What’s something you are looking forward to? Do you have a holiday planned over the Christmas break? Are you waiting for a visit from a family member or friend, waiting for a movie to come out, a birthday, recovery from an illness, Australia winning a cricket test match again? Often waiting is difficult when we are promised something good in the future.

On Sunday our churches begin a time of looking forward to something amazing. On the fourth Sunday before Christmas we annually begin an Advent celebration. We begin a time of waiting.

Advent is a time when we pause and prepare for Christmas. I don’t mean we make sure the Christmas lights are up, the present shopping is completed, Christmas lunch and the family organised. Rather we prepare and wait again to receive the gift of Jesus.

You may have noticed our St Mark’s community pageant float this year has the theme ‘Unwrapping the Gift of God’. We all love to receive gifts at Christmas time and advent is an opportunity to prepare to receive the amazing gift of Jesus. This will also be the theme of our St Mark’s Christmas eve service held at Inbarendi, Cornerstone College.

For thousands of years before Jesus birth his people waited for him. They knew the gift of a saviour had been promised. We’re blessed to know the promise has been delivered. As we look forward to many gifts at Christmas we have the opportunity to pause and wait again for the gift of a saviour.

‘The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come.’ Luke 3:15, 16.

**St Mark’s snapshots**
- Our swimming program begins this week with our Foundation students participating in lessons each day. Next week it will be the turn of our Year 1 and 4 classes.
- Year 1 classes will visit the Botanical Gardens on Wednesday.
- Our next whole school assembly will be held on Wednesday 30th with class 3S sharing their learning.
- Whole school chapel will be led this Friday by our Foundation H class. We begin at 9:00am in our hall and coffee and chat will follow chapel.
- Congratulations to our Champions Challenge team for their excellent participation and achievements last Thursday. I was delighted with your team spirit and positive approach.

**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
This week at St Mark’s

Our focus this week is - ‘Play fairly and keep the rules of games.’

It sounds a very simple and straightforward focus but I witness children finding this increasingly challenging as they grow up in a society that has competition attached to every aspect of sport and game play. The idea of playing for fun rather than a focus on winning and losing seems lost. Society lauds winners and analyses and critiques losers. Our children pick up these messages so it is important we teach them that how we play is more important than the result.

Whole School closing worship for all students – Wednesday 14th December @7pm

You hopefully have seen the above heading in the snapshots of our newsletter for some time now. I’ve continually highlighted this as it is one of the most important activities on our school calendar. On this night we will for the only time of the year gather in an indoor space as one school community. On the night every child will participate during our service. On this night we as one community will honour and farewell our Year six students. On this night we celebrate, by being together, what St Mark’s community means.

It is a school expectation that all students attend this after hours major school event. Students are required to wear their summer uniform.

Thank you St Mark’s

During Term Three we participated in a walkathon to Laratinga. Our purpose was to raise money to support the work of ALWS in Cambodia.

We had the privilege of welcoming Julie Krause from ALWS to our chapel on Friday to receive from our School Captains a token of our funds raised. Julie then shared visual examples of the difference our efforts are making to the lives of people in villages in Cambodia. You could have heard a pin drop as the students gained an appreciation that every step they took helped improve and support those less fortunate than us.

James Heyne
Principal

Sports

Congratulations to the 33 St. Mark’s students who participated in the Champions Challenge event at Cornerstone College last Thursday. We were greeted with a wonderful warm and sunny day as we competed against 4 other LEAH primary schools. All St. Mark’s competitors contested their events with a big smile on their face and a positive energy, however, 2016 was not our year as we finished in 3rd position overall. We look forward to building on this platform in 2017.

Also a big thank you to the parent helpers on the day; Monica Strachan, Laura Fries, Matthew Punkhurst, Belinda Meyers, Kimberly Scott, Tania Pope, Christina Johnston, Paulene Porter, Louise Borgo and any other volunteers that came to support our team.

Mr Scott
On behalf of myself and my family, I would like to thank all the staff and families within the St Mark’s Community for all the support that has been provided to myself and my family over the last few months. We really appreciate the time that generous families have taken to provide the delicious meals for us and the understanding and extra time that the staff have taken to help Maddi and the rest of the family through this tough time. It makes things a little easier!

Kindest regards

Troy, Gloria, Liam, Hamish, Maddi and Jaxon Delaine

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**Book Club**

Book Club order forms will be coming home this week. This is the last order for the year! All orders are due in to the office by **Wednesday 30th November**.

**Library Borrowing**

Please note that this is the **final week** for borrowing of Library Books AND Home Readers. All books MUST be returned next week so that Stocktake can begin.

Thank you,

**Mrs Paterson**, Teacher/Librarian

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**Parents & Friends**

Please be advised that the chevron designs and colours previously advertised on the order form are being discontinued so supply of that design is limited and uncertain. The new pattern/colours are now shown on the order form.

**LAST WEEK FOR ORDERING**

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**Car Boot Sale**

Saturday, November 26th
8am - 3pm

Sausage Sizzle, Cake stall

St Mark’s Lutheran Church Rear
Carpark

Car boot - Sites $10
Book a site call Neil Launer
0402 355 528 or 8391 1341
ENJO Bamboo Kitchen T-Towel Fundraiser Drive

Softer, greener and more absorbent than its cotton counterparts, the combination of bamboo and cotton fibre dries dishes, glasses, cookware and more. Available in grey, green, red or yellow. $15 each. Each T-Towel contributes $2 to the school. Please ensure all forms and money are returned to school by FRIDAY, 25th NOVEMBER. To ensure delivery by end of Term 4, we can’t accept late orders.

Money and orders due back: FRI 25th NOVEMBER
Proceeds go to: St Mark’s Lutheran School - Mount Barker
Family Name:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Email Updates Y/N</th>
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Total number T-Towels purchased:  
Total amount of money enclosed $  

New Design (striped range): blue, charcoal and pink  
New Design (basic range): blue, charcoal and pink
2016
Friday 2nd December
St Mark’s School Hall

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<td>Rec - Year 2</td>
<td>6.00pm-7.00pm</td>
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<td>Year 3</td>
<td>choose one disco</td>
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<td>Year 4-7</td>
<td>7.30pm-9.00pm</td>
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Entry Fee $5.00 (includes fruit box and chips)
Lolly Bag $2.00
Crazy Hair $2.00

In order for the disco to go ahead, we need Santa’s Little Helpers to supervise each age group. Contact Tanya Secomb if you would like to help on 0411955729.
Please note, only designated volunteers (santa’s helpers) will be allowed in the hall.
*Please drop off and pick up your children at the Hall door - not the carpark.*
Let's Boogie!

St Marks Disco Friday 2nd December 2016
Junior (Rec to Yr 2) Disco 6-7pm
Year 3's can choose one disco they wish to attend
Senior (Yr 4 - Yr 6) Disco 7.30-9pm

Please return the completed forms with money enclosed before Friday 25th November 2016.

**(Please do not sticky tape money to the reply slips, an envelope or snap lock bag would be appreciated).**

Name: __________________________ Class: ________________________

- Entry Fee $5 (includes fruit box and chips)  
- Lolly Bag $2 (optional)  
- Crazy Hair $2 (optional)

Total Enclosed $__________________

Name: __________________________ Class: ________________________

- Entry Fee $5 (includes fruit box and chips)  
- Lolly Bag $2 (optional)  
- Crazy Hair $2 (optional)

Total Enclosed $__________________

Name: __________________________ Class: ________________________

- Entry Fee $5 (includes fruit box and chips)  
- Lolly Bag $2 (optional)  
- Crazy Hair $2 (optional)

Total Enclosed $__________________

Name: __________________________ Class: ________________________

- Entry Fee $5 (includes fruit box and chips)  
- Lolly Bag $2 (optional)  
- Crazy Hair $2 (optional)

Total Enclosed $__________________

PARENT HELPERS

Each disco requires 8 parent helpers if you are able to assist please return the completed form.

Name: __________________________ Email: __________________________ Mobile Number: __________________________

I will be helping with the junior/senior disco (please circle)

Contact Tanya Secomb on 0411 955 729 for more information
It’s Pageant time again and **St Mark’s Church & St Mark’s Lutheran School** will be entering a Nativity float in the Mt Barker Christmas Pageant on **Saturday 3rd of December**. It is a great way to remind people about the reason for this wonderful season. But of course we do need children to go on it!

The theme this year is “Unwrapping the Gift of God”. **While we all love to receive gifts on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning, the most miraculous gift of all is receiving Jesus at this very special time. Christmas is really about how Jesus is God’s present to all of us.**

We will be using a car trailer with bales of hay (covered). Older children will be able to walk alongside the float if there is no room on the trailer.

*If your child is interested in joining us, please complete the attached form and hand it into the front office, or ask your child to put it into their class tray.*

Please note the following:

- **Children will need to meet at the church hall at (9.45am) to dress.** The Church does have nativity costumes, but if any girls have angel costumes they would like to wear please do so. **Parents will need to sign in and 'dress' their own children. Parents are also requested to stay to help walk the children over to the oval.**

- When ready, children will be walked over to the Mt Barker oval where they will get on the float ready to leave by **10:30am sharp** (at this stage, parents can leave to watch the pageant).

- At the end of the pageant children must be picked up from **Walker St** (just near the sports shop – SPORTSPOWER). **PLEASE** ensure you pick your children up promptly when our float arrives at Sportpower.

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James Heyne  
Principal  
15th November 2016
**ST MARK’S LUTHERAN CHURCH/ST MARK’S LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

**CHRISTMAS PAGEANT REGISTRATION FORM**

In order for us to provide the best level of care while your child is under our supervision, we require that you fill out and return this registration form. The information provided below will be treated confidentially.

**PERSONAL DETAILS:**

<table>
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<th>Child’s First name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Age</th>
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For any update of information please include your **Email**:

**PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT:**
Do you consent to the appropriate use of photographs taken at the Christmas Pageant that include your child? (For possible inclusion in: St Mark’s Matters (quarterly newsletter) / St Mark’s Worship Service (a PowerPoint slide) / St Mark’s Church/School websites.)  

Yes / No

**EMERGENCY CONTACT:**
In the case of an emergency, please list the phone numbers where you and one other trusted adult may be contacted during the pageant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship to the child</th>
<th>Phone number (preferably mobile)</th>
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<td>2.</td>
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**MEDICAL INFORMATION:**
Please ensure your child has applied sunscreen, has a named hat and water bottle. Are there any medical conditions or other issues which require special attention that we should know about?

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**ARRIVAL/COLLECTION OF CHILDREN:**
Parents will need to dress their own child at the church hall and stay to help walk the children over to the oval. Who will collect your child(ren) at the end of the pageant from Walker St (Sports Power) after trailer arrives?

<table>
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<th>Name:</th>
<th>Mobile No:</th>
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(Families are requested to position themselves near the end of the pageant route in order to collect your child as soon as the St Mark’s float is finished at Walker Street/or ensure pick up from Walker Street when the trailer arrives.

**YOUR AGREEMENT WITH US:**
I understand that although the leaders will take all reasonable care to ensure both the comfort and safety of my child, there is still a risk that an accident may occur. **I will ensure my child is signed in on arrival at St Mark’s Church hall and signed out before our child is collected by the person nominated above.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of Parent/Caregiver</th>
<th>Signature of Parent/Caregiver</th>
<th>Date</th>
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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.

**Junior Global Citizenship Bangladesh Program**

Last week we sent off our gifts to children in Bangladesh. The bags were decorated, friendship bracelets braided and bookmarks designed beautifully. They looked awesome! Well done OSHC family.

Sam Thomas and team
email: sastmarks@oshccampaustria.com.au  Mobile: 0403 731 488