

The K-Town Low-down

with Pat & Issy O'Keeffe • April 2026



Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. James 1:17 Greetings and gratitude from the O'Keeffes! It has been five months since we arrived in Katherine – it has whizzed by. Thank you for your concerns for us and the growth of God's kingdom and, to those ends, your prayers and partnership. They are very precious to us!

A delightful start

We had a blessed send off from our beloved church in Northbridge, Sydney, who so generously outdid us with honour Romans 12:10 style! With hearts full from many reminders of God's grace to us over our 10 years of ministry in Northbridge, and in the wonderful people whose lives were intertwined with ours, we flew to Darwin to spend a few days there before beginning our Katherine ministry. We were immediately struck by the unity of our new diocese, receiving excited exclamations from new clergy colleagues and their church families of "We've been praying for the church in Katherine and for you for a long time!" Pat also had the opportunity to attend a few days' ordination retreat with Derek Snibson, benefiting from his wisdom and humility in church and Top End ministry.

In Katherine, we were heartily welcomed with a poignant (and long!) combined ordination, commencement and induction service that gave glory to God

who has provided for us and our church in every way and given us this task of caring for His flock under Him. It was special to be supported by our parents and friends who travelled to be there, Greg & Karen Harris from BCA, and so many new Territory friends. Our talented friend Joel was able to livestream the service so we felt the love from Sydney too! Thank you all!

Give thanks to God for a blessed send off from Sydney and a warm welcome to Katherine.

Grace upon grace

Because of the sincere love of our new church family at St Paul's Anglican, we have settled in quickly. We are loving living and ministering alongside them! Issy thinks bush life is like the good part of high school – you get to see your friends all the time! We are having so much fun getting to know each member of our church family, with their unique personalities, gifts and stories of God's grace in their lives. Meeting with

Banner Image: Katherine Anglican Church

Circle Image: Issy & Pat

Middle Image: A full house at our combined ordination, commencement & induction

Bottom Image: Baby Corrie being baptised. Young adults Ashleigh, Tyra, Josh and Abbie were all baptised too!



Some of our Thursday evening Connect Group

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our three Connect Groups is a highlight. Our church family want to know God and walk with Him more deeply and truly – they listen to His Word and affirm the Gospel to each other. We share dinner, friends have joined in, the bishop visited, and a few young adults have begun to trust Jesus!

Pat worked through an evangelistic course with two young men who came to church for the first time on our first Sunday in Katherine. One of them went back to Adelaide still wrestling with questions about Christianity, but has connected with church and continued to read the Bible there. The other was baptised in February along with three young women and baby Cornelia as well!

God has given us what we need to continue a Kids' Church ministry on Sundays and Issy is having fun working out how to best teach and encourage a bunch of spunky and sparky young people.

Please pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to grow our church family to maturity in faith, hope and love for our good, our witness in Katherine, and His glory!

Our church family want to know God and walk with him more deeply and truly

It's God who brings the fruit

It has been comforting, exciting and a little overwhelming to find out that our coming to Katherine is the answer to the prayers of many over many years. God is answering many other prayers as well! The faithful perseverance of the brothers and sisters in Katherine through a long season of waiting has borne beautiful gospel fruit in the life of our church family. We have experienced this in the way that we have been embraced. We have also heard this from several others who joined the church before we arrived. The culture of St Paul's Katherine was already one of warm welcome, rich relationships, and sincere care for one another. It has been a joy to join in with this, benefit from it and encourage it.

One example comes from a young woman called Ashleigh.

Before we moved, we heard of 'Ashleigh the music teacher', doing her first teaching placement in town. During a challenging beginning to her time in Katherine, Ash experienced the love and care of her new church. Several older women came alongside her and encouraged her in her faith. Ash heard the Gospel each week through Glenys' ministry (and through the locums and visitors who chipped in along the way!). In Ash's own words:

"I can honestly say that it is because of the encouragement of people at St Paul's that I have come to know who Jesus is. ... Moving to Katherine is the single best thing that's ever happened to me, because it led me to Jesus."

It has been a joy for us to witness this and many other examples of God's work in people's lives. It has been a privilege to come alongside these brothers and sisters to serve them and spur them on.

Please give thanks for the fruit that God has already borne in our church family.

Give thanks for Ash and her new faith in Jesus and the faithful witness of the saints.

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The heavens opened

Alongside all these gifts, we've also had A LOT of rain. So much so that we've had two floods! We have been learning about catchment areas, river levels and levee banks. Thank you for praying for God to protect us. He did that and blessed us even more. Our home and church stayed dry despite being very close to the river, friends generously shared their home with us and we enjoyed special time with them (think lots of monkey bars and Monopoly Deal). We got to see our community activate to chip in and help out, and we had opportunities to serve meals, sing, pray and share Bible stories at the emergency shelters. But homes and businesses were inundated, so there is heaviness, anxiety and fatigue in our town.

Please pray for opportunities and wisdom to help those who are struggling, grieving and under stress, and comfort them with the true peace and hope found in Christ.

Thank you for praying

We have loved learning the regular rhythms of life and

ministry in Katherine. We're excited to continue the ordinary ministries of word and prayer with God's people and explore the many gospel opportunities around us. We'll have the Katherine Christian Convention and BCA Nomad visits to tell you about when we write next.

Could you continue to pray, for us and for God's people in Katherine, that we would go deeper into the Gospel,

in prayer, trusting that God will give us all that we need to continue serving Him.

God has already given us great affection for the people of Katherine. We praise Him for that and for giving you such love too! Thanks for joining us in prayer for God's kingdom in Katherine!

We look forward to what's to come!



The heavens opened

allowing ourselves to be amazed again and again by the good news of Jesus? Pray that we would go deeper in relationships with one another, encouraging each other daily to keep walking with Jesus. And pray that we would go deeper

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.
2 Corinthians 1:2-4

With blessings in Christ,

Pat & Issy

Pray for

our work
in Katherine

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