

26 November 2021

Dear St Thomas Family

**ADVENT:** This Sunday marks the start of our Liturgical Year as we begin the season of **ADVENT** (from the Latin - meaning, coming or arrival) . You will notice that our liturgical colour changes to **purple**. In these 4 weeks leading up to Christmas, we anticipate the coming and arrival of Jesus. We prepare to celebrate his birth as a baby in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago, that moment in history when God, the Word, became flesh – a human being who lived among us. Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us. Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

In addition, we look forward to the return of Christ – his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming – when he will come as our judge: “He will come again to judge the living and the dead” (the Creed). In our Eucharist, we proclaim “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again”.

**VISION:** This Sunday, as we begin a new year, we will also be launching our Parish Vision statement and new Logo. The **Revd Chris Arends** led us in two visioning days during the year, and he “harvested ‘ all the input received from those who attended. After consultation and discussion with the Wardens, PCC, Layministers and others we are excited to present a vision for our church going forward. I am delighted that Revd Chris Arends will preach at both our services this Sunday.

**16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM** against gender based violence is observed from **25 November to 10 December**. We will be lighting a special candle as we pray for all who suffer as a result of GBV, and pray for God’s mercy and grace that we may be a society where all can live in peace and safety.

**SYNOD:** Our Diocesan Synod was postponed due to the lockdown in July, and will resume on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November. Please pray for our parish representatives- Jeremy Smith, Val Wood and myself.

**ADVENT BIBLE STUDY:** I plan to offer a 3 part Wednesday evening series of *Bible Studies with Faith sharing* for any who might be interested, based on some of the key Advent readings.

Dates: Wednesday 1 , 8, 15<sup>th</sup> December from 7pm – 8.30pm (latest). If you are interested in attending, please give your name to Caro. (*The venue and format of these sessions will depend on how many people are attending, so it will be helpful to know in advance in order to plan appropriately!*)

**ENTREPRENEURS MINI MARKET:** Join us for another wonderful creative market in the beautiful church garden on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> from 8.30am – 12.30pm. With Christmas less than a month away, this is a good place to do some gift shopping, stock up on Hugh’s meals, and relax with friends over a cup of coffee and tasty treats!

**FESITVAL OF CAROLS AND LESSONS 6PM 19 Dec:** Sonja would like to invite all **SINGING ENTHUSIASTS** who would like to be part of the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on the 19th December to join the choir at St Thomas on Tuesday evenings 6-7:30pm, *starting this coming Tuesday!*

This Sunday is **RECYCLING SUNDAY** – please bring your clean recycling in bags or boxes and leave just inside the parish hall wooden side gate.

Please note that Caroline Westwood is away in Zimbabwe.

**Inspire notices:** Our next all **Age-Family Service** is on **Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> of December at 09:30am**. Please make sure to invite a friend, young or old the Service is all inclusive.

**Beach Clean-up** is on the **5<sup>th</sup> of December** and we heading to Hout Bay beach in partnership with Green Anglicans and the Diocese. The clean-up times is 09:00-11:00 am. Please contact Jeremy if you keen to be part of this initiative.

**Crib Service** on the **24<sup>th</sup> December at 17:00pm**. We in search of a mini cast, musicians and those who don't mind being a bit silly as we welcome Jesus at our Crib Service. **Our first briefing and planning meeting is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 19:00 in the Koinonia Room.**

**CONGRATULATIONS:** Two of our longstanding St Thomas members, Hugh Corder and Geoff Burton, have been awarded the prestigious Robert Gray Award for 2022 by Bishop's College. We are extremely proud of them and send our huge congratulations! This is what appeared in the Bishops newsletter:

The ODU congratulates the recipients of the 2022 Robert Gray Award, **Hugh Corder (1971S)** and **Geoff Burton (1953G)**.



**Hugh Corder** is recognised for his long and distinguished contribution to law, the South African legal system and education, furthering the application of social justice and extensive pro bono support for NGOs in South Africa. He has recently retired as a Professor of Law at the University of Cape Town where he taught for almost forty years. He is now the University's Emeritus Professor of Public Law.



**Geoff Burton** is honoured for his unflinching and dedicated service to those in need, the homeless and, since 1981, the founder and driver behind The Hope Exchange (previously The Carpenter's Shop) where skills training, food and accommodation is provided to thousands of homeless people, and where they could be provided with a daily hot meal.

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