



Priest's Report to St Jude's Vestry 17th March 2024

*St Jude's seeks to provide a generous and authentic welcome to all,
to encourage children and young people to grow in faith,
and to sustain and renew the environment.*

MINISTRY GAINS 2023/24

When I arrived at St Jude's in 2016, it was not long before some well-meaning people told me stories of the glory days. Of worship services at Christmas and Easter attended by hundreds.

In contrast to the 'glory days' stories, I prefer that we focus on our gratitude to God, for our part in God's mission in our contemporary time. For example, I am thrilled that between the 24th and 25th of December just passed, we ministered with about 500 people over 5 services and a Christmas lunch. This rivals even the glory days stories. What is more, our ministry was with small babies, through to very elderly people, professors, prostitutes, drug addicts, Australian born and new arrivals, able, and profoundly disabled people. It was AMAZING!

One of the beautiful additions to our outreach work this year has been retired hairdresser, Susie Dolling, who comes every fortnight to offer free haircuts for those in need- and is expanding to cut the JUNIOR JUDE's hair in 2024. Superstar Susie was also on hand to help on Christmas Day with many of you.

Our outward focused ministry helps to open our eyes to the important role the church plays in advocating for those who are economically, or socially vulnerable. You may remember these articles during the year: www.adelaideguardian.com/2023/08/18/how-do-we-address-the-moral-failings-of-the-housing-crisis/ and www.adelaideguardian.com/2023/06/29/sacred-porn-stars-online-the-sometimes-unwelcome-reminder-of-the-holiness-of-ordinary-people/

New people are again finding the parish through our outreach, and through our traditional services. It is worth saying that at the time of writing, ¼ of Friday's service attenders first came to us as community meal diners, and community meal diners made up about ½ of the Lenten study group. Alleluia.

We are grateful for our substantially rejuvenated French Hall, thanks to a significant donation by a parish family. It is used every single week for a wide-range of gatherings and ministries, and has been particularly earmarked for our bustling children's ministry.

In the past year we hosted the 'MSi- Mission Shaped introduction' course with Archbishop Geoff, and Lynn Smith. We held a MATE training course to help us to prevent domestic violence, and 'Dementia Friend' training to assist us to make our church dementia aware. After the retirement of our much lauded CVS captain Lange Powell, we recruited the highly capable and warm Karen Field, to Coordinate our Aged Care Volunteer Visitor's Scheme. Karen works alongside the skilful and caring Andrew Lambeth, who coordinates the in-home part of the scheme:

<http://stjudesbrighton.org.au/acvvs/> leading CVS. We ran huge Lent and Advent programs, and recently celebrated with our former curate, Reverend Sally Sandford- Morgan, as she was commissioned in her new parish of Lockley's.

TRAINING PARISH

Over the past six years we have only been without a student in the parish for about ten months. In Advent 2023 it was good to end our mini-drought and welcome Jack Monaghan, our new and very talented ministry formation student. Jack and his brilliant wife Jeannie have quickly settled in. Thanks to Jack's day job as a Case Management Coordinator at Yatala Labour Prison, we not only have a prayerful, but also practical ministry with prisoners this Lent through gifting studies via an ABM partnership. You may like to read more about it here:

www.adelaideguardian.com/2024/02/12/gods-own-country-into-prisons/

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD SATURDAY 20TH APRIL- BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY:



Please go to our notices- worship webpage:

www.stjudesbrighton.org.au/worship/ and book your place today! I

hope that most of the parish will come and be part of the FTLG Conference. It will be an encouraging day of connecting and equipping. It will be properly catered, and as one of the four organisers I can commend it to you. I note that Kathryn Pugh will

lead opening worship, Jack Monaghan will be speaking at one of the breakout sessions with Lynn Smith on Prison ministry, and I will be leading another break out session with Ben Woodd from St Barnabas' at Croydon on 'practical ideas for community engagement'. The whole-of-Diocese conference is free, or by donation.

A VISION FOR 2024/25

The vision for 2024 is one of *strengthening*. We have been in a building phase for several years, and I think the parish is ready to consolidate our gains this year. I do not foresee that we will begin large new ministries; rather we will work to strengthen the ones we have.

I also believe we need to revisit our Mission Action Plan toward the end of 2024. I am no longer confident it covers the parishes' depth of aspiration. It is time to dream again about our future!

PARISH PERSPECTIVES

I am struck by the richness of our diversity as a parish. We come from a range of backgrounds: many Anglicans, some 'high' church and some 'low', some former Baptists, some former Lutherans, Pentecostals, and Catholics, and others. We are a Godly soup. Among us there are fantastic stories of faith, and perspectives on the wonder of God at work in our lives. I have often thought that people who speak at Mothers' Union meetings do an amazing job, and I would love to share their stories with more people. I am intentionally committing to regularly inviting members of the laity to share their stories this year. If you have a good story or want to nominate a speaker- please let me know!

COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS AND AWARDS

We have been blessed this year with a swag of awards. I am grateful for your prayers and hard work that has made the parish an integral part of our community. Here are the ways other folks have lauded your work over the past twelve months: St Jude's Community Meal Team was presented with a 2023 'Boothby Volunteer Service Award' by Louise Miller-Frost MP, St Jude's Community Meal was awarded the City of Holdfast Bay '2024 Community Event of the Year', our Community Meal Coordinator, Paul Miller, is the Westfield Marion Local Hero of the Year 2023/4, and was a 2024

Marion Council 'Citizen of the Year' runner up, Virginia Summers- People's Warden, received a Community Service award from the Minister for Human Services, Nat Cook MP as well as a City of Holdfast Bay 'Active Citizenship Award' 2024. Many of St Jude's community initiatives and awards were mentioned in parliament recently, and an excerpt of Sarah Andrews MP's speech recorded in Hansard is available for you to review in church.

FINANCES

Thank you for your vital financial contributions to the life of our parish. I speak for the community here when I say that we appreciate your gift to the parish very much. Thanks to those who give from their bank account, and those who give with their effort, and the very many who do both. We work hard to make your gifts count.

Grateful thanks once again to our Treasurer John Wenzel and his knowledgeable consultants on the finance sub-committee; Howard Harris and John Gregory. Thank you for sharing your gifts and stewarding our resources so that we have been once again able to achieve a great deal in only one year, and even record a surplus.

Where we have shown moral courage, the community has come out to support us over the past year. Several of us put a lot of the foundational work into securing grants, and I hope that somebody from the parish may feel this could be a way they could help our outreach in 2024? Let me know if this is you.

SPECIAL THANKS TO SARAH, CHRIS & STEPHEN

Deep thanks to my Priest's Warden, Sarah Notridge, for her years of work, support, and wisdom in the role. Sarah is taking a well-earned break from being my Warden at Vestry 2024, although she will remain on Parish Council and serve as Children's ministry Coordinator.

Sarah has been integral to the team that has led us through an era of significant growth in outreach, in building and development, and huge leaps and bounds in children's ministry. During the bleakest times of the pandemic, I could not have asked for a better team than Sarah and Virginia to guide the parish through. There is not much that the three of us could not solve together- and there were some genuinely difficult waters to navigate.

Sarah, we owe you and your family gratitude for all you have done for us and for God in Brighton. We know God will continue to bless you in your leadership at St Jude's.

Thanks too, for the significant contribution of Chris Cahill across a range of important ministries and she takes a step back in 2024. Chris has been a Lay Assistant for 25 years (that's a life sentence in Australia!), she has been on the Parish Council for over a decade and has been the first ever 'Safe Ministry' coordinator for St Jude's. Chris, thank you for your critical work, love, and selfless dedication over many years.

Chris will continue to train folks and be part of the music ministry- she is not going anywhere!

Finally, thank you to Stephen Wong. Steven joined the parish with his late wife Margaret, and has been a member of the parish council, a reader, intercessor, MU speaker, Alpha leader and more. We grieved with Stephen when we suddenly lost Margaret at the start of 2023. You will remember that Margaret was instrumental in the starting of our meals ministry and even served Christmas lunch weeks before her death. We thank God for Stephen's caring family, and his deep faith, that have

brought him comfort. Stephen and Margaret bought their downsize-er house in the inner West and intended to move there someday. The time has come. The parish will want me to say to Stephen, that when you leave us- after Holy Week this year, with our love and blessings, and you will always be very welcome to pop in for a visit.

A prayer for Stephen Wong

We praise and thank you, God of the journey,
for all that is ending and beginning now for Stephen. We thank you for all he has been to us. We entrust Stephen into your loving care, knowing that you are always the faithful traveller and companion on the way. Shield and protect him from harm and anxiety.
Grant Stephen the courage to meet the future, and grace to let go into your new life.
Through Christ our Saviour. Amen

GIVING GOD THANKS FOR LIFE

As well as celebrating happy milestones this year, the parish has also been touched by the loss of dearly loved members of the extended parish family including; William James Handy, Peter Thomas Patrilli, Camile John Domaille, June Hillier, Marjorie Vera Sutcliffe, John Maurice Russell, and Brian Ronald Bottroff. We give thanks for their lives, their labour, and their love, and we entrust them to God's safe keeping.

THANK YOU TO OUR WHOLE TEAM

Thank you to our hard-working Parish Council for all you do to make your parish flourish. Thank you to our excellent Wardens Virginia and Sarah, for the millions of acts of love over the course of a year for the good of the parish. Thank you to Roger Read who has accepted my invitation to join the team as my new Priest's Warden from Vestry 2024 onward.

Thank you to the wonderful assisting clergy in this parish, who have been a great help this year; Michael Hillier, Sidney Green and Joan Teresa Hart.

Thank you for the countless hours you put into children's ministries and music again this year, Sarah and Paul. I know how blessed I am to work with you.

Thank you to Lisa Badenoch. Lisa, you make everything easier – you even help me, to help you, to keep this ship on the high seas. Thank you!

Finally, I offer special thanks to all the many dozens of folks who have worked so hard in so many ministries in 2023/2024. It is thanks to you that St Jude's is the jewel in the crown of the Diocese of Adelaide.

Thanks to all members of our wonderful and messy parish family over the past year.

Paul, Moses, Rupert and I continue to be grateful for your prayers and care.

With every blessing to members of Vestry in 2024.

Sophie