

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday Golf Group meet @ 6am

**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES 2025** - Parish Council will be meeting shortly to organise the social activities we'll be holding throughout the year. If you have a particular favourite from previous years or would like us to consider adding a new event, please speak with one of the Parish Council members so we're aware of what you'd like included when we sit down to plan.

**REVEREND JOSIE** – will be on holiday for a few days while her twin brother is visiting from America. If you have any queries while she is away, please speak with one of the Wardens.

**FRIENDSHIP GROUP, GAMES GROUP, PATCHWORK GROUP** – are all in recess until school resumes in February.

**Please pray for:** Paul; Keena; Cheryl; Elsie; Isla; Charlotte Marilyn; Cameron; Kieth; Bhav; Joyce; Gazza; Derek; Kate; Heather & Colin; Eve

**This week Johnny is with Linley Carson**



*Happy birthday to Janney Gan on 7<sup>th</sup>*

**Wardens -** Philip Goulding Phone: 9247 4978

Judith Smith Phone: 9246 3745

**Parish Priest** – the Reverend Josie Steytler Phone: 0421 115 438

**Electronic giving: Account Name** - Anglican Parish Greenwood

**BSB** - 706 001 **Account Number** - 3000 3969

**Website:** <https://greenwoodanglican.com>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/greenwoodanglican>

**Email address:** [greenwoodanglican@gmail.com](mailto:greenwoodanglican@gmail.com)

**Phone Number:** 9447 9243



## Welcome to Worship

### Second Sunday after Christmas

5<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**We are a warm-hearted community who are delighted to have you worshipping with us today ...**

### Our Mission is to

- Know God personally
- Love and respect one another deeply
- Disciple and serve those around us

**Sentence:** God has destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:15-16

### Collect of the Day

Eternal God,  
in whose sight a thousand years are like a watch  
in the night: guide us now and always, as you  
have led us in times past,  
that our hearts may learn to choose your will;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity  
of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

### Today's readings:

Jeremiah 31:7-14  
Psalm 147:12-20  
Ephesians 1:3-14  
John 1:1-18

### Next Week:

Isaiah 43:1-7  
Psalm 29  
Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-22



## Second Sunday after Christmas

*Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.”*  
Matthew 2: 1-12

The story of the astrologers and the star of Bethlehem is unique to Matthew’s Gospel. Note that Matthew does not call them “kings” or does he give their names or reports where they came from – in fact, Matthew never even specifies the number of magi (because three gifts are presented to the Child, it has been a tradition since the fifth century to picture “three wise men”). In stripping away the romantic layers that have been added to the story, Matthew’s point can be better appreciated.

A great many First Testament ideas and images are presented in this story. The star, for example, is reminiscent of Balaam’s prophecy that “a star shall advance from Jacob” (Numbers 24: 17). Many of the details in Matthew’s story about the child Jesus parallel the story of the child Moses and the Exodus.

Matthew’s story also provides a preview of what is to come. First, the reactions of the various parties to the birth of Jesus parallel the effects Jesus’ teaching will have on those who hear it. Herod reacts with anger and hostility to the Jesus of the poor who comes to overturn the powerful and rich. The chief priests and scribes greet the news with haughty indifference toward the Jesus who comes to give new life and meaning to the rituals and laws of the scribes. But the magi – non-believers in the eyes of Israel – possess the humility and the openness of mind and heart essential to faith that leads them to seek and welcome the Jesus who will institute the Second Covenant between God and the New Israel.

Secondly, the gifts of the astrologers indicate the principal dimensions of Jesus’ mission:

- **gold** is a gift fitting for a king, a ruler, one with power and authority;
- **frankincense** is a gift fitting for a priest, one who offers sacrifice (frankincense was an aromatic perfume sprinkled on the animals sacrificed in the Temple);
- **myrrh** is a fitting “gift” for someone who is to die (myrrh was used in ancient times for embalming the bodies of the dead before burial).

Epiphany calls is to a new vision of the world that sees beyond the walls and borders we have created and to walk by the light which has dawned for all of humankind, a light by which we are able to recognize all men and women as our brothers and sisters under the loving providence of God, the Father of all.

The magi’s following of the star is a journey of faith, a constant search for meaning, for purpose, for the things of God that each one of us experiences in the course of our own lives.

What we read and watch and listen to in search of wealth, fame and power are the “stars” we follow. The journey of the magi in Matthew’s Gospel puts our own “stargazing” in perspective, calling us to fix our search on the “star” of God’s justice, peace and compassion.