



AUGUST 2020

PARTICIPATE

IN LIFE • IN CHRIST



Aldgate Church of Christ, The Village Well

What does it mean to find our unique story in God's story and how do we hear it spoken through our interactions with others? While COVID-19 has certainly impacted us as a community it has reminded us of the story continuing to unfold in our liminal spaces, of creativity that is born in times of listening and contemplation. And, it has challenged us to be open to discerning how the Grand Storyteller finds creative ways to still reveal the Word.

The Studio continues to be a space of connection, relationship, mutual listening and evolvment. When

we could not gather in groups or outside, chalk drawing appeared in the car park where neighbours would walk beside, a bare wooden cross among the gum trees became a place for anyone to leave a message, a prayer, a symbol of hope and we painted 'au plein air'.

As The Studio recommences inside our building we begin connecting with members in the wider hills community to prepare for an exhibition, offering The Well as a place to share our stories through art. The Story continuing to move in all and through all.

News and stories from Churches of Christ in South Australia



State Minister's Note

I hope you have enjoyed reading some of the wonderful stories from our churches in this edition of our newsletter. I am looking forward to receiving more stories from our churches to share across our movement, along with stories from our ministry partners Life Care, GMP and CareWorks.

In addition to sharing some good news from our churches we were keen to tie the look of the Newsletter in with the theme of this year's convention; Participate: in life: in Christ".

Participating in the life of Christ through union with Christ (Christ in me, I in Christ) is a New Testament theme that emerges throughout the apostle Paul's writings, John's writings and the New Testament more broadly. (Col. 1:27) We are invited in these New Testament writings to align ourselves with Jesus. We are to follow the lead of Jesus as we live out our lives and to seek to be in relationship with Jesus as our primary response to the call of the Gospel.

Our lives are full of participation; in our families, our workplaces, friendship groups and in society as a whole. We are also called to participate in the movement of the Churches of Christ and for these many reasons we see this theme as relevant for us at this time. Our hope is that our reflections at Convention will help us to think about how we participate in the Churches of Christ movement. We also hope it will help us to participate in life as a response to our participation in Christ.

Peter Barney
State Minister

SouthPoint Church of Christ



Our vision at SouthPoint is Bless, Belong, Believe, Become. Our aim is to be a blessing to our community so that people have a place to belong, no questions asked. In doing life together, we are able to share our faith in Jesus Christ so that we can all become what God has always intended for us.

During COVID-19 we started a community garden where the community could come and be part of a project that blesses our neighbours. It was wonderful to see the community involvement. We also opened our building to Puddle Jumpers who gives out food to around 400 people on Mondays. They

use our facilities to prepare the meals and it was great to see volunteers get involved.

Our men had their first get together after lock-down and it was great to have Dr. Paul Whetham speaking about the "Elephant in the Room" namely, mental health. It was amazing to see men open up around this topic.

Our young people continued to gather on a Friday night and it was a blessing to see so many staying engaged.

Our "CREATE" department also opened up for community artists to come and enhance their painting skills.



Marion Church of Christ



MarionLife

MarionLIFE launched The Staying Connected Project to help those in the community who are digitally disconnected to remain socially connected. The project connects volunteers with vulnerable people in the community who are looking for someone to check in with them via a phone call or letter. A friendly voice on the phone or letter in the mail can make a big difference. As a volunteer for the project explained, "In this difficult time we need to work closer together, support

each other to survive as a community."

A feature of the project is a letterbox that has also been installed on Alawoona Avenue, Mitchell Park making it possible for anyone to drop off letters of kindness and encouragement that are then passed on to those who need it most. More information is available here:

<https://marionlife.org.au/thestayingconnectedproject>
#TheStayingConnectedProject
#Community

Faith Online

One of the things that wasn't expected of our young adults ministry was to see new members join during the pandemic, but that's exactly what happened. Being reminded of Paul's words in 2 Timothy 2: 9 that "...the Word of God is not chained..." we saw one young lady come to faith in Jesus first by connecting with her Christian cousin (who lives overseas) online and then speaking with a member of our church.

Having a new Christian thrown into the mix always helps spur

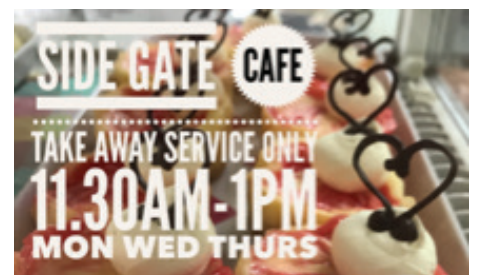
on growth in the body. The growth in our Young Adults wasn't just numerical by adding one, but also spiritual. As someone comes into a Christian community for the first time (first online, and now more recently in person) new questions are asked and assumptions questioned. As a result, there is a fresh re-examining of each person's own faith as they look inward for answers and realize the beauty of what lies at the heart of the Gospel.

MCC and COVID-19 Connections

MCC's Side Gate Café usually has the pleasure of regularly serving customers from Life Care Marion Rose Retirement Units, adjacent to our Car Park. These frequent customers felt the loss of connection and conversation without the Café in operation during COVID-19. Their response was wonderful to witness as they did not let the negative circumstances deflect from the positive interactions they would usually enjoy. No, instead, a couple of our MCC Members who also live in the units invited and encouraged their unit neighbours to meet on a Wednesday morning. Each resident brought their own chair and cuppa out and sat outside their respective units to greet each other, share in a cuppa and a chat. It became a popular time and so as many that were able to each week, weather permitting, met in this special and unique way.

One of the more agile residents would also take orders for a take away meal from the local venue (who were able to be open) for those interested. They were all so delighted when Side Gate Café was able to re-open once again, albeit only for take away food.

We all know how important human connections are and we were delighted to see these neighbours looking out for and checking on each other and their needs. An example to us all. We don't really have an excuse not to be neighbourly, especially as Christians, where God's Words tell us many times to love one another.



Brooklyn Park Church of Christ

What does it mean to be the church?

As COVID restrictions kicked in, we sensed a rare opportunity dig deeply into this question and why God has us at Brooklyn Park.

It was encouraging to recognize that our purpose – a Jesus-centred spiritual family who are passionate about seeing lives change – was still the core of who God was calling us to be. Even if we couldn't meet in the same space, there were so many ways in which we could still live those values out together.

However, our Board wrestled with what we would do if we were starting a church from scratch in August 2020. We imagined a scenario where we were given our fantastic facility and a diverse group of 80-90 people to kick off our new church. We settled on 2 key priorities. We would have a simple but intentional time of gathering together, where we took time to be reminded about who God is, what Jesus has done for us, share family stories, unpack and apply Scripture together and gather around the Communion table to reflect, remember and celebrate. We would also invest heavily in small groups – 3-10 people connecting regularly to share their joys and struggles, learn from each other, talk about their next steps in their walk with Jesus, how to serve and support our neighbours and pray together.

Earth-shattering? Not really! But we have been very challenged about how much of our focus, energy and resourcing goes towards both of those key areas and whether the other things we're doing are helping or holding back those priorities for us.

We're excited about the journey ahead and the continued refining that we believe God is doing in and through us at BPCC.

State Youth ~~Came~~ Worship & Community Night



COVID-19 caused State Youth Games to be cancelled for 2020, but with a small release of the restrictions an opportunity opened up for 120 youth and young adults to gather at Aldgate Church of Christ for an amazing night of worship, testimony, prayer



and community time. A night of youth leading youth, peers praying for peers and all the glory given to an awesome God. Plans are well underway for a follow up night later this term, helping to bring more of our Churches youth together as one. Details to come.

Brighton Chapel Refurbished



Before...

The Brighton congregation only had a few weeks to enjoy their newly refurbished Chapel before the COVID-19 shutdown came into effect.

However, when "the great resumption" finally takes place, the members and friends of Brighton will have this sparkling new facility in which to witness and worship. The Chapel was built in the mid-60s and had remained virtually untouched during the intervening years.

Now, the look is light, fresh and much more contemporary,



After...

with two new overhead data projectors and a new sound desk. Split-level air conditioning is also a feature of the makeover.

Jim Bartlett (Wally's son, for those who remember) is the builder who erected the original church. Today he's a member at Brighton and, at 87 years of age, was one of the most active and enthusiastic voluntary workers on the project.

Brighton's minister, Graham Agnew, says he has rarely seen more passion and dedication invested into a project, than what he saw at Brighton...



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