



VICTOR HARBOR CHURCH OF CHRIST

IN THE HEART OF VICTOR WITH VICTOR AT HEART

CHURCH PROFILE

Location

Victor Harbor is a very popular coastal city located just 80 kilometres from the South Australian state capital city of Adelaide. Very much a tourist centre, the resident population of 15,000 will often expand 2 and 3 times in holiday seasons. As a result of its location and weather conditions, the city has a high number of retiring people with the result its demographic shows that over 40% of the population is over 60 years of age. Accompanying this feature is the expanding aged care sector which in turn is seeing a growing younger population arriving to service that industry, along with a growing number of families prepared to commute to the Adelaide regions for work. The Victor Harbor Church of Christ community, numbering 110 in membership, has quite an expansive meeting complex located in Seaview Road very close to the centre of the city. Hence the church's motto is "In the heart of Victor with Victor at heart".

Brief History of the Church

The possibility of establishing a Churches of Christ presence in Victor Harbor was first explored in 1928 and it was not long [1929] before there was a group meeting in the Masonic Hall. With support of the Goolwa and Mount Compass Churches of Christ, ministry was maintained.

In 1940, having travelled through the Depression and now being part of a nation involved in a World War, a small group of near 50, under the innovative leadership of the Rev Bart Manning, were in a position to move into a purpose built, very large

chapel on the Seaview Road site [they had purchased the year before] debt free. 450 people were there to share the occasion and what an amazing achievement for a generous, sacrificial and hard-working group. It was to be 60 years before any alteration or addition was to be considered.

The fruitful era of Sunday School and Christian Youth Fellowship in the 1950's and 1960's saw a strong young church forming that carried ministry operations and growth well into the 1990's, when building modification and expansion of the church's property footprint took place. Through the 1990's and into the first decade of the second millennium, the church staff team was expanded along with the prevailing youth and music ministry. It was in this time that the church membership peaked at over 230.

More Recent History

The last 10 years has seen this Christian community come to face several life tensions that have brought a significant level of fragmentation and consequent loss of momentum in ministry and growth. In 2018, a transition ministry appointment was made with the aim of moving through a season of healing and re-establishing of ministry direction.

During this time, the Church Leadership Team has been intentional in approaching aspects of church life that clearly needed priority attention, which included matters of governance, becoming an incorporated body, administrative framework, property improvements and usage of the complex. In this same time period, genuine attempts were made to re-connect with younger generations, as well as identify some of those other challenges we might face in seeking to build up the body of Christ and extend the Kingdom of God.

The COVID Season

It is a peculiar season this world is moving through and even as South Australia has appreciated a good measure of being 'guarded' from the spreading virus, it is clear to be seen, that life has not quite got the flow it had before early 2020.

That said, the transition process for Victor Harbor Church of Christ has not been halted. The peculiar events going on around have brought into focus some more life matters that we consider will define our future. Some of these include:

- Recognizing the value of developing our technological capacities in order to increase the level of connectedness within the fellowship and into the community around.

- Developing a clearer picture of the style of leadership and ministry appointment needed to facilitate a stronger connect into the younger demographic and between our Churches of Christ communities located on the Fleurieu Peninsula.
- Undertaking a review of current ministry activities to accurately assess effectiveness and sustainability.

Current Church Life Activities

There is a good balance to the many activities in operation within the Victor Harbor Church of Christ. Regular Sunday worship times, several groups orientated to Bible study and fellowship, along with some social type groups, all provide for folk already connected with the church. In turn, there are several gatherings presented in the setting of the church complex, orientated to groups within the wider community, aiming to provide social interaction, as well as relational connection and some introduction to the Christian faith.

A good description of our current church activities is provided on our website at:

www.vhcoc.org

In Summary

The Victor Harbor Church of Christ is appreciating being in a place of improving health and looking forward with eyes wide open to the possible needs and challenges of the future. At heart the church is welcoming and encouraging, with its members carrying a solid faith that is showing a readiness to stretch and embrace the new dimensions of life and ministry that is contained in the future we share. As our heart beats for this city and the region that surrounds, we see that ministry and mission is much bigger than just this local context, and so our centre of focus continues to be Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, and the builder of His Church.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission as Victor Harbor Church of Christ is to be a healthy, dynamic and relevant Christian community in the city and surrounding regions.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

[Document available]

AFFILIATION

As an autonomous fellowship, we operate with a high level of belonging and working connectedness with the Churches of Christ Conference of South Australia and the Northern Territory.

CORE VALUES

At Victor Harbor Church of Christ, we value:

- Authenticity and integrity of our faith in Jesus
- Being gathered for fellowship and worship
- Discipleship – Learning and growing in our faith and encouraging/urging others to do the same. EPHESIANS 4
- Practice of our faith through the various avenues available such as:
 - Engaging the Word
 - Prayer, both personal and corporate
 - Sharing of our faith. i.e. personal testimony
 - Generous support of ministry endeavours via financial giving, investing of time, talents, spiritual gifts and experience, etc
 - Serving as a vital part of the body of Christ
 - Sharing the call to mission
- Investing in leadership
 - Seek to identify, encourage and equip leaders and ministry/mission facilitators
- Holding to the distinctives of Churches of Christ
 - Baptism by immersion
 - Regular celebration of the Lord's Supper
 - Priesthood of all believers
 - Unity in diversity

- Soundness of doctrine and theology
- Looking to purposefully cooperate with other Christian communities to advance the cause of the Gospel
- Healthy relationships
 - Good communication with the aim to build understanding and cooperation in being a Christ centred community

LEADERSHIP

The framework of our leadership operating under the constitution of an incorporated body consists of:

Church Leadership Team. Members are appointed via an annual nomination and congregational election/affirmation process. This group are given the responsibility of spiritual oversight, vision and administration, fulfilling a combination of responsibilities previously undertaken separately by Elders and Deacons.

Ministry Area Leaders. Appointed by the Church Leadership Team, upon recommendation by the Ministry Team Leader, this group is responsible for ministry and mission shaping and implementation.

Auxiliary and Small Group Leadership. These members look after individual ministry activities of the church and operate with a working link into one of the Ministry Areas.

MINISTRY PRIORITIES [Established 2018]

1. Community connections
2. Equipping
3. Leadership Training
4. Evangelism
5. Governance
6. Properties
7. Children and Families

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As a people of faith in the Lord Jesus, we look forward with an anticipation that stirs our hearts. As the song writer of recent years notes 'He has brought us this far by His grace'. The Lord continues to lead us through a season of healing and restoring. He also continues to bring us through this peculiar season of COVID 19. In this time, He has sustained and strengthened as well as stretched us. He has enabled us to retain a connectedness and at the same time to reach out to others. In His grace, we are advancing in the work of ministry and mission, as well as genuinely seeking through prayer to know the vital next steps to take.