

Mrs Jaensch Leaving 2019

Good Shepherd school and Church community has been my second HOME.
I thank God for my time here. I am grateful.

36 Years being part of Good Shepherd Lutheran School -Where to start?

A phone call from Bruno Matuschka (the first principal of Good Shepherd) when Chris and I were temporarily back home on my parent's farm after having travelled and lived overseas for a of couple years....- there's a story about that which could take a good slab of time.

Where to start?

Teaching Year 3 for the first time in 1983 and going home from school for the whole first term, being totally overwhelmed and crying every night even though I had been a kindergarten teacher for 4 years prior to coming to Good Shepherd..... but that's another story.

Where to start?

Perhaps I could describe my first classroom in the wooden prefab building where the natural air conditioning was to simply open the windows. The new building (phase one) was already functioning but we were still needing to use four of the portable classrooms with the shelter shed for our shared eating area.

I remember Chris and I cleaning my classroom early in January before we found out that a huge "Working-Bee" was held every year where parents came in to clean the whole school in late January, just before the teachers started.

So my dusty little old Grade 3 room got a double cleaning that year!

When I moved into the new building, it was luxury beyond measure.

Where to start?

So, should I take you through my teaching experience year by year? NO!

Just a few recollections

Did you know that when I started at this school, women were paid a different wage depending on whether they had a husband working or not?

During extremely hot days, students congregated in the library where there was air conditioning or parents could pick up children early and take them home.

There was no maternity leave so when we had our first child, I had to resign. For 15 years, while enjoying motherhood and home life, I also did relief teaching, mostly at this school but also at Golden Grove and many Kindergartens.

One of the most wonderful memories I have is the fantastic sense of community I have felt and experienced both here at school and in our church.

Those "working bees" went on for many years and I enjoyed going to everyone I could, first as a teacher and then as a parent. Nothing like scrubbing desks and prying chewing gum off the bottom of seats while chatting and getting to know other parents.

When I left our school to start a family, I went on School Council (for nine years) and Chris served on the PFA. What a perfect way to understand and truly be part of the school where you entrust your children.

Did you know that for many years, we held a School fete where parents and teachers and students all pitched in to make a huge and fantastic community event?

I remember leading singing with groups of children here at Good Shepherd Church and at our fellow Lutheran churches -Dernancourt and Tea Tree Gully on some Sundays and also walking classes of children to sing Christmas carols at Clovercrest and Ingle Farm shopping centres. I led groups of singers for our closing services and organised the band for those occasions.

Chris and I sent our three children to this school and I was always able to say and still say to this day, we made an excellent choice and wouldn't have wanted to send our children anywhere else.

My art teaching career at this school started in 1998 with a three hour a week contract, teaching art to Year 6 and 7 students. That position turned into two days, teaching Art to the students in Years 2-7 plus teaching Health and Science and PE in the junior school and Singing with students in two large groupings over in the church. Back then we had two small art rooms and two store rooms. A lot of years and a lot of stories. A LOT of building projects!

Finally teaching only Visual Arts three days a week began in 2009 in the art room as we know it now.

So

Where to start?

Maybe I need to go back to my one room Rural Primary School at Ebenezer where at the maximum I had 24 fellow students, (3 class mates) in the entire school from Year 1-7 and I had the same teacher for the whole seven years of my primary schooling.

My passion for teaching the students here at this school stems from having had no art lessons to speak of in my entire schooling. My desire has been to give the children all the experiences I never had.

I'm not an artist and have no special gifting in this area but what I have learned is that we can all be artists if we just have a go. I have been in awe of the art work students produce and I feel exceptionally lucky that I have had the privilege of seeing so much of it. Pinning up students work around the school has come with its pain (my thumb) but the joy of listening to students when they find their own work on display or the fabulous comments and conversations about other students work or how they did it, just makes my heart sing.

Watching students tackle new things, feel proud of what they have achieved or realising that they just need more time - to 'have another go' is what makes teaching such a rewarding experience.

So I'm nearly done.

To my beautiful students past and present. THANK-YOU.

Some of my early Year 3 students are actually in the building tonight. I should get you to stand up and take a bow- it's been quite a ride! You are now parents and you chose to send your children to our awesome school.

Thanks to my (400+) current students. You are all amazing! We have had good moments, harder moments, lots of laughter, 'too noisy' moments, lots of fun conversations and created some incredible art work.

You have been and always will be the biggest blessing of working in this place. You are special, you are unique and just the way God designed.

To the parents, even though I have had little chance to get to know most of you- such is the nature of being in a specialist area, thank you for the words of encouragement I have received and thank you most of all for entrusting your children into this place and allowing me the joy of teaching them, especially in the area of Visual Arts.

To the staff, past and present THANK- YOU. For the conversations, the shared learning in this crazy career, for the fun and laughter, grumbles and shared tears and many prayers -thank you.

To School council and to Bruno for employing me- Thank you.

What a ride, what a journey.

Thanks to my husband Chris and my beautiful family and some special friends who have loved and supported me through all the "moments" of my Good Shepherd teaching career. God certainly blessed me with the best!

Thank you God. Thank you for sending that phone call 36 years ago.
Thank-you for being by my side through the great times and carrying me through some tough times.

THANK YOU God for this amazing school called Good Shepherd and the opportunity to work in this place.

And finally, when thinking about what I wanted to say in this speech tonight, and especially what I would want to share with all my students, three songs from my childhood came into my mind, so I want to thank my Mum and Dad tonight too.

These songs are "What a FRIEND we have in Jesus", " I am Jesus little lamb" and "Jesus loves ME this I know, for the Bible tells me so".

They taught me that Jesus IS and always will be my BEST FRIEND and He is yours too.

Thank you God. I am Grateful.

Helane Jaensch