



Recess

Week 3 | Term 1 | 2026

Faith Focus

This week in Chapel, we will learn about some of the amazing work that Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS) is doing in South Sudan.

Years of war, floods, and drought have destroyed many homes, food sources and livelihoods. Families struggle to survive with no reliable source of income and very little to eat. One food source they can rely on is fish from the rivers, but very few people have any proper fishing equipment.

Can you imagine standing in the river trying to catch a fish with just a home-made bowl? Not surprisingly families who rely on this form of fishing often go hungry!

But through ALWS, we can help. Through our donations, ALWS can buy fishing kits (nets and hooks) and give them to those who need them.

Those who have received these fishing kits are very grateful, because now they can not only catch enough fish to feed their family, they can catch extra fish to sell or trade for other necessary supplies or services like medication, schooling, seeds for crops, and livestock.

One fisher reported: "Before, I felt hunger would overwhelm my family. Now with the net I get many more fish! When my family have full stomachs, we say 'God bless you' to those who help us."

To donate, or to find out more, check out this link: <https://www.alws.org.au/gifts-of-grace/fish-for-freedom/>

I'm at Chapel most Fridays and available for a chat afterwards. Feel free to come and say "Hi." Or if you prefer, drop me an email at greg@stmarksmtbarker.org.au.

God bless your week!

Pastor Greg



Principal Ponderings

It was wonderful to have so many of you join us for our "Eat, Meet and Greet" night last week. Our teachers appreciated the opportunity to meet parents and caregivers and share what they are doing and personally, I really enjoyed getting to catch up with so many of you and hear about your experiences at St Mark's. I particularly enjoyed seeing the students of St Mark's showing their parents/caregivers around the school, sharing what happens in their classrooms and introducing them to their teachers.

We have had a really positive feel around the school to begin the year and staff have been focusing on building a calm, welcoming environment, where students are valued for who they are. I have been grateful to our staff for the excellent work they have done in building this environment. I have also been grateful for their work in implementing new systems and programs in the school. Our new literacy programs have required staff to undertake new learning into how children learn to read, in addition to learning new routines for teaching literacy programs. Our F-2 classes have been working with the Heggerty phonemic awareness program, the Year F-1 students have been working with the Little Learners Love Literacy phonics program, while the Year 2-3 students have worked with the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) Foundations course. Meanwhile, the students in Years 4-6 have begun working on structured word inquiry, finding out about the sounds, the origins and the structure of words.

Mobile Devices

Please be aware our mobile device policy will be sent home shortly. The policy sets out our procedures for managing mobile devices at school. If your child has a mobile device (including a watch), please watch for this policy and take the time to go through it with your child.

Andrew Boesch
Principal

Lunch Clubs

Our SRC run Lunch Clubs have started with more to come in following weeks!

In the Library:



Near the courts:



Under the big tree:



Icy Tubes are back!

In Term 1 the SRC will be selling delicious Fruit Juice Icy Tubes each Friday. The ice blocks will be available after lunch eating time outside of the Library. Please bring a \$1 coin if you would like to enjoy one. Any profits will go towards our Term 1 giving focus – Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS).



Semester 1 SRC Representatives

Back row (L to R): Tristan C, Harvey W, Florence G-K, Ava M, Sarah S, Elijah M

Front row (L to R): Madeleine R, Mirriam P, Louis M, Henrik D, Ellie M, Carla F, Will R, Saya P



House Captains for 2026

(L to R): Milan R, Imogen B (Barker), Annabelle W, Elijah M (Davison), Oscar H, Holly B (Dunn), Jed H, and Seth W, (Sturt)

School life

Whole School Assembly

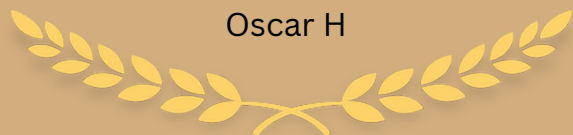
On Tuesday, we had our first Whole School Assembly for the year. Led by two of our school captains, Ellie and Henrik, we had 4k and 6K share their learnings. We also announced our SRC members for Semester 1, as well as our House Captains. We also had several Achievement Awards to give out. Congratulations to all our wonderful students.



Achievement Awards

Congratulations to the following students
who received awards at our Week 3
Assembly:

Emersyn H
Chelsea S
Camile L
Oscar H





At St Mark's students belong to one of four house teams; Barker (yellow), Davison (blue), Sturt (green) and Dunn (red). House teams are involved in various activities on a number of occasions throughout the year. St Mark's first whole school event is our annual Sports Day. Due to the number of events, St Mark's Sports Day is held over two days;

**Friday, 27 February (Week 5):
600m and Discus Day!**

Only students in Years 4-6 are involved on this day. 600m takes place after Chapel – each student running in their age group. Following this, students return to their classrooms before being invited to the oval in age group order (youngest to oldest) to complete the Discus event.

**Friday March 13, (Week 7)
St Mark's Twilight Sports Day**
(Whole school event)

Parents, caregivers, and students are invited to attend an optional community lunch from 12.00pm. You are welcome to bring a picnic or purchase lunch from the P&F. Please note that all children are expected to be in their classroom at 12.40pm for the official school roll call. Before entering the classroom, please ensure your child has eaten a substantial lunch, is wearing their house coloured plain polo top, has applied sunscreen, has a bottle of water and their school hat.

A final program and map of the events will be included in the newsletter in the coming weeks.



Shrove Tuesday Volunteers

To mark Shrove Tuesday, students will have the opportunity to eat pancakes. We would love some volunteers to help cook pancakes for our Foundation - Year 3 classes from 8.40am.

If you are available, please contact Miss Barolo through the front office.



P&F Update

Come join the P&F Committee. The P&F are in need of more members to help organise the school events within the year. Please come to the next meeting to be a part of a great friendly team.

P&F Meeting

The next P&F meeting is on Tuesday March 3rd at 6:30pm

Sports Day Snack Packs

Orders will be available soon via Flexischools for the Sports Day Snack packs which will include an apple, popcorn, gummy bears and fruit box.

Sports Day volunteers

P&F will be asking for volunteers for the BBQ and Cake stall again this year. If you can help we would love to hear from you.



REMINDER

Scholastic Book Club

A reminder that Scholastic Book Club orders and payment are due by Friday 20th February.

School life

Year 6 Survivor Challenge

Last week the Year 6s began their Survivor experience. Students were placed into teams and undertook a range of challenges that aim to build the 5 Keys to Success; Persistence, Resilience, Confidence, Getting Along and Organisation. The first day provided opportunities for students to name their team, create a growth mindset motto and engage with activities that would challenge their skills. Across the term our Survivor program continues as a way to bring our You Can Do It learning around the 5 Keys to life!



Diary

February

Feb 13 - Chapel - 9.00am
Feb 20 - Chapel - 9.00am
Feb 24 - Assembly - 2.40pm
Feb 26 - Hills/Barker Swimming
Feb 27 - Chapel - 9.00am

March

Mar 4-6 Year 5 Camp Port Hughs
Mar 6 - Chapel 9am
Mar 9 - Public Holiday
Mar 10 - Assembly 2.40pm
Mar 12 - Harmony Day
Mar 13 - Twilight Sports Day - Community Lunch
from 12 noon, students in classrooms
by 12.40pm

Introducing **STEM** early helps children build **problem-solving, creativity** and **critical thinking skills**, sparking curiosity and supporting their learning for the future, whatever path they choose.

At **OSHC**, children explore STEM every day through fun, hands-on activities like **cooking, gardening, construction play** and **creative art**. They're learning through play, building confidence, curiosity and a love of discovery, often without even realising it.

STEM ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO AT HOME

LAVA LAMPS with a water bottle, vegetable oil, food colouring and an Alka-Seltzer. Discovering chemical reactions.

MARBLE RUNS with cardboard tubes, tape and marbles. Discovering gravity, motion and problem solving.

NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT, create a list for children to find in the back yard, encourages observations, discovery and categorisation.



Friday Chapel

Chapel is held every Friday at 9am in the Hall. We look forward to Pastor Greg & Celia from ALWS leading us in Chapel tomorrow.

Parents and friends are welcome to attend and join us in the staff room, before and after Chapel for coffee, tea, hot chocolate and biscuits!



Mt Barker Lutheran Netball Club is welcoming new players, coaches and umpires for the 2026 season.

We're a family-focused club offering a supportive and encouraging environment from juniors through to seniors, including our popular Sparklers program for 5-10 year olds. Whether you're new to netball or returning to the game, we'd love to see you join our purple and gold community.

Registrations and enquiries are now open via our website and social pages.

Community news & events



🏀 Eastern Mavericks – Free Come & Try Sessions 🏀

Is your child interested in basketball? New to the game or keen to give it a go? This is the perfect opportunity to experience the Mavericks environment.

Who it's for

- ✓ Suitable for beginners
- ✓ No experience needed
- ✓ Open to new players

Session Dates (all sessions run 12:00 – 1:30pm)

- U14s (born 2013–2014): 7 & 14 February 2026
- U10s (born 2017–2020): 21 & 28 February 2026
- U12s (born 2015–2016): 14 & 21 March 2026

📍 Venue

Mt Lofty Community Sports Centre
99 Longwood Rd, Heathfield SA 5153

Cost

- ✓ Free for new players
- ✓ Free for Mavericks players who bring a non-Mavericks friend
- 🟡 Otherwise, a gold coin donation applies

Coaching

All sessions are run by Division 1 & State Level Mavericks coaches, focusing on skill development, confidence, and fun in a supportive environment.

🕒 No limited spots – come along and give it a try!

👉 A great introduction to basketball and a chance to see what the Mavericks are all about.

You can just arrive and try, or register via link on The Eastern Mavericks Facebook page. Alternatively, you can email community@easternmavericks.com.au

