

## Weekly News

### Synod

Good morning and welcome to Church. It's great to have you here especially if you're new or visiting. We'd love to meet you after church over a cup of tea.

In last week's news article I gave an overview of what Synod is all about. This week I wanted to raise one of the key issues that will be discussed this year.

In the lead up to Synod a report has been released titled, '*Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese*'. This report has been produced because of worrying statistics. In the last 10 years (2013-2023) attendance at Sydney Anglican Churches has declined by 7% or 14% if you take into account population growth over that period. That means simply, less people are going to church and our mission to reach people with the gospel appears to be going backwards rather than forwards.

There are many factors at play in this decline. Working out which ones are most significant is a difficult task. Australian society is becoming increasingly secular. This has been happening for much longer than the last 10 years but is clearly a significant factor. Some would suggest that this explains the decline. Others have suggested that perhaps we need to have a look at ourselves, perhaps we are not doing our job as the church as well as we should be or as well as previous generations have done.

Without committing to either option at the extent of the other, it does seem that thinking carefully about how we can do better is always a good thing to do. I'm not convinced that there will always be a direct line between faithfulness and numerical success but that's not a good reason to stop trying to do better. I'd be keen to hear from any of you who have reflections on this issue.

Is this a problem to be solved? Some would like to see a Diocese-wide strategy implemented to help churches get back on track. I'll be reporting back from Synod with what we come up with.

Yours in Christ,

Tim.

**Blackheath Parish Men's Coffee Morning** will be on this Friday 20th September starting at 10am at Hartley Fresh on the Great Western Highway in Hartley. Men from across the Parish are welcome, no agenda, just a chance to chat and catch up with others. All welcome.

**Blackheath Parish Ladies Coffee Morning** will also be on this Friday 20th September starting at 10am at the V & A Hotel in Mt Victoria. Ladies from across the Parish are welcome.

**BCA Boxes**—September is box opening month, if you have a BCA money box for your small change, now is the time to bring it to church. St Aidan's box secretary is Annabel Childs and St Peter's is Carol Crowther.

Both these ladies would welcome you bringing your box to them sometime this month. If you don't have a box and would like to support Bush Church Aid with your small change, then speak to either of these ladies to get a box.

**Christianity Explored**—an 8 week course suitable for a convinced atheist or committed Christians (or anyone in between), on Sunday afternoon in St Aidan's Church hall in Blackheath from 2—3.30pm. Rowan Coull will be running this course, exploring what makes the Christian faith unique by looking at the life of Jesus in Mark's Gospel. People won't be asked to sing or pray aloud, you don't need to know anything about the Bible to get a lot out of it. Speak to Rowan after the service if you or anyone you know might be interested.

**St Peter's**—On the 18th September 2024, St Peter's at Mt Victoria celebrates 150 years since the foundation stone was laid for the church, which was then officially opened with its first service on 21st June, 1875. St Peter's congregation plan to celebrate this milestone next year 2025—watch out for details.

## Notes

### 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 15th September, 2024**

#### SERVICES FOR TODAY

8.45am Mt Victoria —Communion Service

10.30am Blackheath— Communion Service

6.30pm—Night Church—Communion Service

**First Reading—Job 16:1-22**

**Second Reading—Luke 18:18-43**

# Welcome

**Next Sunday 22nd September, 2024**

#### Bible Readings

1st Reading—Job 17:1-16

2nd Reading—Luke 19:1-27

#### Prayers

**St Peter's** : Helen Hoffman. **St Aidan's**: Stephen Williams.

**Night Church**: Andrew.

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