During Sunday worship at St Mark’s this week we lit the Hope advent candle.

It is an extremely common word and this isn’t the first time I’ve written about hope in the newsletter. When we use the word hope it is usually followed by ‘that’. We say ‘I hope that …’ I hope that it stops raining soon, I hope that tomorrow is a better day, I hope that we recover from a sickness, I hope that I find employment, I hope that ….. The list is quite endless. In all of these circumstances our hope is genuine, optimistic and positive. In reality our hope is often more like a wish. We can take steps that increase the likelihood of what we hope for but it can still feel like a fingers crossed type of hope as it usually takes our energy and effort or factors outside our control to make it happen. The outcome isn’t a sure thing.

There is a small, subtle but significant difference with Christian hope. We don’t say ‘I hope that…rather we read in the bible the words “But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you”. Psalm 39:7

It is only small word but notice the word ‘in’. Christian hope isn’t hoping on an outcome but hoping with confidence in a loving God who has shown that he is faithful. We don’t hope that God will forgive our sins but rather hope in a God of grace who has given us the gift of Jesus at Christmas. We hope in a God of love who gave his son at Easter as a payment for our sins.

As you think through your hopes for the future it might be worth considering how hope in our loving God can make all the difference to what we experience each day.

**2017 School Budget**

At our recent school council meeting our 2017 budget was discussed in depth. While the final budget has not been adopted we have determined our tuition fees and charges schedule for 2017 which has been included in today’s newsletter. We have been able to restrict the fee increase to 3% which is the lowest level increase for many years. As always we continue to seek to provide the high levels of support and specialist staffing that support student learning and the resources and facilities while maintaining tuition fees at the lowest level we can.

If you have any questions about fees please contact our Business Manager, Holly Wake as we have a range of payment plans available.

**Stationery pack collection**

Advance notice for our stationery pack collection days. They will be held on Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th and Friday 27th January. Stationery packs will be available for collection from the library between 9:00am and 4pm on each of these days. Instructions for labelling of stationery items will be provided with the packs.

**This week at St Mark’s**

Our focus this week is: ‘communicate respectfully and politely to others.’ We are particularly asking our students to focus on their words and how powerful they can be as well as their non-verbal communication. We expect communications that build others up and leave them feeling respected, safe and valued, even if they have a different view.
St Mark’s snapshots
- Our swimming program continues this week with our Year 1 and 4 students participating in lessons each day. Next week it will be the turn of our Year 2 and 3 students.
- Our whole school assembly will be held tomorrow with class 3S sharing their learning.
- Whole school chapel will be led this Friday by Pastor Clayton. We begin at 9:00am in our hall and coffee and chat will follow chapel.
- Whole school closing service at Inbarendi, Cornerstone College, 7pm on Wednesday 14th December.
- Stationery pack collection days on Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th and Friday 27th January.

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.
- 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

James Heyne
Principal

Christmas Casual Day

As part of our contribution to help those less fortunate in the local community, the SRC are holding a casual day on Tuesday 13th December (last week of school). The theme is Christmas, so please dress up in anything to do with Christmas and bring your gold coin donation. All proceeds will go to Christian Care and Share, Mount Barker.

Christian Care and Share is a local charity who provides emergency food parcels and other practical assistance to people in need in our local community.

Each class will have a Christian Care and Share collection box to receive your kind donations. Please donate non-perishable food items and new small toys to help local families at Christmas. This encourages our students to show love, care and compassion for those in our Mount Barker community who are not as fortunate as they are at Christmas and would otherwise go without.

We thank you for your continued support helping to make a difference in our community.

SRC
Parents & Friends

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

Your orders will be ready for collection from the Front Office from Monday, 12th December in the afternoon.

Book Club

All Book Club orders need to be in by tomorrow (Wednesday 30th). This is the final order for the year.

Library Borrowing

Just a reminder that all Library Books and Readers are due back this week on the day that your child usually has borrowing. Borrowing has now finished for the year.

Thank you,

Mrs Paterson, Teacher/Librarian

As a small token of our appreciation for our volunteers and helpers of St Mark’s this year, the staff would like to invite you to morning tea on Friday, 9th December 2016.

9.00am Chapel, followed by morning tea on the grass outside Year 2 classrooms.

Please RSVP to the Front Office by Tuesday, 6th December 2016

Thank you to all of our Chess attendees throughout this year. The final class was held this morning. Lessons will recommence in week 3 in Term 1, on Tuesday 14th February.
Dear Parents/Caregivers,

**HOLIDAY BOOKINGS ARE OPEN!**

We have an exciting program planned for our Sensational Summer themed Holiday Club. Be sure to book in early for excursion days. We are open every day (excluding public holidays). Open hours are 6:30am-6:15pm.

All bookings can be made at www.campaustralia.com.au/holidayclubfun or you can call our friendly customer service team 1300 105 343.

Sam Thomas and team
email: sastmarks@oshccampaustralia.com.au  Mobile: 0403 731 488
2017 FEE SCHEDULE & PROCEDURES

Tuition Fees
1st child ........................................................................ $3,191 per annum ($797.75 per term)
2nd child ......................................................................... $2,741 per annum ($685.25 per term)
3rd child .......................................................................... $2,291 per annum ($572.75 per term)
4th child & subsequent children ............................... $ 250 per annum ($ 62.50 per term)

NB: Tuition Fees cover extra-curricular activities such as excursions and swimming. Camps, stationery and voluntary payments (eg Chess Club, Scholastic Book Club, photographs, musical instrument hire etc) are excluded from the Tuition Fees and will be billed separately.

Information Technology Levy
$120.00 per child per annum ($30 per term)

Capital Levy
$250.00 per family per annum (billed in full in Term 1)

Booklist
Booklist (student stationery) ranges from $60 to $90 per child depending on the year level and will be billed in Term 1.

Camps
Camps are charged based on a user-pays system. The total cost of the camp is divided by the number of students who attend to achieve a per student cost. Camps generally range from $100 to $350 depending on the duration and venue selected.

Payment of Fees
Tuition Fees are charged at the beginning of each term and are payable 14 days after receipt of invoice unless you elect to pay in instalments by one of the approved payment methods, in which case the fees are to be fully paid by the end of Term 4. Any additional costs incurred in collecting outstanding fees may be charged against the parents/guardians.

Refunds
Tuition fees are not refundable.

The school's budget is determined based on enrolment numbers at the start of the academic year and financial commitments are made to curriculum, staff and facilities accordingly. Therefore, requests for pro-rated tuition charges or refunds as a result of illness or extended holidays cannot be granted.

In the event that a student is required to leave for disciplinary reasons, tuition fees are forfeited.
Payment Method Options

Direct Debit (preferred by the school)
You can have a nominated amount debited to your credit card or bank account regularly (weekly/fortnightly/monthly/per term). There is no charge to you for direct debit however if a payment is declined by your financial institution, you may be charged a fee by the school. You will also need to make up the payment immediately. Please contact the office for a direct debit form or visit the school website. Formal Payment Plan should be set up no later than 10 February 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of average 1 child family:</th>
<th>Instalment Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st child Tuition Fee............... $3,191.00</td>
<td>10 Monthly Instalments $392 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Levy........................ $250.00</td>
<td>20 Fortnightly Instalments $196 per fortnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Levy.............................. $120.00</td>
<td>40 Weekly Instalments $98 per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Stationery Pack ........... $100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp................................... $250.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total.............................. $3,911.00</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

New Students - Enrolment Deposit Refund
The enrolment deposit paid one term in advance for new students will be refunded upon commencement when tuition fees are billed. Please note that this will alter payment plans in the year of commencement and the instalment amounts will be less due to the pre-payment. Please ensure you budget for an increase in the second year based on the example calculation above.

Direct Credit / Periodic Payment
You can credit our bank account directly or ask your bank /employer to credit our bank account on a regular basis. Please ensure that enough information is provided with each payment to identify you, ideally your St Mark’s Code found on the top right of the fee statement. Ask us or your financial institution for more details.

Our bank account details:
Bank: Westpac Banking Corporation
Branch: Mt Barker
Account Name: St Mark’s Lutheran School Mt Barker Inc – Operating Account
BSB No: 035-094
Account No: 129541

Paying in person
Payment can be made at the school office by cash, cheque or credit/EFTPOS card (Visa, Mastercard and savings accounts only). Cheques should be made payable to “St Mark’s Lutheran School Mt Barker Inc”.

Centrelink automatic deduction – “Centrepay”
Centrepay is a facility available for Centrelink customers to have regular amounts deducted from their Centrelink payments for the payment of school fees. Please ask for more information at your local Centrelink office.