

3rd December 2021

ST THOMAS PARISH NEWS & NOTICES

Dear St Thomas Family,

What a week it has been, probably dominated for many by the news of travel bans imposed on South Africa by countries abroad. This has left countless families devastated that they will not be able to be reunited with family members over the festive season. We acknowledge the extreme disappointment of many. As the family of God in this place, striving to be "Loving hearts of God in Rondebosch", let us reach out to one another and support one another in whatever way we can.

LOGO AND VISION STATEMENT: Last Sunday, at the start of our new liturgical year, we welcomed Revd Chris Arends as our preacher and launched our new logo (see below or click to view) and Vision Statement:



Our Vision - A WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, LOVING HEART OF GOD IN RONDEBOSCH

We are 'loving hearts':

1. Joyfully celebrating our diversity in our all-age family.
2. Embracing Anglican worship in traditional, contemporary, creative and inclusive ways.
3. Committed to prayer, engaging with Scripture and witnessing to the love of Christ as we grow in faith and action relevant for our times.
4. Generously sharing our gifts, talents and resources for the benefit of the church and wider community.
5. Compassionately committed to caring for ALL of God's creation.

Our motivation:

"The love of Christ compels us." (2 Cor 5:14)

Now the challenge will be to live up to our calling as loving hearts, in all of these areas! Moving forward, this will become the bench mark by which we evaluate how we are doing as a parish.

SERVICES THIS SUNDAY Advent II – At 7.45am will be a traditional Advent Eucharist, and at **9.30am will be our All Age service**. Our preacher will be Jeremy Smith

ORDINATION: On 5th December, Philip Donald (formerly from this parish) and others will be ordained to the priesthood in St George's Cathedral. I shall be attending. At this service, the Bishop will license my husband, Andrew Hunter, as a Provincial Canon in recognition of his service and contribution to ACSA in several different capacities over the years (including minute secretary at Provincial Synods and Synod of Bishops, Canon Law provincial team, Safe Church and as the longest serving dean in the Diocese of Grahamstown (13 years)).

APPEAL FOR CHRISTMAS CHOIR: There will be two Christmas Carol 'workshops' for those wanting to be part of the service of Nine Lessons and Carols (19 December): this Saturday TOMORROW, 4 December and again in on Saturday the 18th December, both 9-11am at St Thomas. If you would like to be part of the Christmas music group, kindly send Sonja a message (0713654495) so that she can make sure that there will be music or lyrics for you! All welcome - the more, indeed the merrier!

ORGAN UPDATE: Lucia Earl writes: How absolutely wonderful it has been to hear the newly refurbished organ being played at our services. It is not completely finished yet, the organ builder still has a little work to do, but it has been so special to hear and see the results of ten weeks of work. It may have a few teething problems, and it will need to settle down, so we will listen and watch intently. I am sure you will agree, that it is very exciting and thrilling that this restoration work has taken place. You might wonder about the dates on the wooden paneling above the cry room, 1966 when the organ was rebuilt, 1994 the last time major work occurred and now 2021. It should now be good to last for many years and apart from having it tuned regularly and looking after it extremely well, we shouldn't have to do much more. I think we have an organ to be really proud of. So, what comes next, a music/organ concert to celebrate the new look and new sound and to raise the shortfall that we still require. We don't have a date yet, but sometime in the new year, so watch this space. In the meantime, enjoy this magnificent organ and give thanks to God for answering our prayers.

SYNOD: Last weekend Jeremy Smith, Val Wood and I represented our parish at our Diocesan Synod. Thank you for your prayers. Jeremy writes: The diocesan synod was held on 26th and 27th November at St. Saviour's Church Claremont. Thank you, to Parish Council and the church for allowing me to be part of Synod. I enjoyed the discussions, exposure, and the many lessons over the two days. The format of Synod was new for everyone with a hybrid model of meeting together in a "sacred hub" and virtually online with a diverse group of people.

The motions raised were administrative, business, social, environmental, and spiritual, as we discussed and voted on the future processes to be implemented at Diocesan and parish level. It's wonderful to see the range and scope of the Anglican church and how we engage in all of life through faith, reason, and Scripture.

A theme that came out of our Bible study was a statement, "moving from maintenance to mission". It is exciting that as a church we are looking outwards while assessing what's happening internally. COVID-19 has changed how and what we do, and we need to respond as a faith community to the many challenges affecting people. The future of our church and Diocese requires of us to be a people that discern the times in which we live through our faith and in an authentic way.

As a rep of St Thomas church and the YPM (Young People's Ministry) we imagined a role for a "parish youth worker" model. As a youth administrator I know that ministry to young people (children and teens) necessitates a focused individual who can dedicate time, energy, and resources in building up and strengthening young people alongside a Rector and a parish vision. It was exciting to motivate this based on what we are doing here at St. Thomas church. As a parish we may be on the cusp of pioneering something fresh and new for the future of our church and Diocese.

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY: the Advent Bible Study continues this week on Wednesday evening at 7pm in the Koinonia room.

THE DECEMBER PRAYER DIARY is attached and copies will be available in church on Sunday. Thank you to this month's prayer diary writer for her lovely prayers and inspiration.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS - For Christmas day the church will be decorated with flowers to celebrate the birth of our Saviour Jesus! Please consider making a donation towards the costs of the flowers, perhaps in memory of a loved one or in thankfulness for blessings received. Please use the envelopes in the porch and place in the collection or the church's bank details using the reference FLOWERS.

God bless everyone and see you on Sunday.

Claire

The Rev'd Claire Nye Hunter, PhD

Rector, St Thomas's Church

61 Campground Road

Rondebosch 7700

Tel 021-685-6752 (w)

071-417-0145 (mobile)