

ST MARK'S ANGLICAN PARISH THE GAP

A letter to our new priest

St Mark's is now four months into the interregnum and we write this letter to the priest who feels called to minister to us and to be loved by us. A Parish Profile has been posted on the Diocesan website – our Parish website is currently being rebuilt and refreshed. As one chapter closes and another opens for our parish, we would like to reflect on where we are, and the tremendous hope that we have.

To do that, let us tell you about our church and our suburb, adding context and currency to the Parish Profile.

OUR CHURCH

St Mark's has been ministering to the suburb of The Gap for nearly 100 years. Our church community, led by the Holy Spirit, has:

- raised many people to a variety of ministries (priests, deacons, chaplains, missionaries, youth workers, key diocesan personnel)
- led the diocese in youth ministry and
- taken the lead in bringing Cursillo to the Brisbane Diocese and then to dioceses both in Australia and overseas.

At its peak, our congregation numbered 250+ with a thriving youth and children's ministry.

We have a strong calling to rebuild these ministries. In this interregnum, we are refocussing in prayer, appreciating our rich blessings and revelling in the mood of excitement and anticipation that is flowing through us all.



Our church services are warm, joyful and welcoming. Having endured severe COVID restrictions, we are again worshipping, praying, singing, and listening to the word of God together. Our parishioners are being visited, we are reigniting our care programs and we are looking to engage with Anglicare to better support those in need. We are aiming to restart Alpha and to recommence Sunday School. We are currently preparing young adults for confirmation.

St Mark's continues to give generously to missionary work in Australia and abroad. We also support the local school chaplains. We have not had an RE presence in our local schools for some years – we are keen to remedy that. Members of our congregation are hospital and prison chaplains and we have an outreach to the local Regis Nursing Home.

The interregnum has seen a surge in generosity and people feeling released for ministry. We are rich in ability and enthusiasm, keenly awaiting the arrival of a pastor who will care for us, nurture us, encourage us – and lead us.



We have a separate, well-equipped Parish Office. Our Parish Hall is spacious and modern with excellent kitchen, AV and meeting facilities - and a large deck overlooking our suburb. We see wonderful possibilities for ministry!



The rectory is separate from the church/hall/office precinct. It is situated across the road from the church building and blends with the streetscape to allow privacy for our priest. The rectory is to be refurbished during the interregnum. We also have plans for a more extensive rectory renovation should our priest and their family intend to reside in the rectory. If not, we will provide a housing allowance.

We will purchase a new parish motor vehicle upon the appointment of our priest.



OUR SUBURB

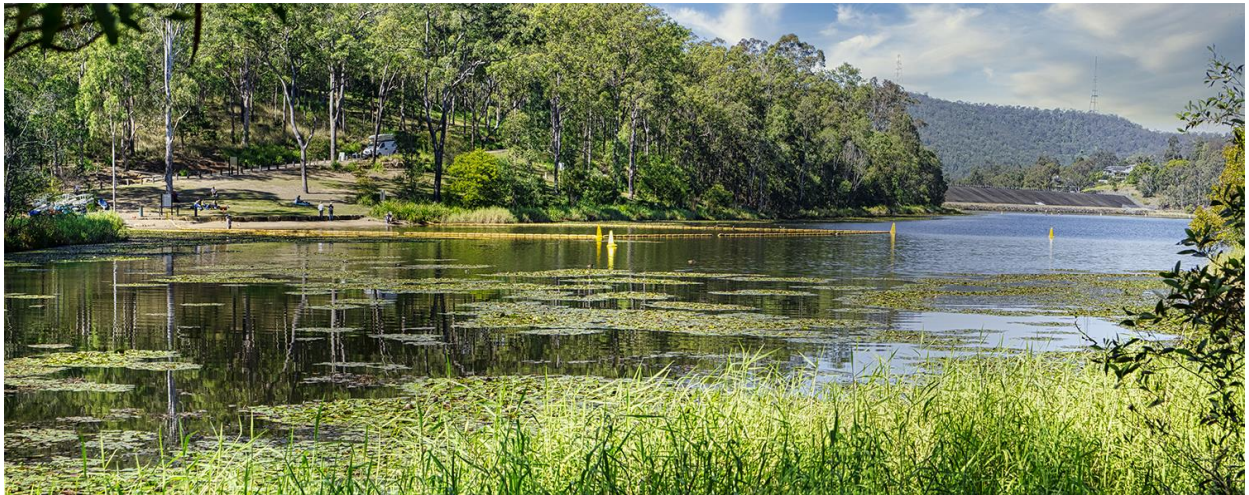
The Gap is renowned as a quiet, safe, leafy suburb, cradled in the foothills of Mt Coot-tha.

It is secluded, yet with a village feel and a wonderful, friendly community spirit. There are 16,000 people (with families predominating) nestled in its cul-de-sacs and bushland ways. Brisbane's CBD is a 10 minute drive.

As we write, the skies are impossibly clear and blue with winter daytime temperatures into the low mid-20s. Summers can be hot, but we are kept cool by the swimming pools and birdsong. When people live in The Gap, they seldom want to leave – many move to a different house, but stay in The Gap! Here is an outline of other features that may be important to you:

Back to nature

The Gap borders Brisbane Forest Park and the D'Agular National Park. There are a host of walking trails and mountain bike trails minutes away. Go swimming or kayaking in the Enoggera Reservoir or take a 5 minute drive to the Walkabout Creek Wildlife Centre where rangers care for our local wildlife (including platypus). Alternatively, take a walk up Mount Coot-tha.



Stay active

Play golf at the 18 hole Ashgrove Golf Club. There is netball, soccer and cricket at The Gap Pastime Club. We also have a dance school, swimming club, boxing and martial arts. Choose between two gyms or play tennis at the local tennis centre. All of these, no more than a 3 minute drive from the rectory. Our schools have even more sporting opportunities. If you are into cycling, the Enoggera Creek bike path connects us to bikeways into the suburbs of Ashgrove, Bardon and beyond. Take your pick of two off-leash areas for dogs – each a 10 minute walk from the rectory.



Going green

Why not join The Gap Garden Club, or the Orchid Society? You could join SOWN which provides land care around Enoggera Creek and other waterways. The Gap has its own community garden – there is also a native plant nursery. There are many parks in The Gap – most with children's play equipment.

Shopping

A 'local' corner store is a two minute walk from the rectory. Across the road from this store is a service station. The Gap Village Shopping Centre is, for many, the heart of our suburb (five minute walk, two minute drive) and this features Coles, Aldi, boutique shops, cafes, coffee shops and take-aways, the post office and a host of professional services.

A five minute drive into the adjoining suburb of Keperra is the Great Western Shopping Centre with Woolworths, Aldi and more shops, restaurants and professional services. Bunnings adjoins this precinct.



Professional Services

These are principally located at The Gap Village (5 minute walk/2 minute drive) – there is a medical centre which has been established for over 50 years. Also local physiotherapy, occupational therapy, podiatry, exercise physiology, psychology, audiology, optometry, two dental practices and two pathology collection centres.

There are legal practices, accountants, banking facilities, two pharmacies and two local vet practices – with many of these duplicated at the Great Western Shopping Centre – and a local nursing home. Our local police station is opposite The Gap Village.



Schools

We have four excellent State Primary Schools and two private Catholic primary schools within a 5 minute driving radius of the rectory. They feature before and after school care. The Gap State High School is ranked in the top five State High Schools in Queensland and is a three minute walk from the rectory. This school is renowned academically – a new ‘state of the art’ STEM building has recently been completed. Its music program is exceptional and its sporting facilities are superb. In the adjoining suburb is one of Queensland’s premier Catholic Secondary School for boys – Marist Brothers College, Ashgrove which has produced Prime Ministers and sporting greats. Two equally excellent Catholic girls’ schools are also nearby (Mt St Michaels and Stuartholme).

There are dedicated buses to Brisbane’s top Anglican schools – St Margaret’s Anglican Girls School and the Anglican Church Grammar School (Churchie). Hillbrook, a co-educational Anglican school, is easily accessed by public transport.

The Gap also boasts four child care centres.



Service clubs

Choose from Lions, Rotary, Probus, Shed Happens, Men's Shed, The Gap Pioneer and History Group, The Gap Historical Society. Two of Brisbane's largest scout groups and a girl guide group meet within five minute's drive of the rectory.



Public Transport

There are excellent bus services (the bus stop is a one minute walk from the rectory) from The Gap to the City or to South Bank (museums, galleries, Queensland Performing Arts Centre) and to Lang Park (for all Broncos home games).

Other local churches

The other local churches are within walking distance. Denominations include Roman Catholic, Uniting Church, Baptist Church and the Rivercity Church (non-denominational – charismatic). Our church enjoys a close and supportive relationship with them all, periodically working with them, developing opportunities for joint ministry.

IN CLOSING

St Mark's is a church with a proud history of community engagement. The interregnum has fuelled a resurgence in enthusiasm across our church. We want to reach out to our community, our schools and the many families in our midst. We are rich in opportunities for ministry, but we are rebuilding, praying for a priest who will love and nurture us – and encourage us in our individual and collective callings.

A priest who will lead a spirit filled family church, caring for our community, caring for each other.

Denise Cruickshank
Craig Ray
Shane Sondergeld

Nominators
St Mark's Anglican Parish
The Gap, Brisbane

Please click on the links below if you would like to:

- Firstly, watch an Introduction to St Mark's Anglican Church, The Gap,
<https://youtu.be/NFKBIW5VTWg>
- [listen to a brief presentation from Denise, Craig and Shane](#)
- [hear from our parishioners](#)
- take a virtual tour of St Mark's
<https://kuula.co/share/collection/7P5pH?fs=1&vr=1&sd=1&initload=0&thumbs=1&alpha=0.71&chromeless=1&logo=1&logosize=41>
- Layout of church buildings: [Ministry Centre](#), [Main Church](#), [Parish Office](#)

