

## Weekly News

### Welcome.

We're very glad you are able to make it to church today, if you're a visitor please stay around for some refreshments after the service we'd love to get to know you. We're exploring the idea of just how valuable and relevant God's word is to us in a world full of confusion. So we'll sing about it, read from it, reflect on it and pray about it.

The great preacher, Charles Spurgeon was once asked 'Which is more important reading the Bible or praying?' He replied 'Which is more important breathing in or breathing out?' The word of God and prayer, are core to our relationship with the God of the universe. They keep us spiritually alive just as breathing keeps us physically alive.

These days the Bible is seen as an interesting artefact. Madonna once verbalised what is the consensus amongst most people these days; 'The Bible is an interesting book to read. I want my daughter to read it. But I will also explain to her that these are stories that people made up to teach people.' It stuns me the way two thousand years of scholarship is so easily cast aside by contemporary society. There are libraries written on the historical accuracy of the Bible. The Dead Sea scrolls, to which a whole museum is devoted, is a classic example of that. We don't have time today to go into why we can trust the Bibles we have, but I'm happy to chat personally with you if you are interested.

Today, I want to simply encourage you to taste and see for yourself the power of the Biblical text. Pick up Mark's story of Jesus and read it for yourself, you should easily get through it in about three hours, a good way to spend a pleasant Sunday afternoon. It appears that Bible reading amongst Christians is slowly decreasing. I suspect it's partly because of the information overload we are bombarded with these days. The graph below shows a clear trend amongst younger generations that is worrying to say the least.

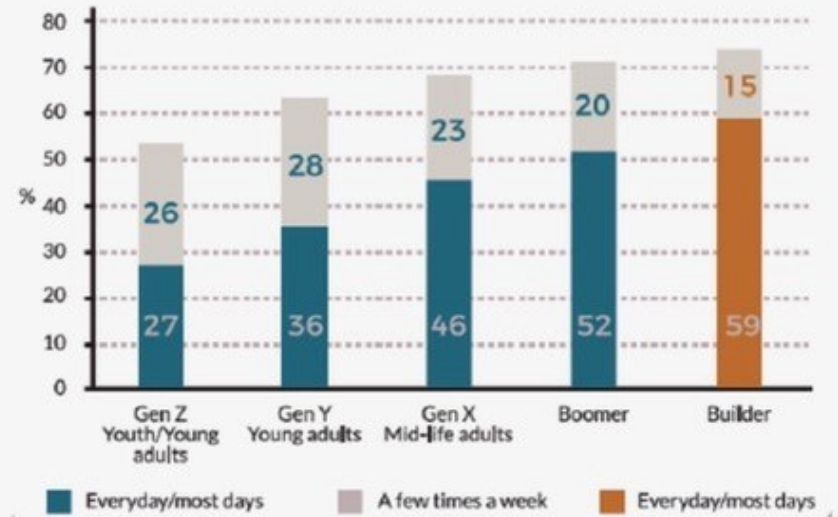
Is it that we are too busy? A quick look at the time we spend on our phones seems to indicate we have time for some things. Can I encourage you to set aside time each day to commune with the living God? The author James Smart wrote, 'Without the Bible the remembered Christ becomes the imagined Christ, [a Christ shaped] by the religiosity and unconscious desires of His worshippers.' And Peter Adam gives some great advice for the busy person; 'Don't do a Bible study every day, do one on Monday and meditate on it for a week.' And David Murray; 'If your morning devotions are going to be 5 minutes, make sure you read for 1 and think for 4.'

However you do it, never forget the normal way God speaks to us is through the Bible and He has things He wants you to hear.

Ray Robinson

## Private devotional activity, by generation

How often do you spend time in private devotional activities (e.g. prayer, meditation, Bible reading alone)?



Australian church attenders' frequency of private devotional activity, by cohort generation.  
Source: 2016 National Church Life Survey, Attender Survey (n=185,267).

NCLS NCLS Research www.ncls.org.au

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### **A Date for your Diaries—An Imprint Youth Fund-raiser at**

### **St Aidan's in Blackheath. Christmas in July—**

Please save the date for a special night of food and fellowship on

Saturday 27th July 2024. More details to come.

## Notes

Sermon Series -

8 things Christians know but don't necessarily believe.

1. **Jesus is Lord.**
2. **You are loved more than you ever realise.**
3. **We are in a spiritual battle.**
4. **The Bible is an amazing treasure chest.**

## THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BLACKHEATH

St. Aidan's Blackheath, St. Peter's Mt Victoria,  
St. John's Hartley, St. George's Mt Wilson

**CENTRED ON CHRIST**

Building up One Another, Reaching Out to the World

**Sunday 21st April, 2024**

**SERVICES FOR TODAY**

8.45am Mt Victoria —Communion Service—Rev Ray Robinson

10.30am Blackheath— Communion Service—Rev Ray Robinson

6.30pm—Night Church— Communion Service—Rev Ray Robinson

**First Reading—Psalm 19**

**Second Reading—Hebrews 5:1- 6:3**

# Welcome

**Bible Readings—for next Sunday 28th April, 2024**

1st Reading—Psalm 1

2nd Reading—1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Rev Ray Robinson

### Prayers

**St Peter's** : Open Prayer. **St Aidan's**: Stephen Williams.

**Night Church**: Open Prayer.

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