

# Parish Profile

## St. Paul's Ithaca-Ashgrove

"The Kingdom of God is justice and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit"



## **Our core beliefs**

We believe that all are loved equally by God and are equal in the eyes of God. We are offered wholeness through Jesus who we believe to be The Christ. We are called from our baptism to live and share Christ's resurrected life both for the world and for all people.

## **We seek to live this by**

- Growing an inclusive, diverse and affirming community.
- Encouraging our congregation to be the people of God.
- Maintaining a vital, attractive and open community, where all feel welcome and included.
- Encouraging, questioning and inviting people to explore their faith on a deeper level.
- Proclaiming a faith that is relevant to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and changes the way we live our lives and see the world. Engaging in social justice and support for our community both locally and beyond the parish.
- Promoting a program that ensures good stewardship of the resources we have received and maintains and upgrades the parish as a community hub.
- Cultivating a community where we have the courage, by virtue of faith, to explore and take risks in new ministry areas.

## **Our purpose**

We are part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion and embrace the 5 Marks of Mission.

- Witness to Christ's saving, forgiving and reconciling love for all people.
- Build welcoming, transforming communities of faith.
- Respond to human need by loving service.
- Transform unjust structures of society to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.
- Protect, care for and renew life on our planet.

## Where we are situated

Ashgrove is an inner suburb of Brisbane in Queensland, Australia, located approximately 5km north-west of the Brisbane CBD. The population is approximately 13 000, with 54% of the population between 20-59 years, 25% under 20 years and 21% 60 or over.

Ashgrove is a picturesque suburb with excellent primary and secondary schools, both private and state operated, frequent bus services and easy access to Suncorp Stadium.

St Paul's Church is a relatively recent landmark in the suburb of Ashgrove having celebrated its 65th anniversary in July 2017. We are a small parish with a broad age demographic and healthy community life.



## Parish Buildings

Parish buildings comprise St Paul's Church, the Parish House/Rectory and Parish Hall. All buildings are within the one precinct at the intersection of two major arterial roads, Waterworks Road and Jubilee Terrace. The 65 year old brick church dominates the intersection and



together with the historically significant Lichgate, is a local and well recognised landmark. The lower hall houses our successful Thrift Shop and the upper hall has an anchor tenant in the Ashgrove Dance Studio which has been a long term user of the facility. The hall is used

regularly by the congregation for morning teas and other Parish functions. The Parish Office is located under the church building, adjacent to the Crypt, with the latter providing a venue for Sunday School, Parish Council, Bible Study and Playgroup and is the hub of our many community activities. We have made



recent significant renovations and improvements to our buildings and Church, with special note to our west window, new hall floor, organ restoration and a new rectory kitchen.

## FINANCES

St Paul's is a beneficed parish, is debt free and in a stable and sound financial position and able to meet all its expenses and commitments. Our Diocesan contribution is on track to achieve 10% of offertory income by 2020. We maintain a generous contribution to mission beyond the parish. We are the first mainstream church in Australia to accept virtual currency.



## Parish Staffing

- In our faith community we have 3 Honorary Priests and an Army Chaplain, all of whom are actively involved.
- We also employ a part-time Parish Assistant to assist with ongoing parish administration.

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.*  
John 13:34-35

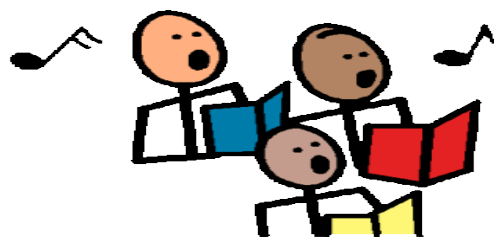
## Services

St Paul's has a strong tradition of **baptising people** into the Community of Faith. Through our sermons and intergenerational Church services we encourage people to deeply reflect on their faith and what that means in their lives. Our services follow a traditional liturgy using A Prayer Book for Australia.



Our Sunday services, centring around the Eucharist, are welcoming and inclusive and incorporate contemporary theology.

On feast days, such as Christmas, Easter, and our patronal festival we have a **full sung Eucharist with incense**; our choir sings on these days. In conjunction with



our traditional liturgy, we embrace a number of worship styles throughout the year.



On the first Friday of every month and throughout Lent we enjoy a **Taize** style service designed for contemplation on the scriptures, meditation and relaxation to finish off the busy week. This service is followed by fellowship over fish and chips at a local restaurant. The first Friday of the month also has our

Mothers' Union service. Every 6 weeks we run an '**All in Church**' **intergenerational service** that is based on a "story telling" of the scriptures and theological reflection in lieu of a traditional sermon. We encourage lay involvement for the telling of the story.



We have a range of celebrations over the course of the year including our **Maundy Thursday** service, Good Friday **Veneration of the Cross** and our **Service of the Light** on Holy Saturday that has been growing over the last few years.

We have a special Easter egg hunt for the children on **Easter Day** and our **Christmas Eve Children's** service is well attended by the local community.



In October we hold a **Blessing of the Pets** and observe **All Soul's** to remember all who have gone before us, who have taught us how to live in the world and how to love.

Every 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month we have a combined 8.30am service followed by breakfast. Over the last couple of years we have joined with the community at Red Hill either at St Paul's or at St Barnabas as a symbol of friendship and fellowship.



*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*  
Galatians  
3:28

## Mission, Fellowship and Outreach

Mission giving is important to our parish. We contribute to a number of Agencies including Bush Ministry Fund, ABM, Anglican Aid Abroad, Anglicare Women's Shelter and the Goodna Pantry.

At St Paul's we like to be able to offer all of the congregation a chance to be part of the parish life, to find meaning and belonging. Some of the ways we do this include:

### Wine and cheese nights

These occur 3 times a year. We invite a guest speaker or a panel to talk and answer questions on themes and concepts. In the past we have chosen topics such as Public Christianity, Faith and Science, Christianity and Social Conscience, Insights into the Middle East, Interreligious Dialogue amongst many others. These nights have proven to be very popular with the local community and across greater Brisbane.



### Thrift Shop

We love our Thrift Shop at St Pauls. It was recently voted one of the top 10 thrift shops by the Brisbane Times. We open on Wednesdays and Saturdays and have an amazing team of volunteers from the wider community who contribute to this important outreach ministry.

## Bookfest

Our annual bookfest is one of our biggest activities. Held over 2 days, we invite the community to St Paul's to find bargains for booklovers and to sample tasty food. We have developed this over the years with a future vision of it becoming a community festival.



## Trivia Night

Trivia Night is one of our favourite events, usually attracting around 100 people and generously supported by local business.



## Westside Orchestra

Westside Orchestra uses the Crypt for their rehearsals and twice a year perform in the Church.

## Book Club

Book Club meets every 6 weeks to discuss and reflect on a chosen text.







## Playgroup

Playgroup is held every Friday during school term. Registered under Playgroup Queensland, our playgroup is very well attended and is a place of fun, music, crafts, play and learning.

## Workshops

Every year we host workshops for spiritual development as well as awareness on general issues. Previously we have hosted Dr Patrick Oliver and community workshops on dementia, personality and spirituality.



## Parish breakfasts

Men's and women's breakfasts are held a couple of times a year, in parishioners' homes or at Church. We usually have a guest speaker who inspires us to discuss and reflect on topical issues.

## Board Games

We host a board game group that is open to all who are interested in strategy based board games and fellowship.



*For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?  
Matthew 16:26*

## **Spiritual Development**

- The Practically Spiritual group discuss systematic and practical theology. They meet in person once a month and by email in between to study theologians such as Richard Rohr, Rowan Williams and Julian of Norwich amongst others.
- Bible Study meets every Wednesday and moves through chosen books of the bible discussing the social and historical context and reflecting on the message of the text.
- Prayer Group meets every Wednesday for Morning Prayer.
- Prayer chain communicates the prayer needs of the Parish on a weekly basis to a group of parishioners.

## **Social Media Presence and Activities**

Our St Paul's website is regularly updated with rosters, pew bulletins and news that is relevant for our parish community, locals and visitors. A significant aspect of our online presence is the recording of all sermons for people to listen to at a later time. This is taken advantage of, not only by people who cannot attend due to geographical distance, ailment or other commitments but by members who seek to further reflect on the sermon content during the week.

Our Facebook page is regularly updated with information and is our primary platform for advertising events such as special services and feast days, bookfests, our wine and cheese nights, workshops and other Diocesan wide notices and activities. Social media has been an important part of our parish profile in the local community and beyond. Our Thrift Shop has its own page called "Revelations at Jubilee Op Shop"

We started an online campaign called "Repent4Lent" for the purpose of encouraging people to enter more deeply into Lent and to be mindful of what is happening around

them. This campaign reached over 30,000 people and was joined by people across the Diocese and ecumenically.

St Paul's also launched a Bitcoin campaign calling for people to be aware of their online behaviour. Social justice and relevant social commentary is an important aspect of our parish.



For further information and expressions of interest please contact –

The Right Reverend Bishop Jeremy Greaves,  
Bishop for the Brisbane Diocese Northern Region:

email: [jgreaves@anglicanchurchsq.org.au](mailto:jgreaves@anglicanchurchsq.org.au)

mob: 0428 315 763

# What we love about our parish!

We are multi-generational

We are learners and carers

Our desire to spread the messages of the Gospel.

Safe

We have fun!

The people, their generosity, friendliness, kindness, acceptance, thoughtfulness and positive attitudes.

Equality

Social support toward our community

Our community engagement through Bookfest, wine and cheese nights, pantry support and thrift shop

Relevant

Courage to speak up in a safe environment.

The breadth, diversity and inclusivity of our community. I love that we embrace all people, where they are in their life and spiritual journeys.

Inclusive

Forgiving

Unwavering

I love the Sung Eucharist and traditional style. I love that we all, including the priest, openly count ourselves among those who have faults and who are not perfect. I love the gentle nature that is evident.

Open

Welcoming nature of our Church

Genuine

Inclusive leadership

Enthusiastic

Our building, organ, music and middle to high church style worship. Traditional liturgy, and contemporary theology.

Sharing with other parishes

Parish support for church initiatives

I feel grounded, accepted and at peace.

I really like that everyone is welcome at St. Pauls. It is a very inclusive community, and most importantly, there is no judgement about how often you come to church, or how much time/money you can/can't give. The services have energy and humour about them, yet are always set in the true and unwavering beliefs of the church.

# What inspires us about our parish!

Individuals have freedom and are encouraged to explore what they feel are their own ministries.

The potential to bring in more young people and families.

Outward looking attitude of parishioners.

I am inspired by the continual teachings about love, courage, justice and compassion

Sermons

The preaching, the hymns, the music.

The people, their loving generosity, kindness and warmth.

Taize

I always come away from the service having had some time to reflect on the week, our fortunes in life, and that our day to day problems are actually fairly small, and there is a bigger world out there. It inspires me to be a better person, which to me is what Christianity and the Church is about.

The kind and faithful people in our parish.

Parishioners commitment to love and compassion.

Belonging

Our desire to spread the Gospel and grow our community.

Younger people

Our support for social justice for all.

Parish Management

Compassionate

Welcoming

Energy and enthusiasm of our rector and the whole community.

Unwavering

Depth

Contemporary Theology

Our ability to apply Christian teachings to contemporary society.

The music, the friendships, the community, and the sermons. I learn something from everyone at the Church, regardless of their age. I love how our parish tends to melt away the barriers of age, sex, race and background. What I learn from everyone at church inspires me to keep trying to live a better life.

Freedom to question

Accepting

The opportunity for reflection that comes with time in Church and time spent with our faith community.