



St Petri
lutheran church

Focus

May 2019 | Ministry Focus and news from Pastor Adrian



Don't Believe it

If any of us ever doubted that St Petri has a bright future in the Holy Spirit's power then they must have missed the last few months!

There have been so many moments of very fine witness and care given and received between all kinds of people in the name and power of the gospel, it is hard to know where to start the story.

I think of God's people filing up to the altar, kneeling, eating and drinking of the life-giving forgiveness and healing bearing body and blood of Jesus, week after week.

I think of an overflowing hall full of parents, grandparents and children, most of whom are not connected to our worshipping community, and in many cases, not connected to a living faith in Jesus yet, hearing the gospel from everyday St Petri people at Messy Church.

I think of the Vintage Festival display just gone, and the creative, hard working and hospitable witness that we gave to hundreds of people who came and had a look at the marvellous display of God's Word in art.

I think of the fine job we do for people in the time of need when we host the many funerals we do - from how we assist the families in grief to how we run the funeral and how we cater for the gathering of family and friends.

I think of our caring people who gather those who find it no longer possible to participate in Sunday worship, but can do so on Wednesday mornings.

I think of so many men in need of a conversation about life and the issues they face, being invited into the opportunity to do so in sheds around the Barossa and the same for many women in our church hall at Branching Out.

I think of the joy of brass instruments, choral voices, organ, guitar and drums and the voice of the people of God singing and praying their faith at our Easter services, and watching the children find their eggs in the morning dawn light at Easter Dawn.

I think of our hard working Governing Council who meet into the night to pray, hear God's Word and lead this community into participating with God's Spirit in his mission to reach many sinners with the grace and hope of the resurrected Jesus.

I marvel at our staff who go way above and beyond all the time for this community and create so many opportunities for God's people to learn, go and grow in the gospel.

I think of Pastors' Noel Due and Steen Olsen bringing top quality biblical teaching to a good number of our people and all of our ...

teaching now being available on the internet for all kinds of people in all kinds of places to access.

I think of the care and Christian faith at work in the Teachers and staff of Redeemer and Faith and Nuri high as they live out their faith in their vocations with kids.

Shall I go on? No. There's no need.

Whoever you may be, whatever your story and situation at the moment, don't for one minute believe that 'the church is dying'.

Yes, our church has huge challenges and there is numerical decline and more than we like to admit, a lack of concern for those not yet with us in the gospel, but the Spirit is here and he is working in us and through us and will never leave us.

There will always remain a church - a people of God who know that their calling is to make disciples who make disciples until the final resurrection when heaven and earth will be completely fulfilled, and we will all see it.

Our vision

is to see God's love in Christ coming to life in people in our local community, through St Petri congregation, as we joyfully receive, live and share the gospel

(1 John 4:9-12).

Our mission

as a church and as individuals is to share the love and hope of Jesus with everyone

WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

We are learning that our task is not to fill up our Sunday morning worship gatherings with new people, but to fill people up with the gospel wherever they are.

It used to be that we could build a church building, put on a worship service and attract people to come join us. That happened well in the 50's and 60's.

But now, this 'build it and they will come' kind approach simply does not cut it. They are not coming to worship and they most likely will not be doing that in the same way or in the same large numbers as they used to. Just think about your own family.

The task is now much more about **going to them on their terms**, starting where they are at and listening, encouraging, inviting and caring people into the kingdom, all under the Holy Spirit's power, knowing that many will never connect fully with us as a worshipping community, even if they certainly sense the presence and power of Jesus in their lives.

This is called the '**incarnational approach**' to mission; where we be like Jesus, who through God, 'became flesh' (was 'incarnate') to rescue us.

We are learning to do this. We are going to people where they are in public ways (Messy Church, Shed Happens, Redeemer School and etc) but more crucially, in personal ways (over your back fence, in the morning tea room at work, in your class at school, at your family gathering...).

We bring Jesus wherever we go and the Holy Spirit uses our words, character, generosity, welcome and words to plant his seeds and reap his harvest when he is ready. We just need to be willing and ready!

WHERE WE ARE AT

In order to see God's love coming to life in our people and the people around them as we deliberately share the love and hope of Jesus by word and action, we need to remain focussed on doing less things really well, rather than too many things not very well and dissolving our efforts.

So we believe the Lord has given us five focus areas for our mission efforts:

1. **Child, Youth and Family Ministry**
2. **Sunday Morning Gathering**
3. **Adult Faith Formation**
4. **Working with Seniors**
5. **School Connections**

The Lord is blessing us with new people. There are many more new faces around, not just in worship, but in other gatherings and groups we host in these five areas. Our challenge is to love them, invite them in, welcome them and teach them the gospel of Christ as we share his Word for everyday living.

This is the people's work, not just the Pastor or the employed staff's work. This work is not for a special few, but for the chosen people of God. This grand enterprise of working in God's Word by his Spirit to make disciples to then make other disciples is what Chritain's do - together and alone.

We call upon you to reassess where and how you can be better equipped and help equip and encourage others in this mission work that God calls us to carry out with joy in his love..



HOLDING FAST
Hebrews 10:23-24

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.