

St. Thomas Congregation

Evangelical Church (Lutheran Confession)

Newsletter 6 (2008)

November & December



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

IMPORTANT DATES

- 1 November St Thomas Mini-Bazaar (page 9)
- 15 November Working Day at church (page 9)
- 16 November Baptism of Erin van der Walt (page 8)
- 30 November Advent Celebrations (page 9)
- 7 December Community Christmas Carol Service (pages 11-12)

Read also:

- Finances (pages 10-11)
- Rates Rebate for the Elderly (page 12)

PURPOSE STATEMENT SAINT THOMAS CONGREGATION

- To promote fellowship in a friendly environment, where
- a) God's love in Christ is proclaimed (proclamation)
 - b) love for one another is exercised (care)
 - c) loving others is practised (outreach)

Loved by God. Loving others.

FROM THE PASTOR

Have a closer look at the photo of Father Christmas on the cover page of this newsletter taken during our Advent Celebrations in 2005. Father Christmas (David Skibbe), lovingly presenting Teneal Karshagen with a Christmas gift.

Christmas is indeed a time of buying and giving gifts. Parents buy gifts for their children and god-children, friends exchange gifts, companies make (corporate) gifts to the clients. But what is the relationship between David and Teneal? Are they family members? No! Is David Teneal's god-father? No! What joins them is "one" Lord, "one" baptism, "one" faith. By the grace of God they both belong to the redeemed family of God located in Saint Thomas.

David is dressed as "Father Christmas" to remind Teneal and all the other children of our congregation that something quite special has happened and that the gift in her hand is *symbolic* of the great gift that God has given us: ***"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"*** (John 3:16).

Being reminded of this divine gift and accepting this gift - that is what CHRISTMAS is all about. Sometimes we forget that Christmas is a "divine" festival. We rush to our end of year cocktails and parties. We rush to do our Christmas shopping. We rush to get our houses ready for the visitors that will be arriving. We rush to prepare our meals so that everybody may be satisfied. As we open our gifts on Christmas Day, we make (mental or written) notes of those people who thought of us, so that we in turn will not forget to convey our "thanks."

In Psalm 103 King David rights: ***"Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his***



benefits" (v.2). Of whom is he reminding his "soul"? Of "the Lord". That is what we should also be doing. Christmas is first and foremost of what "the Lord" has done for me and the gift that "he" has given us. He send his one and only Son. There is no greater gift than that. And indeed, Christmas is empty if in the rush of the Christmas hour, this gift is overlooked. Christians throughout the world, therefore meet in church. They "celebrate" the gift giving to them by God. They join the angelic hosts to sing his praises. And as they give each other gifts, they are aware of the fact that the joys of this world can only be symbolic of the real joy that we have in God who through Christ has redeemed himself with us.

Two years after receiving the gift from David, Teneal was diagnosed with cancer. The were times when her family and friends feared the worst. She may loose the most precious thing given to us, "life". Many prayers ascended to heaven. God was gracious. Others cancer patient passed away. But the days that God had determined for Teneal had not yet been numbered. Teneal recovered. Her parents rejoiced. So did we in the congregation. We had missed her bubbly nature in church, waving at parents and others as she walked to the altar and (ran) back (now joined by two the equally bubbly Johnston twins, providing us with a threefold joy). But the greatest gift is not an extended "life on earth". It is "eternal life". Long life (stretching of many years is) is in fact "empty" if it does not culminate in eternal life.

So don't forget this Christmas, as indeed every day of your life: *You are loved by God*. You are so precious to him, that he gave you his one and only Son, so that you do not perish but have eternal life with him in heaven. On the day of your baptism God already presented this gift to you. Every Christmas you are reminded of it. In "faith" you already have it, right now. But one day it will be revealed to you.

I wish you all a happy Christmas. Now already? Yes, every day of your life. Every day when CHRIST is written in large letters over your life, it *is* Christmas. Christmas Day is just a reminder. When you open your gifts or enjoy your end of your Christmas parties be reminded of the gift of CHRIST.

Yours in Christ
Dieter Reinstorf

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

How to reach people with the Gospel Message

A little boy was selling newspapers on the corner, the people were [hurrying to get out of the cold]. The little boy was so cold, he was no longer trying to sell newspapers. He walked up to a policeman and said: "Mister, you wouldn't happen to know where a poor boy could find a warm place to sleep tonight, would you? You see, I sleep in a box up around the corner there and down the alley and it's awfully cold in there during the night. Sure would be nice to have a warm place to stay." The policeman looked down at the little boy and said: "You go down the street to that big white house and you knock on the door. When they come out the door, you just say 'John 3:16' and they will let you in.

So he did. He walked up the steps and knocked on the door and a lady answered. He looked up and said "John 3:16". The lady said: "Come right in, son." She took him in and sat him down in a rocker in front of a big old fireplace, and she went off. The boy sat there for a while and thought to himself: John 3:16 ... I don't understand it, but it sure makes a cold boy warm.

Later the lady came back and asked him: "Are you hungry?" He said: "Well, just a little. I haven't eaten in a couple of days. I guess I could stand a little bit of food." The lady took him to the kitchen and sat him down at a table full of wonderful food. He ate and ate until he couldn't eat any more. Then he thought to himself: John 3,16 .. Boy, I sure don't understand it but it sure makes a hungry boy full.

The lady took him upstairs to a bathroom to a huge bathtub filled with warm water, and he sat and soaked there for a while. As he soaked he thought: John 3,16 ... I sure don't understand it, but it sure makes a dirty boy clean. You know, I've not had a bath, a real bath, in my whole life. The only bath I ever had was when I stood in front of that old fire hydrant and they flushed it out.

The lady came in [and helped him out of the bath]. She took him to a warm room, tucked him into a big old feather bed, pulled the covers up around his neck, kissed him goodnight and turned out the lights. As he lay in the darkness and looked out the window at the snow coming down on that cold night, he thought to himself: John 3:16 ... I don't understand, but it sure makes a tired boy feel rested.

The next morning the lady came back and took him down again to that same big table full of food. After he had eaten, she took him back to that same old rocker in front of the fireplace and picked up a big old Bible. She sat down in front of him and looked into his young face. "Do you understand John 3:16?" she asked gently. He replied: "No, Ma'am, I don't. The first time I ever heard it was late last night when the policeman told me to use it." She opened the Bible to John 3:16 and began to explain to him about Jesus. Right there, in front of the old fireplace, his life was transformed. He sat there and thought: "John 3:16 ... I don't understand it, but it sure makes a lost boy feel safe."



You know, I have to confess, I don't understand it either, how God was willing to send His Son to die for me, and how Jesus would agree to do such a thing. I don't understand the agony of the Father and every angel in heaven as they watched Jesus suffer and die. I don't understand the intense love for ME that kept Jesus on the cross till the end. I don't

understand it, but it sure makes life worth living.

A prayer for our country

Moaning, complaining, worried (zumaphobia) Read Proverbs: 29:2: ***"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan."***

"Heavenly Father, thank you that we can take comfort in the fact that you are in control of every situation. We pray for a godly, honest leader for our country, South Africa. God YOU make the impossible, possible. We pray for a leader who will bring peace and reconciliation to our land.

We pray that YOUR people in South Africa will keep their eyes on YOU and that you will bless them. Please protect all innocent South Africans from the violence in our country. We pray this in the precious name of JESUS' name. Amen."

(Sent in by Shane Swiegers)

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

The Wall of Remembrance

On Sunday 5 October, at a Special Meeting of the Congregation, the building of a new (and hopefully cheaper) Wall of Remembrance for St Thomas was approved. With building costs rising and additional constructional improvements that need to be made, the originally approved wall of remembrance could no longer be build without drastically exceeding the budget. As a result the Church Council requested Deon Deetlefs to prepare new building plans. The new wall is to be build against the present church wall to the left of the main entrance of the church. The church council is still awaiting final quotes from various builders.

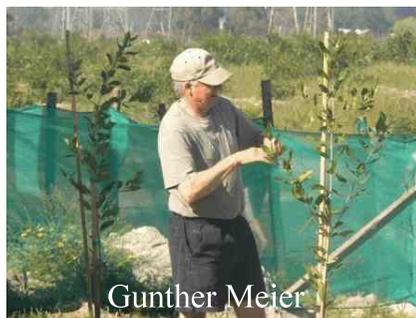
St Thomas Garden Day



Shawn, Shane and Carl

A number of congregation members, young and old(er), arrived at St Thomas to plant some trees on Saturday 13 September. The confirmands did most of the digging, with Shawn Johnston (being a horticulturalist) providing us with professional advice. If these trees, with the added attention from Günther Meier who donated them all, don't survive,

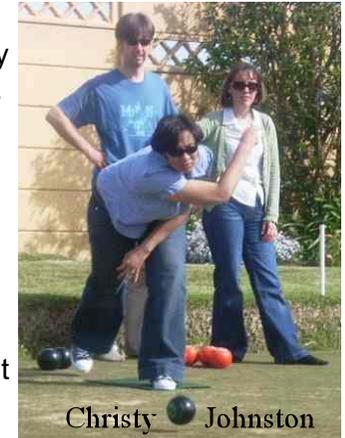
nothing will grow. We may not realise it, but the church garden speaks for itself: Here is a congregation that cares. It's members are our proud of their church. A hearty thanks to all that gave their time to beautify our church.



Gunther Meier

St Thomas Bowling Day

As a congregation we gather first and foremost around the Word of God on the day that God has "set aside" and declared "holy". But fellowship is also promoted by spending an enjoyable afternoon together. This was definitely the case when St Thomas members converged on the Edgemaed Bowling club on 21 September for a day of "Bowling" and "Braaiing". We had a wonderful afternoon. Edgemaed Bowling Club take note, there is a lot of bowling talent in St Thomas.



Christy Johnston



Denise Kontsidis



Baptism of Erin Van der Walt on 16 November

Baptism is always a special occasion, to be celebrated yet again in Saint Thomas. On 16 November Rhod and Tracy Van der Walt will be joining St Thomas and their daughter, Erin, will be baptised in the name of the triune God. We are grateful that God is adding to our numbers, but above all, that he has drawn this family to himself so that they can enjoy and share his boundless love and grace. As a congregation we hope to make you feel welcome and that you may grow in fellowship both with Him and his local family at Saint Thomas. (Read more about the Van der Walts in our next newsletter)

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Bazaar - 1 November 2008

As this newsletter is being written, it is full steam ahead for our bazaar. Behind the scenes many congregation members have been hard at work. A special thanks to the Bazaar Committee members, Wesley Karshagen, Erica Laspé, and Marja Wybrow, and all those who have spend many valuable hours to make it a success.

Working Day - 15 November

The Church Council had suggested that the whole sprinkler system at church be replaced. Due to the lack of funds, the decision has been taken to rather repair the present system and to replace some of the faulty pop-ups. Please join us at the church on Saturday 15 November at 9am.

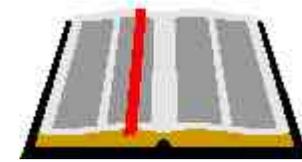


Advent Celebrations - 30 November



A special Advent Service is being planned for the first Sunday of Advent, 30 November. Please note, there will be no morning Service. The service, seated at tables with a light meal, will commence at **7pm**. Apart from singing carols and listening to the advent message, there will be a **Nativity Play** to be performed by our Sunday School Children. We sincerely hope that Father Christmas will also show his face with some gifts for our children. You are welcome to invite your family members and friends. Further announcements will be made in Church.

BIBLE STUDY



Come and join us for our Bible studies, every Wednesday evening at 7pm in the parsonage. Everybody is most welcome. It is an enriching experiencing of studying God's Word together and sharing with one another.

- 5 November "Wall or Well" (DVD Series and Discussion)
- 12 November John 9:1-34 (Why was I born blind?)
- 19 November Exodus 14:5-31 (Crossing the Red Sea)
- 26 November Movie night: Babette's Feast with reflections on God's grace (please bring some snacks along)

FINANCES

This is the last report on our finances for 2008 and covers the nine months until the end of September 2008. There are less than three months left before the end of our financial year on 31 December 2008. This provides us with an opportunity to look at our financial position and hopefully it will encourage us to make a special effort to support the church financially during the last few months of the year.

Income shortfall

As stated in the previous newsletter, so far this year our expenses were more than our income. The deficit caused by this, amounts to approximately R22 000. To cover this shortfall, we had to use some of the savings from previous years and as a result our money market balance has been reduced.

Expenses

The main expenses incurred so far this year, were for the various improvements to our church building. So far this year we have spent

about R66 500 on building improvements, primarily on replacing and enlarging the roof structure in the courtyard. Every time we gather in the courtyard after the service, it fills our hearts with gratitude. It makes such a big difference and is money well spent.

The only major expenses left for the remainder of the year, are payments to Synod (R62 145) and the costs of building the wall of remembrance.

Income

Our contributions so far this year amounted to R104 859, which is about R8 000 short of the budgeted figure. Our income received a major boost, when we received a donation of R15 000, during September, from an anonymous FELSISA member. We as a congregation are indeed blessed that members of our Synod still help and support us in such a generous way. We sincerely appreciate this contribution and pray that God will bless the voluntary giver.

Thanks

Thanks to everyone who has contributed so faithfully during the past months, also for the pledges for the wall of remembrance. We pray that these funds will contribute to spiritual growth in St Thomas and will help to spread the Gospel in our area.

Out of thankfulness for all the blessings we receive and with a joyful heart, lets make a special effort to contribute during the last few months of the year.

Günther Meier

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Community Christmas Carol Service

You are invited to attend our *Community Christmas Carol Service*. It is being hosted by the Tygerberg Ministers Fellowship in conjunction with the official switching on of the Bothasig Christmas lights. Each year over Christmas Bothasig is transformed into a "light marvel" and has

literally become a tourist attraction. What a great opportunity to bring the Gospel message of Christ's birth for the salvation of all people to our community and others. For this purpose the churches of our community join hands and unite as they present a service together.

The event is planned for Sunday, 7 December, at the Bothasig library (off Vryburger Street). It includes:

- Christmas market to start at 15.00
- Carols by Candle-light service at 19.00
- The Switching on of the Lights at 20.00

A thank offering will be taken in support of mission work evolving out of the xenophobic attacks, in particular by Pastor Pedro Benjamin (a Zimbabwean serving in the Richwood community). It is advisable to bring a chair and/or a blanket along.

Rates Rebate for the Elderly

The City Council of Cape Town provides a rates rebate for the elderly and the handicapped. From 1 July 2008 all elderly and handicapped with an income category below R7000 qualify for a (partial) rebate, while those household incomes below R1880 per month will receive a 100% rebate on their rates.

For more information on the rates rebates' scheme and application procedures, please contact 021 590 1465 or 0860 10 30 89 at the Goodwood municipal offices. The deadline for 2008 has already passed, but if you do qualify consider applying next year.

Ward Forum

Since the beginning of 2008 Pastor Reinstorf serves on the Ward Forum representing the "Religious Groups" of our area (Bothasig and Edemead). You are more than welcome to approach him to make an application at the Ward Forum Meeting on any an issue relating to the improvement of our community.



Birthdays

Wishing you a happy and a blessed birthday!

November

6	Reinhold Küsel
11	Glynis Rewitzky
13	Dennis Rewitzky
22	Matthew Crouch

December

2	Frankie Lear
3	Graham Lear
5	Peter Reinstorf
6	Bob Laspe
27	Vivian Louw
31	Marja Wybrow

January

5	Anita Willis
7	Elke Crouch



Laughter is good



Lot's wife

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jason interrupted, 'My Mommy looked back once, while she was driving,' he announced triumphantly, 'and she turned into a telephone pole!'

Did Noah fish?

A Sunday school teacher asked, 'Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark ?'
'No,' replied Johnny. 'How could he, with just two worms.'

Moses and the Red Sea

Nine-year-old Joey was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday School.

'Well, Mom, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt . When he got to the Red Sea , he had his army build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then, he radioed headquarters for reinforcements. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved.'

'Now, Joey, is that really what your teacher taught you?' his mother asked.

'Well, no, Mom. But, if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!'

The Lord is my Shepherd:

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible; Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the chapter. Little Rick was excited about the task but, he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Ricky was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I need to know.'

Unanswered Prayer?

The preacher's 5 year-old daughter noticed that her father always paused and bowed his head, for a moment, before starting his sermon. One day, she asked him why. 'Well, Honey,' he began, proud that his daughter was so observant of his messages, 'I'm asking the Lord to help me preach a good sermon.'

'How come He doesn't do it?' she asked.

Being Thankful

A rabbi said to a precocious six-year-old boy, 'So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?'

The little boy replied, 'Thank God he's in bed!'



DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

November

01 2 Corinthians 8,16-24
 02 2 Corinthians 9,1-5
 03 2 Corinthians 9,6-15
 04 2 Corinthians 10,1-11
 05 Psalms 120
 06 2 Corinthians 10,12-18
 07 2 Corinthians 11,1-6
 08 2 Corinthians 11,7-15
 09 2 Corinthians 11,16-33
 10 2 Corinthians 12,1-10
 11 2 Corinthians 12,11-18
 12 Psalms 90
 13 2 Corinthians 12,19-21
 14 2 Corinthians 13,1-4
 15 2 Corinthians 13,5-13
 16 Philemon 1-25
 17 Mark 13,1-13
 18 Mark 13,14-23
 19 Psalms 51
 20 Mark 13,24-37
 21 2 Peter 1,1-11
 22 2 Peter 1,12-21
 23 2 Peter 2,1-22
 24 2 Peter 3,1-9
 25 2 Peter 3,10-18
 26 Isaiah 26,7-18
 27 Isaiah 56,1-8
 28 Isaiah 57,14-21
 29 Isaiah 58,1-12
 30 Isaiah 59,1-15a

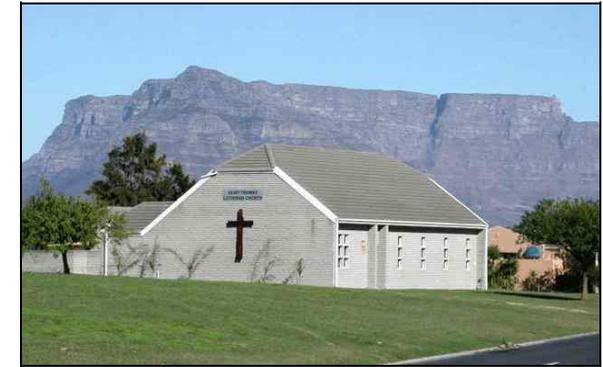
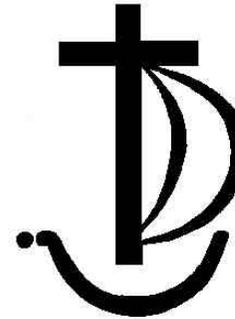
December

01 Isaiah 59,15b-21
 02 Isaiah 60,1-11
 03 Psalms 24
 04 Isaiah 60,15-22
 05 Isaiah 61,1-6
 06 Isaiah 61,7-11

07 Isaiah 62,1-5
 08 Isaiah 62,6-12
 09 Isaiah 63,7-16
 10 Psalms 68,1-21
 11 Isaiah 63,17-64,3
 12 Isaiah 64,4-11
 13 Isaiah 65,1-16a
 14 Isaiah 65,16b-25
 15 Isaiah 66,5-14
 16 Isaiah 66,18-24
 17 Psalms 68,25-36
 18 Luke 1,1-17
 19 Luke 1,18-25
 20 Luke 1,26-38
 21 Luke 1,39-56
 22 Luke 1,57-66
 23 Luke 1,67-80
 24 Psalms 130
 25 Luke 2,1-14
 26 Luke 2,15-20
 27 Luke 2,21-24
 28 Luke 2,25-35
 29 Luke 2,36-40
 30 Luke 2,41-52
 31 Psalms 2

January

01 Psalms 8
 02 Luke 3,1-6
 03 Luke 3,7-14
 04 Luke 3,15-20
 05 Luke 3,21-38
 06 Luke 4,1-13
 07 Psalms 72
 08 Luke 4,14-21
 09 Luke 4,22-30
 10 Luke 4,31-37
 11 Luke 4,38-44



EVANGELICAL CHURCH (LUTHERAN CONFESSION) SAINT THOMAS CONGREGATION

Church

27 Settlers Drive, Edgemoed

Parsonage:

10 Van Gogh Street
 Panorama 7500
 ☒ Street Address or
 P.O. Box 12255
 N1-City 7463

Divine Service

Every Sunday at 10.00am

- Sunday School
- Holy Communion

Sunday School

Maggi Reinstorf 021- 9303734

Women's Guild Convenor

Leanne Swiegers 021-9390486
 021-5953192 (w)

Treasurer

Günther Meier 021- 9760313

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Dieter Reinstorf

☎ 021-9303734
 083-4409498

Church Council

Günther Meier 021-9760313
 Heindry Peyper 021-4243949
 David Skibbe 021- 5581701
 Marja Wybrow 021-5571328

Banking Details

ABSA (Parow 502 110)
 Account Name: St Thomas
 Acc Number: 404 1515 600

Wall of Remembrance

Banking Details

Std Bank (Tyger Manor 050-410)
 Account Name: Evangelical Church
 Lutheran Confession.
 Acc Number: 076356302

Website: www.stthomas.za.net

SUNDAY SERVICES AND DUTY ROSTER

Service Times: Every Sunday at 10.00 (with Holy Communion) / (U) = Usher. Evening Service at 7pm (highlighted)

DATE	SUNDAY	CHURCH ELDER	READER	SUNDAY SCHOOL	ALTAR DUTY	FLOWERS	TEA DUTY
2 November	Reformation Festival	D. Skibbe S. Swiegers (U)	S. Swiegers Col.1:9-14	Ulrike Reinstorf Maggi Reinstorf	L. Swiegers	M. Deetlefs	M. Deetlefs M. Reinstorf
9 November	3 rd Last Sunday	G. Meier D. Skibbe (U)	D. Skibbe Rom.14:7-9	Antje Eggers Martina Reinstorf	A. Willis	M. Aubrey	M. Aubrey D. Kontsidis
16 November	2 nd Last Sunday	H. Peyper A. Runds (U)	H. Peyper Rom.8:18-25	Taryn Roseveare Maggi Reinstorf	J. Peyper	Elke Crouch	Elke Crouch J. Karshagen
23 November	Sunday of Fulfilment	D. Skibbe G. Meier (U)	C. Melck Rev.21:1-7	Ulrike Reinstorf Martina Reinstorf	M. Halm	Faith Dini	Faith Dini Lauren Swiegers
30 November	1 Advent	7pm Service. Advent Celebrations (with a light meal) and a Christmas play by the Sunday School children					
7 December	2 Advent	G. Meier S. Swiegers (U)	K. Köhne James 5:7-9	Taryn Roseveare	M. Skibbe	C. Johnston	C. Johnston M. Reinstorf
14 December	3 Advent	D. Skibbe H. Peyper (U)	S. Swiegers 1 Cor.4:1-5	Ulrike Reinstorf	M. Wybrow	J. Karshagen	Karshagen Elke Crouch
21 December	4 Advent	G. Meier A. Runds (U)	C. Melck Phil.4:4-7	Maggi Reinstorf	G. Schreiber	M. Deetlefs	Deetlefs M. Aubrey
25 December	CHRISTMAS	H. Peyper D. Skibbe (U)	Pastor Luke 2	Ulrike Reinstorf Martina Reinstorf	M. Halm	D. Kontsidis	D. Kontsidis M. Wybrow
28 December	Sunday after Christmas	D. Skibbe G. Meier (U)	D. Skibbe 1 John 1:1-5	Taryn Roseveare	A. Willis	M. Reinstorf	M. Reinstorf J. Peyper
31 December*	New Year's Eve	7pm Service with celebration of Holy Communion (Ulrike Reinstorf)					
4 January	Epiphany	G. Meier H. Peyper (U)	H. Peyper Eph.3:2-6	Maggi Reinstorf	M. Skibbe	C. Johnston	C. Johnston Martina Reinstorf
11 January	1 st after Epiphany	D. Skibbe S. Swiegers (U)	E. Köhne Rom.12:1-8	Ulrike Reinstorf Martina Reinstorf	G. Schreiber	L. Swiegers	L. Swiegers M. Deetlefs

* Please note, there will be not Christmas Eve service on 24 December

NB: If a person on duty is unable to fulfil his/her duty, please make alternate arrangement.