Nessun Dorma'. It is a big coup for us to have them here at St Peter's.

The Tenors had a lot of fun with the crowd too and some were even called to the stage to receive singing lessons. Now you don't get that for free too often so people jumped at the chance! We were surprised to find one 'random audience participant' could sing like a professional tenor – it was amazing!



The party got into full swing with the arrival of **SANTA** at 7.30pm. He was a smash hit arriving on top of his truck in shorts and gum boots. With his helper elves there were plenty of smiles and candy canes consumed.



After the excitement of Santa we were joined again by The Tenors who injected some more variety showcasing their talents with The Wiggles and then a little song called 'Sweet Caroline' both of which had the crowd on their feet and even dancing!

It was a truly wonderful night rounded out with a rendition of 'We Wish you a Merry Christmas'.

We certainly echo that to all our readers and with many thanks and much appreciation to our sponsors **Hunter Readymixed Concrete**, **The Mutual** and **Maitland Toyota** we hope to see you all again next year.



Serving at St Peter's in 2023

At St Peter's we have a committed and experienced team of servers who assist at the Eucharists each weekend. Our servers are Richard Fellows, Rachel Morris, Geoff Newby, Katrina Priestly, Stephen McKinnon, Georgia Dulley and Kevin Short.



We each undertake a variety of activities as servers. We participate in the entry, exit, gospel and offertory processions; we assist with aspects of communion and are generally a worshipful presence in the sanctuary. We wear the white alb and cincture to signify the light of Christ, being bound in purity and to represent the temporary departure from our normal lives. Our purpose is to assist in the work of the priest humbly and unobtrusively and to help create a worshipful, reverent atmosphere, allowing each worshipper to sense the love and mystery of God through the service. And afterwards there are several jobs we undertake: refilling of candles and cleaning and packing away of communion items.

We thank the servers for their commitment and faithfulness. Should anyone of any age wish to inquire about being part of the serving team in 2024, please speak to Fr Scott.



Petrus Happenings

We've had a great time at Petrus in the second half of the year!

We have enjoyed a variety of fun and meaningful activities: sharing our most meaningful possessions; a games night with 'speed Connect-4' and indoor badminton; two guest speakers: Chaplain Andrew Margetson and Rev Sarah Dulley; a BBQ at the rectory; a gratitude reflection; Christmas craft and a Christmas dinner!



Through all of this, we got to know each other better simply through spending time chatting, sharing some of our stories, listening to each other and eating together. It was great to have many people visit Petrus for several of these activities and anyone who hasn't come to a Petrus gathering is most welcome to come along and try it out in 2024.





Mission Lunch - Sunday 10th December



Meagan Schwarz from ABM joined us for lunch and was our guest speaker. Meagan spoke about a number of projects that St Peter's has supported in the past year. An interesting note was the possibility that St Peter's was likely to have been one of the earliest supporters of ABM in the Diocese, dating back to close to the time of ABM's establishment in the 19th century.

The 90's Club

Clearly **1933** was a very good year and we celebrated a number of big birthdays this year. Our Parish family gathered to celebrate with a morning tea and cake for our nonagenarians.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 🍰 Kay Cobb | 🍰 Bob Taylor |
| 🍰 Beryl Mudd | 🍰 Betty King |
| 🍰 Allan Cummins | 🍰 Mavis Allen |
| 🍰 Maureen Cummins | 🍰 Bob Finch |



The Counting Team

St Peter's would like to thank our very diligent Counting Team who work together each week to successfully tally and bank the money donated via services and fundraising for the Parish.

This is a very important job and together with Fr Scott they have implemented a great system to ensure all the checks and balances are in place. There were big smiles, especially after the big Carols on the Hill count where they reconciled every penny with the bank – yay team!

Here we have Warren, Yvonne and Carol. We also have Kerry Bruce, Kerry Priestley, Anne and Tom on the alternate week roster. We appreciate you all – thanks again. *(not present for this photo).*





Hall Hire

Our Parish Hall is available to hire for community or family events and functions.

We currently host a number of local groups running weekly **Yoga, Belly Dancing and Tai Chi** classes.

Welcome to our newest group, the **U3A Garden Class**, we look forward to hosting you again soon.

If you would like to hire the Hall, please contact the Parish Office.



Saint Peter's Columbarium

Many of our friends and loved ones rest in the columbarium niches and memorial garden.



We invite all members of our local community to consider our columbarium as the final resting place for their cremated remains, where family members and descendants can visit.

For further details about purchasing a columbarium niche please contact the Parish Office.



Please pray for the souls of all those who have died since our last edition and their lives celebrated at St. Peter's

- Thelma TULL
- Yevonne RAMSAY
- Mary ANSTEAD
- Mildred BRUCE
- Barry WISEMAN
- George CRIMINALE
- Elizabeth TAYLOR

May they rest in peace and rise with Christ in glory.

Regular Giving

The preferred way of receiving peoples offering to support the ministry and mission of the Parish is by electronic bank transfer.

Would you be willing to give your regular offering electronically?



The Parish Council is asking all those who regularly give to the life of the Parish to consider doing so electronically. Giving regularly by bank transfer is simple to set up and saves having to remember your giving envelopes each week. It also reduces security risks on the church site.

There are two ways to set this up:

- ★ If you have access to the internet and already use electronic banking for other payments you can set this up from within your bank's website;
- ★ If not, you can visit your local bank branch and ask the staff to arrange it for you.

The Parish's bank details are:
Saint Peter's Anglican Church
BSB: 705-077,

Account Number: 00040464 Reference: St Peter's Giving.

It is important for you to know that your giving will remain confidential. Christine Simpson-Morgan our Treasurer is available to help you. Please contact Christine at office@eastmaitlandanglican.org or on 4934 5303 if you would like to discuss this confidentially.

Memorial Flowers

Throughout the year we remember our loved ones on the anniversary of their death. Each year families remember loved ones who have died by dedicating memorial flowers in the church on the weekend in which they are included in our prayers.

This is a lovely way to remember loved ones and to help Saint Peter's maintain a supply of fresh flowers throughout the church.

The cost of flowers is determined by the family making the donation, however as an indication this is usually in the order of \$150 - \$200.

If you would like to organise memorial flowers for a loved one, please contact the Parish Office on 4934 5303



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