



St Paul's Church, Rondebosch
Parish Newsletter

CARITAS

December 2017

HAPPY CHRISTMAS to everyone!

O holy day, calloo callay! This is a time for **JOY**
for **LAUGHING** and **LOVING**

May everyone have a friend or some family to share this happiness.

Wonder at the miracle of a new baby. How did those tiny cells know how to grow, divide, differentiate, coordinate so as to make a person, a real person with all those magical functions of thinking and feeling and knowing and relating?

God's gift to us is His own Son – Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Here at St Paul's we are being given another gift – a Rector! Most of you will already know this and are very happy. Not only will there be someone at the helm of the parish, it is someone whom we already know and love because she has already served here.

The Revd Reeva Mulder, at present serving at St Cyprian's Church in Retreat, will be starting at St Paul's after mid-January when she returns from leave. The date of her inauguration will be announced.

Thank you, God, for the gift of Reeva (we can't call her "Father" or "Mother" – Rev is close!)

Reeva is a true Kaapenaar. The family was moved from District 6 to a house in Netreg, Bonteheuwel, rather a small house for six children and their parents. They went to the local schools. Choices were few at that time, the height of apartheid, but luckily Reeva is a born teacher, took her degree and teacher training at U.W.C. and taught for 26 years at Bishop Lavis High School. That takes stamina. When she told the school that she was leaving in order to enter the ministry the staff were appalled because they had hoped she would become the Head Teacher, but her decision to enter the church was more than a choice, it was a calling. Brought up in the Anglican Church, God's call came to her when she was a child and ever since He has been guiding and grooming her for this ministry. She loves people, helping them where she can.

The people of St Paul's remember her serving here 5 years ago before she went for theological training to the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown. After that, she was appointed to St Thomas's for her first curacy. During the past two years she has been Assistant Rector of St Cyprian's Church in Retreat and, understandably, the people of her congregation are very upset

to hear that Reeva was leaving, but she says that they are getting someone else who is very good. Our need is great, and she knows us, and so HERE SHE IS! What a wonderful Christmas present!

Rev Reeva was invited to speak at the last student service in November, here in St Paul's – and she gave a quietly moving address. Afterwards she met our newly appointed UCT chaplain, Father Isaias Chachine, who was one of her lecturers in Grahamstown. We are so blessed to have them both.

Rev Reeva – we welcome you. May you feel very happy in this parish.

Dear Friends at St Paul's:

So, now we know that Revd Reeva Mulder is our new Rector. Hallelujah! A very good Christmas present, wouldn't you all say? I certainly would. This year we can therefore rejoice in the coming of God Incarnate, and of a new minister.

Rejoicing is something we Christians do well, especially in singing: Advent and Christmas carols, rich and meaningful words in many hymns, the occasional bouncy melody (not that many at St Paul's, though), and great music. A special thanks to Sonja and the choir.

Christmas is a season for thanksgiving too. We give thanks to God for all the wonderful gifts of grace and love.

My thanks to you all for welcoming me so graciously throughout this year. This has been a very special time for me.

Thank you, too, to those who responded to my invitation to tithe from November to January. How great it would be to see Revd Reeva begin her ministry here with our monthly pledge budget met.

Happy and blessed Christmas to one and all,

Much love,
Fr Jim.

(We are going to miss you so much. Ed)

A Shepherd (by Heywood Broun)

The host of heaven and the angel of the Lord had filled the sky with radiance. Now the glory of God was gone and the shepherds and the sheep stood under dim starlight. The men were shaken by the wonders they had seen and heard and, like the animals, they huddled close.

"Let us now," said the eldest of the shepherds, "go to Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us." The City of David lay beyond a far, high hill, upon the crest of which there danced a star. The men made haste to be away, but as they broke out of the circle there was one called Amos who remained. He dug his crook into the turf and clung to it.

"Come," cried the eldest of the shepherds, but Amos shook his head. They marvelled, and one called out: "It is true. It was an angel. You heard. A Saviour is born!"

"I heard," said Amos. "I will abide."

The eldest walked back from the road to the little knoll on which Amos stood. "You do not understand," the old man told him. "We have a sign from God. An Angel commanded us. We go to worship the Saviour, who is now born in Bethlehem. God has made His will manifest."

"It is not in my heart," replied Amos.

And now the eldest of the shepherds was angry. "With your own eyes," he cried out, "you have seen the host of heaven in these dark hills. And you heard, for it was like the thunder when 'Glory to God in the highest' came ringing to us out of the night."

And again Amos said: "It is not in my heart."

Another shepherd then broke in. "Because the hills still stand and the sky has not fallen, it is not enough for Amos. He must have something louder than the voice of God."

Amos held more tightly to his crook and answered: "I have need of a whisper."

They laughed at him and said: "What should this voice say in your ear?" He was silent and they pressed about him and shouted mockingly: "Tell us now. What says the God of Amos, the little shepherd of a hundred sheep?"

Meekness fell away from him. He took his hands from off the crook and raised them high.

"I too am a god," said Amos in a loud strange voice, "and to my hundred sheep I am a saviour. See my flock. See the fright of them. The fear of the bright angel and of the voices is still upon them. God is busy in Bethlehem. He has no time for a hundred sheep. They are my sheep. I will abide."

This the others did not take so much amiss, for they saw that there was a terror in all the flocks and they too knew the ways of the sheep. And before the shepherds departed on the road to Bethlehem towards the bright star, each talked to Amos and told him what he should do for the care of the several flocks. And yet one or two turned back a moment to taunt Amos, before they reached the dip in the road which led to the City of David. It was said: "We shall see new glories at the throne of God, and you, Amos, you will see sheep."

Amos paid no heed, for he thought to himself: "One shepherd the less will not matter at the throne of God." Nor did he have time to be troubled that he was not to see the Child who was come to save the world. There was much to be done among the flocks and Amos walked between the sheep and made under his tongue a clucking noise, which was a way he had, and to his hundred and to the others it was a sound more fine and friendly than the voice of the bright angel. Presently the animals ceased to tremble and they began to graze as the sun came up over the hill where the stars had been.

"For sheep," said Amos to himself, "the angels shine too much. A shepherd is better."

With the morning the others came up the road from Bethlehem, and they told Amos of the manger and of the wise men who had mingled there with the shepherds. And they described to him the gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. And when they were done they said: "And did you see wonders here in the field with the sheep?"

Amos told them: "Now my hundred are one hundred and one," and he showed them a lamb which had been born just before the dawn.

"And was there a great voice out of heaven?" asked the eldest of the shepherds. Amos shook his head and smiled, and there was upon his face that which seemed to the shepherds a wonder even in a night of wonders.

"To my heart," he said, "there came a whisper."

EPIPHANY we all come to the stable, even unbelievers who Christmas by Christmas are drawn somehow here to the crib and to the old carols, even those of us who are still struggling with our faith and following a star... The journey does not end with the stable. It begins there, and as we look into it we know we are being called on a long journey. 'We have seen his star in the east,' they said – yes, and it stopped over the place where the child lay. But the star moves on, both for those of a deep faith and for those who have a questioning faith. To have a firm faith always is a wonderful gift, but to have a “following” faith, a faith that sometimes loses the star behind mountains and clouds and amongst others in a bright and attractive firmament, that is also a gift. And perhaps God is saying to me and to others, “Do you love me enough to doubt me?” Do you walk on when the star disappears entirely from your lives and your prayers, when, in Newman’s words, ‘you’re far from home’? Because religious faith is not words and creeds, it is a commitment often in dark times and in dark lives.

The Epiphany is for all of us. It tells of a longing in the human heart that is never satisfied. . . . so go on your way then. Follow your star – and it will not be easy and it will not be painless. And as you follow your star, remember the babe you left behind you. You will meet him again one day, outside the city wall. And where will we stand then? (from a sermon by E L King, Dean of Cape Town)

NASTY THINGS

We have beetles and borers in both our church and hall, even in the sanctuary.

The exterminators are coming with poisonous gases so there will be

NO ENTRY TO CHURCH OR HALL

from Jan 8 to 12

Philip van der Walt is our 100% reliable accountant. He was attacked in his home, by his gardener who tried to cut his throat, and had lots of stitches and horrible bruising – but Philip lives and laughs and is recovering though he says that people in the supermarket regard his face with horror. He may move his residence (and work) from Cape Town to his farm out at Moorreesburg. Get better soon, Philip and may God heal and bless you.

Please complete your pledge cards so that we can create a budget!!

There are about 100 outstanding P L E E E E A S E

REMEMBER - SUNDAY 28TH JANUARY is our Patronal Festival

There will be one service at 9 a.m.

A VERY SPECIAL THANKYOU TO THE CHOIR which worked so hard and, augmented by other fine musicians, gave us two Carol services! Your beautiful offering was made even better by the return of dear friends, Christina and Ed. Welcome home. Now we must get the bell for them to ring!

Interim Rector: Revd Jim Harris, who will be happy to visit you

Assistant Priest: Revd Darron Mispion, a full-time teacher during school term

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Contributions received with thanks at the A/C St Paul’s, Standard Bank, Rondebosch, 71488928