On Sunday during St Mark’s worship we lit the third advent candle - the Joy candle. Christmas can be a time when we can experience joy as we celebrate with family and friends. It warms your heart to see the excitement in children as they look with anticipation towards Christmas Day. They are just filled with an amazing buzz inside that changes their whole outlook.

Our Christmas joy can be a similar experience but even better. We not only look forward to Christmas but the impact of the gift of Jesus in every moment of our lives.

Our joy isn’t limited to celebrating Jesus birth at Christmas time. It’s far more than that. Jesus birth was the start of his mission coming to earth as a human to save us from our sins. It’s the love and grace that his life brings us that means joy can be ours every day. All our other Christmas presents and joyful experiences will fade over time but our joy can last forever when we remember the love God has for us. We can have the child like joy, like the joy we saw in our dancing Foundation angels at chapel last Friday.

As we close this school year my pray is that despite any circumstances you find yourself experiencing you always have the hope, peace and joy that God’s love for you brings.

Have a blessed Christmas.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Luke 2:10

St Mark’s activities
We’ve almost completed our year together but look forward to our final two closing events to be held tomorrow.

- Whole School Student Assembly
  You are all warmly welcome to join us at 9:00am in our hall for our final assembly for the year. During our assembly the following will occur:
  + Our School Band will perform
  + We will present our final achievement awards, acknowledge and farewell students not re-joining us in 2017, announce and present the winners of our house shield and our chess competition
  + Acknowledge and thank our 2016 student leaders
  + Announce our 2017 School captains and hand the leadership mantle to our future leaders.
  + In between events we will enjoy singing some Christmas carols.

Please note the school office will be temporarily closed from 9:00am to allow all staff to attend assembly.

- Whole school closing service.
  Tomorrow night we will all gather at Inbarendi, Cornerstone College for our closing service. This will be an opportunity for students, families and staff to come together and give thanks to God for the many blessings we have received during 2016. The graduation of our Year 6 students will also occur during this service.
I ask you to please note the organisational details below to assist with the running of the service.

- The service will begin at 7:00 pm with the doors open from 6:30 pm for family and friends of our Year 6 graduating students. There will be reserved seats towards the front for these families.
- I ask Foundation to Year 5 families to arrive from 6:40 pm and be seated by 6:55pm. Upon arrival, students should move to the front and meet their teacher to sit with their class.
- All students should wear their summer uniform.
- At the conclusion of the service, Foundation to Year 5 students will stay seated in their class groups until a parent comes to collect them. Please see your child’s teacher.
- Light refreshments will be available following the service.

I look forward to your company during this very special occasion. As all students will have a role during the service I ask that if your child is not able to attend this important school activity to please advise me in writing.

**Student written reports**

Tomorrow afternoon students will bring home their end of year written reports. If you wish to speak with your child’s teacher regarding any aspect of the report please phone the office to make an appointment. Teachers will be available on Thursday and Friday to answer any questions you may have.

2017 class lists have been provided in the sealed envelope with your child’s report.

**2017 student stationery**

Stationery packs have been ordered for students for 2017. Families are asked to collect these on either Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th or Friday 27th January 2017. Collection will take place in the school library between 9:00am and 4:00pm. each day. Packs will include a welcome letter and requests from teachers for naming and labelling stationery.

Please note our school office will be closed from Tuesday 20th December until Monday 16th January. There will be staff in attendance intermittently during these times but normal services may not be available.

**2016 St Mark’s Lutheran Lightning Pedal Prix**

Students currently in Year 5 who have expressed interest in participating in our St Mark’s Lutheran Lightning Pedal Prix team have brought home an initial information letter for you to consider. We will hold an information meeting early next year to determine the level of commitment and participation of our team in 2017.

**Facilities work**

During the term break we will be refreshing and upgrading our F to Year 4 classrooms and hallways. New carpet will be laid in these areas and operable walls, to allow greater collaboration, will be installed between our Year 2 and Year 4 classrooms.

**2017 Term Dates**

**Term One**
- Year 1 to 6 students commence on Monday 30th January
- Foundation 2017 students first day of school on Tuesday 31st January. Stationery can be dropped off to the classroom on Monday 30th January between 8:30am-10:30am or 2:00pm-3:45pm
- Last day of Term One Thursday 13th April

**Term Two** - Monday 1st May to Friday 30th June

Professional Learning week for staff. No student attendance - Monday 3rd to Friday 7th July

**Term Three** - Monday 24th July to Friday 29th September

**Term Four** - Monday 16th October to Wednesday 13th December

You are all welcome to attend our 2017 opening chapel on Monday 30th January 2017. Students will first assemble in their 2017 classrooms and then move with their classes ready for chapel which will begin at 9:00 am. Coffee and Chat will follow after chapel for families and friends.
2017 Key School dates
I have listed below key dates of events that are currently planned on our calendar. Unless unknown significant activities occur we will commit to the dates listed below.

St Mark’s twilight Sports day – Friday 24th March

Parent Information nights
F to Year 3 – Tuesday 15th February 7 pm.
Year 4 to 6 - Thursday 9th February 7 pm.

P and F first meeting – Thursday 2nd February

Parent teacher interviews
Thursday 6th, Monday 10th and Wednesday 12th April

Year 3 and 5 NAPLAN
Tuesday 9th to Thursday 11th May.

Junior Primary Concerts
Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th September.

Camps
Year 1 - Term 4. Monday 30th to Tuesday, 31st October.
Year 2 - Term 4 either in Week 1 or 2 to be confirmed.
Year 3 – Term 1. Monday 27th February to Wednesday 1st March.
Year 4 – Term 2. Wednesday 10th to Friday 12th May.
Year 5 – Term 1. Wednesday 29th to 31st March.
Year 6 - Term 4. Aquatics camp - 1st Wednesday 1st to Friday 3rd November.

Some final thoughts.
It seems that within the blink of an eye another school year is drawing to a close. I find it difficult to believe we are concluding 2016 and talking of 2017.

In the rare moments of pause we look back and reflect on the many achievements, celebrations, events and activities and opportunities provided for students and families this year. Of course we also reflect and learn how we can continue to improve in 2017.

St Mark’s is an incredibly busy, active and vibrant place. It is exciting, energising and fulfilling. It is that way because we have 36 staff members who each day commits to doing the very best we can collectively for your children. It is really only when you are on the inside that you truly understand how any organisation works and I can assure you it is because of our incredibly talented, dedicated and hardworking staff team that we are who we are. From our classrooms and learning spaces to our office and support areas we are blessed to have highly skilled and passionate staff that come together to provide a wonderful daily experience for our students. They are the foundation on which St Mark’s relies each and every day.

On behalf of all our students and families I thank our staff for everything they do to enrich the lives of the young people that come to St Mark’s. They are a blessing to our students.

At the end of our year, we also farewell families finishing their association with St Mark’s. We thank you for your association and contribution to our school and wish you God’s blessings for the years ahead.

We farewell the following families;

♦ Applebee  ♦ Howe  ♦ Pope
♦ Burdett  ♦ Kupke  ♦ Rayson
♦ Donoghue  ♦ Kuss  ♦ Shaw
♦ Eales  ♦ May  ♦ Thorpe
♦ Faehrmann  ♦ Meldrum  ♦ Versteeg
♦ Ferber  ♦ Noske  ♦ Verwey
♦ Follett  ♦ Petschel  ♦ Wells
♦ Holton  ♦ Pfitzner  ♦ Wright
We also farewell Mrs Kimberley Blesing as she finishes teaching with us. We thank her for her contributions to St Mark’s, our students and families over the last two years and wish her God’s blessings. Thank you to Mrs Seidel and Mrs Marsh who have been with us this term replacing teachers on leave. Your time with us is appreciated.

Thank you to students and families
As we finish our year I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you all for giving us at St Mark’s the privilege and opportunity to be part of your child’s lives and their growth and development as young people. It is an honour and I do thank you for partnering with us.

Finally I would like to wish you all a safe, restful and blessed Christmas season as we remember with great joy the greatest gift we ever receive - the birth of Jesus.

Peace and blessings to you

James Heyne
Principal

FOR SALE - Secondhand Shade Structure

Endless possibilities - shade for a home playground, horse riding arena, pool or scrap metal.

Due to October storm damage, the school is replacing the shade structure over the junior primary playground. The shade cloths have a few tears that will need to be repaired. Some of the stainless steel cables that tension the cloth have snapped and will need to be replaced.

Buyer to remove including digging out the 6 support posts and concrete footings.

Scaffolding must be used to dismantle the top frame.

BEST OFFER in writing by close of business Thursday, 29 December 2016 to Holly Wake, Business Manager - hwake@stmarks.sa.edu.au. Inspection welcome, please contact Holly at the school.

MISSING JUMPER

One of our school families is missing a winter jumper which is labelled “Lachlan Howe”. Should you find it, could it please be returned to the Front Office—Thank you

Parents & Friends

Thank you to everyone that placed an order for tea towels.

Your orders are ready for collection from the Front Office.
SUMMER HOLIDAY FUN – COMING SOON

Get ready for a ‘Sensational Summer’ of fun! Summer Holiday Club is coming to your school and it is going to be one of our greatest holidays yet.

Here are just some of the feature theme days coming up:

At the movies
SING (PG) The movie event of the Summer is here. We’re off to meet Dapper Koala Buster Moon and see the world’s greatest singing competition!

Science Spectacular
Interactive Science Session - Bubble, Bubble, POP! Mini Scientists get ready, it’s time to experiment! With a take-home Science notebook.

Flying Hole in One
Frisbee Golf Course - Will you be first to score a flying hole in one? A colourful and wildly fun indoor obstacle course awaits and we’re ready to score! Plus, you’ll get your own take-home Frisbee!

Inside Out
Nesting Dolls - Design and take-home your masterpieces. Will it be a footy team? A music band? The choice is yours!

Program Details
To find out more about what’s on at our Holiday Club program on site and to book visit

We look forward to seeing you and your family soon.

From The Team at Camp Australia.