



St Peter's Eastern Hill

Anglican Parish Church of the City since 1847

Statement of Priorities 2009-12

From the Vicar

St Peter's is a place of soul-stirring liturgy, challenging preaching, fine music, concern for issues of justice and peace - and it is a place of warm care and welcome: a community gathered in the name of the Lord.

St Peter's seeks to equip and encourage its members to share their faith in a natural and joyful way. Our motivation is simply to encourage our people to be passionate about the mission of God in their work-places and homes as well as in the church community. We recognise that the mission is God's and we are called to share in it. It includes evangelism, compassionate social action and care for the environment.

Fr John Davis

Our Vision

St Peter's Eastern Hill is a lively and inclusive community of Catholic Anglicans in the City of Melbourne.

Worship of God is at the centre of our life together. We communicate the love of God in Jesus Christ through the beauty of holiness and an active engagement with Scripture.

Our tradition calls us to—

- Encounter God in the sacraments;
- Bring our reason and intellect to a living faith;
- Build a loving community;
- Serve other through social action.

As Christians we are called to love God and our neighbour. In the next three years we commit to—

- Serving the wider Church as a place of ministry training and Christian formation;
- Ministering to people across all age groups;
- Embracing the gifts of all within our parish community;
- Involving ourselves more fully in the life of our City;
- Speaking out on significant issues, including social justice and the environment;
- Honouring our historic responsibility to witness to an inclusive catholic faith in the diocese and the wider church.

Key Themes

This section sets out the priorities that we have identified as being critical for 2009–12 and highlights progress toward the outcomes we are seeking to achieve. Although each priority action may contribute to a number of our goals, actions are outlined under the theme to which they make the most significant contribution.

We also identify our priorities as custodians of the historic and beautiful church which dates from the mid 1840s as well as the surrounding precinct.

Serving the wider Church as a place of ministry training and Christian formation

What have we already done?

Supported ministry training through parish placements, mentoring and financial assistance
Sustained the Institute of Spiritual Studies
Provided a range of courses (such as Lenten programs), discussion groups (including Canterbury Readers) and Christian meditation
Supported and promoted the ministry of St Peter's Bookroom

Why is this important?

As a leading inclusive Anglo-Catholic parish, St Peter's has long promoted an intellectual dimension to spiritual life. For a hundred years St Peter's has fostered openness to liberal biblical scholarship and criticism; study groups that focused on the relationship between modern researches, literary, historical and scientific, and the biblical texts, proved highly popular during the second decade of the last century. It is now the responsibility of our generation to explore new ways to help people grow in their Christian faith and to strengthen the Catholic Anglican tradition to meet the challenges of the contemporary church.

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

Provide for a continuing deepening of each parishioner's knowledge, understanding, and respect for Church history, tradition, values, and doctrine
Bring the Institute of Spiritual Studies securely into the mainstream of parish life
Provide regular courses to enable people to see how the Christian story impinges on their own story
Foster the growth of faith as well as knowledge through establishing closer links with Trinity College

Ministering to people across all age groups

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

- Further consolidate and extend our children's ministry, focusing on pre- and primary school-aged children
- Identify and implement specific ministry initiatives to enrich and grow the 9.30am family mass and 5.00pm evensong in directions appropriate for those congregations
- Implement the 10-point plan for music:
 - strengthening music at the 9.30am family mass and 5.00pm evensong
 - enhancing the role of music director, growing music scholarships and promoting a music foundation
- Hold regular parish-wide social events and small group gatherings to provide fellowship opportunities
- Devise and implement a plan for systematic supportive pastoral follow up of current and former parishioners

Embracing the gifts of all within our parish community

What have we already done?

Been able to rely upon abundant and enduring individual commitments of time and expertise
Further strengthened the Servers Guild
Undertaken a parish survey to identify skills and capabilities
Provided opportunities for lay ministry leaders to identify and promote volunteer participants
Promoted the planned giving program to enhance financial sustainability
Established an environment working party of expert volunteer parishioners
Set up voluntary groups for catering, welcoming and Bookroom
Established a charitable music foundation

Why is this important?

St Peter's parish community is blessed with scores of people who freely bring talents, skills and knowledge in the worship of God and service to our neighbours and our church. Many members of our congregations help out in the church, and here we have need for more assistance, particularly in meeting and greeting Sunday worshippers, in providing hospitality, and working in the sacristy (including caring for linen and sacred vessels). There is a yearning in the community for space to meet people's spiritual and other needs. There is also a climate for a church to make a difference. Collectively and individually, we need to commit to growing our contribution to meeting these needs.

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

Affirm all volunteering work by formalising a volunteering program with support for volunteers

Develop Sunday lunches with feature speakers about activities at St Peter's, such as new music or Christian education projects, capital improvements, outreach projects, etc

Develop a volunteer transport service that provides transport to services and to other parish events for those who need it

Make new members by welcoming newcomers and integrating them into the life of our congregation; find, recruit, train and support newcomer leaders

Involving ourselves more fully in the life of our City

What have we already done?

Made a major contribution to the establishment and continued development of Melbourne City Churches in Action including the increasingly popular annual Way of the Cross
Played a major role in the Council of Churches emergency management activities

Why is this important?

We honour and celebrate St Peter's historic and special connection with the City of Melbourne. Placed on the eastern hill of the city of Melbourne, beside Parliament House and across the street from St Patrick's Cathedral, it is a place of prayerful quiet beauty that attracts visitors from all over the world, and parishioners from all over the metropolitan area. We recognise that the City is a community of workers and visitors as well as rapidly rising numbers of residents. We know also that communities are now increasingly virtual cities and that networks of people joined together through the internet are just as compelling as communities defined by location. St Peter's aims to reach out to these 'cities' too

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

- Emphasise St Peter's as the Anglican parish church of the City of Melbourne
- Increase awareness of St Peter's as a place of quiet reflection for city residents, workers and visitors
 - Increase awareness of St Peter's traditions and commitments as well as church activities within the wider Melbourne metropolitan area
- Improve communications within the parish and community by developing an internal & external communications plan including:
 - providing more & better information (via print & website), and improving church access & signage
 - ensuring routine media (both newspaper and radio) advertising
 - enhancing St Peter's internet presence, including establishing a St Peter's blog.

Speaking out on significant issues, including social justice and the environment

What have we already done?

Continued to support the Lazarus Centre breakfast program which provides an important ministry to homeless people and the very poor of the CBD of Melbourne

Why is this important?

During the second half of the 19th Century St Peter's developed a reputation for involvement in social outreach in the inner city. The mild Christian Socialism of the early years of the 20th Century was developed by Fr Maynard (1926-64) who emphasised a sometimes radical message through publications and radio broadcasts. The Brotherhood of St Laurence came to work in the parish in 1933 and is a prick to Melbourne's social conscience. This Catholic and inclusive attitude continues to the present. The 21st Century brings new challenges for social action and critical public debate of the issues of our time. We must make our own contribution to tackling inequality and injustice. And we have a new obligation to show leadership in caring for the environment that God has entrusted to us.

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

- Be a vocal and effective advocate for the disadvantaged, in particular those who are homeless
- Use our website and blog to promote critical debate on the social issues of the day
- Host periodic social issues debates at St Peter's each year, using the Bookroom as a means of promotion and recording
- Establish partnerships with other advocacy organisations

Honouring our historic responsibility to witness to an inclusive catholic faith in the diocese and the wider church

What have we already done?

Provided leadership in the formation of a chapter of the Society of Catholic Priests in Australia
Provided leadership in the formation of a chapter of Affirming Catholicism in Australia
Provided, through the ministry of St Peter's Bookroom, witness to the inclusiveness and affirmation of our faith. The shop is open every week day and frequently visits local and rural parishes, clergy conferences etc.
Developed a 'sister-church' relationship with the rural parish of Beechworth
Provided members of General Synod and Archbishop-in-Council

Why is this important?

Worship of God is at the centre of our life together. The Solemn High Mass, in particular, connects St Peter's with the great traditions and rich heritage of many centuries through the use of vestments, ceremonial, and music. We are also a proudly inclusive church. We share with others from differing perspectives and differing locations the aim of celebrating and maintaining the traditional inclusivity and diversity of the Anglican Communion. We believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is good news for people regardless of their location, sex, race, colour or sexual orientation. Our duty is to affirm these principles and to support others who face challenges of isolation, opposition or, sometimes, intense rejection.

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

- Comment on & participate in debates on issues affecting the broader Anglican Communion. Aim to have articles on these key issues from the vicar or other authorised representatives of St Peter's widely accessible in relevant major publications
- Encourage more lay members of the parish to participate in the activities of the parish, region and diocese and to participate in interdenominational and interfaith activities
- Support & resource vulnerable rural & suburban parishes in their continuance of the Catholic tradition
- Offer regular parish retreats as a way to grow in faith and community and encourage participation in local, national, or international tours & pilgrimages

Protecting and maintaining the historic and beautiful church and the surrounding precinct

What have we already done?

Refurbished the timber floors in the church and parish hall
Repaired and repainted the internal plaster in the church
Rebuilt the conveniences to make them wheelchair accessible
Installed new kitchen equipment in the parish hall
Repaired and restored the vicarage roof
Installed premium vinyl floor covering in the Hughes Room
Made substantial improvements to the sanctuary
Refurbished the parish office to improve functionality and staff amenity
Total value: in excess of \$280 000

Why is this important?

St Peter's church dates from the mid-1840s. Heritage Victoria and the National Trust place St Peter's at the highest level of significance; it stands as one of the handful of buildings in Melbourne pre-dating the gold rush of the 1850s. We have a responsibility to past and future generations to secure and maintain these buildings. We want to ensure that we are environmentally sustainable and that we provide a safe and welcoming environment for all who come here – parishioners, clergy, visitors and all who worship, live and work with us.

What are our priorities for 2009-12?

- Prepare a 10-year precinct plan which provides a long term blueprint for the church, other buildings and open space on site. The plan is to include major equipment items such as the organ. For more detail see Appendix 1.
- Include capital improvements in the annual budget planning, including developing an annual list of facility related expenditures that details expected costs and timeframe. A summary of the 2009-10 Asset Improvement Priority List is at Appendix 1

Precinct Plan

Establish baseline of immediate parish facility needs and projected facility needs for 5, 10 and 15 years into the future

- Detail functional physical space needs (eg for quiet place, office space, meeting rooms and parking)
- Detail options for providing additional space to meet identified needs
- Detail audio and video improvements to facilitate communication goals
- Detail plan and timeline for environmental sustainability. Include assessment of impacts of underground water tanks for cost and facility utilisation.
- Establish tentative timeline outlining the various phases for development scenarios

Ensure the preservation and maintenance of the buildings and grounds

- Develop a property guide that details the standard operating procedures for all maintenance related activities and standards of upkeep for all facets of building and grounds
- Develop and maintain a running list of outstanding maintenance and enhancement items. Prioritise and update this list on a quarterly basis

Asset Improvement Priority List 2009-10[†]

Items on the following list are those which will be implemented by the end of 2009-10 subject to availability of funds:

1. Purchase audio-visual system for the parish hall
2. Repair and restore the church roof
3. Install heritage-appropriate fences and gates (to make the precinct safe and secure for residents, parishioners and visitors)
4. Provide paved path from the north transept door to the driveway
5. Provide clearly marked parking spaces & signage to enable parishioners with special needs to attend services and for tenants
6. Redevelop the gardens to create a living space that is protected without being enclosed.
7. Install water saving devices for garden watering and to reduce St Peter's environmental impact
8. Fit new shelving into the storage room in the tower
9. Address rising damp/concrete cancer in crypt & other locations

[†] Items not on this list will not be funded in 2009-10 except in an emergency (eg for security or occupational health and safety reasons). Proposed new items will be considered by vestry in formulating the 2001-11 and subsequent parish budgets.