A picture containing wall, indoor, furniture

Description automatically generated**St Thomas’ Church**

*“Building the Kingdom…….”*

A very warm welcome to this first Newsletter of 2022. May you know God with you throughout this coming year. The photo is from Pauline, our church warden, and it is of a white amarylis, which was a gift she received. Just thinking about gifts:

We enter the season of Epiphany remembering the visit of the Magi, as they are known, the Wise Men. How precious is wisdom! As Proverbs chapter 9 tells us “ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For through wisdom your days will be many and years will be added to your life. If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you;….” (New International Version)

The wisdom of the Magi did reward them, they met with the Messiah, the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ. They acknowledged Him as King, worshipped Him and gave Him their gifts. God has given us gifts (talents, skills, energy as well as time) and we worship Him by using those gifts to serve Him. Taking a lesson from the Magi, let’s be looking out for the signs God gives us in the days, weeks and months to come in order that we may follow, worship and serve Him. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom – the word ‘fear’ here meaning acknowledging the majesty of God, His sovereignty, power and authority.

A WAY OF GIVING

Regular financial giving to the church is another way in which we serve our God and it is vital for our vision and our planning. If you are not already part of our Stewardship Scheme, please do consider joining – either by using weekly envelopes or by standing order. If you would like to know more please talk with me, Vicky Bentley, at church or call me on 0779 6342147.

Additionally, if you are a tax payer, Gift Aid can be claimed on your donations which adds a further 25% to the gift. Again, please have a chat with me if you are a tax payer.

*Here is the information for the services for this Sunday (the full service schedule will be available soon)*

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| Sunday 9th January 2022  1st Sunday of Epiphany  **Baptism of Christ** | 10.30am Service of the Word Reading: Luke 3 v 15 – 17 and 21 - 22  Leader: ES Preacher: DOB Celebrant: ES  6pm Prayer Gathering/Breaking of Bread SH/YB |
| Wednesday 12th January | 11am BCP Holy Communion |

Key to abbreviations:

DOB: Revd David O’Brien ES: Revd Emma Swarbrick

SH: Revd Steve Haskett YB: Yvonne Blazey (LLM – Licensed Lay Minister)

Our morning and evening readings for the coming week:

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|  | **Morning Readings** | **Evening Readings** |
| Monday 10th January 2022  *William Laud, archbishop, 1645* | Psalm 80, Genesis 1 v 1 – 19;  Matthew 21 v 1 – 17 | Psalm 85; Amos 1;  1 Corinthians 1 v 1- 17 |
| Tuesday 11th January  *Mary Slessor, missionary, 1915* | Psalm 89 v 1 – 18;  Genesis 1 v 20 – 2 v 3;  Matthew 21 v 18 – 32 | Psalm 89 v 19 – end; Amos 2;  1 Corinthians 1 v 18 - end |
| Wednesday 12th January  *Aelred, abbot, 1167*  *Benedict Biscop, scholar, 689* | Psalm 119 v 105 – 128;  Genesis 2 v 4 – end;  Matthew 21 v 33 - end | Psalm 91;  Amos 3;  1 Corinthians 2 |
| Thursday 13th January  *Hilary, bishop, 367; Kentigern (Mungo) missionary bishop, 603*  *George Fox (Quakers) 1691* | Psalm 92;  Genesis 3;  Matthew 22 v 1 – 14 | Psalm 94;  Amos 4;  1 Corinthians 3 |
| Friday 14th January | Psalm 88;  Genesis 4 v 1 – 16 and 25-26; Matthew 22 v 15 – 33 | Psalm 102;  Amos 5 v 1 – 17;  1 Corinthians 4 |
| Saturday 15th January | Psalm 97; Genesis 6 v 1 – 10;  Matthew 22 v 34 – end | Psalm 104; Amos 5 v 18 – end;  1 Corinthians 5 |

**(the LORD said…) Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.** (2 Chronicles 7 v 15)