

ST GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, MALVERN



THE NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

I January, 2023

# **Reflection on Today's Feast**

The feast we celebrate today has a three-fold focus. The oldest focus, as the most ancient title for today makes clear, is the circumcision of Jesus. It has been celebrated in both East and West since at least the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Likewise, it has always been kept on January 1<sup>st</sup> (the 'date' for Christ's nativity having been determined by then as December 25). In taking Jesus for circumcision on that day, Mary and Joseph, and therefore the child, show they were 'obedient to the Law' in bringing their son for circumcision on the 8<sup>th</sup> day (i.e., a week) after his birth. Circumcision, of course, was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham, and all the people of Israel. Jesus thus is an embodiment of that covenant, but, as becomes clear in the earliest days after the resurrection, the sense was that, in Jesus, that covenant is extended in and through him to all people.

Secondly, given that the only gospel account we have of the circumcision comes in Luke's gospel, and that Luke links the ceremony directly with the naming of the child ("After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus..." *Luke 2:21*), the feast also commemorates the *naming of Jesus*. "Jesus" is, in fact, the Greek version of the Hebrew name "Joshua", and it literally means "YHWH saves". It reminds us not only of the hero of the Hebrew people who brought them into the Promised Land (as Jesus brings his people to the home promised for them), but also of the 'name' God gives in answer to Moses' question, "What is your name?": "I AM WHO I AM" (*Exodus 3:14*). And, later, God pronounces the name to Moses: "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious... abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." (*Exodus 34:6*). In later centuries in the West, the feast of 'the Holy Name of Jesus' became linked to this feast.

Thirdly, since the Middle Ages, the focus on circumcision (and the necessary consequences of that procedure) has seen the feast honoured as marking the first shedding of Jesus' blood, (hence in icons, it is usually performed on what looks like an altar) and continuing the saving work of God seen in the Annunciation and Nativity.

As ever, the Eastern Church tried to represent the theological riches of the feast in icons - that always give us a glimpse not so much of earthly 'reality' (though there is that), but of the heavenly reality breaking into our earthly realm - just as in the Christ child earth and heaven are combined. Thus the two icons in this Order of Service show the child being brought to the rabbi or priest by his parents (and, in later icons, his grandmother Anne). Often, as well as the 'sharp implement' (or scissors - see p.18) necessary for the operation, another Jewish rabbi is present, holding the book of Law – a sign of the Holy Family's obedience to the Law. And, from earliest times, St Basil of Caesarea ("Basil the Great") has been shown in or near the scene, watching on. St Basil's feast day was also, traditionally, on January I (though it is now usually transferred to January 2). He, and the other great Cappadocian theologians – his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, his sister, Macrina and his great friend, Gregory of Nazianzus ("Gregory the Theologian"), were crucial in promoting an understanding of the full humanity of Jesus. It is therefore entirely appropriate that he appears in the icon as well: bearing witness to Jesus undergoing, as a fully human child, an important episode in our salvation. That we celebrate this Feast now on the day that begins a new year is also appropriate: remembering the first shedding of the blood that will mark, for us, the beginning of a whole new order, thanks to the faithful obedience of Mary, Joseph and the child who saves.

The service may be followed from p. 119 in An Australian Prayer Book (APBA – the green book), with seasonal material for Christmas (p. 149)

Setting:

Christ Church Mass by Phillip Matthias (1954-)

# **GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME**

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN** 

- O let the heart beat high with bliss, Yea, let it triumph at the sound Of Jesus' name, so sweet it is, For every joy therein is found.
- The name that comforts us in woe, The name of Jesus healing sin, The name that curbs the powers below And drives away the death within.
- The name that soundeth ever sweet
   In speech or verse or holy song,
   And bids us run with willing feet,
   Consoled, and comforted, and strong.
- Then let the name of Jesus ring With lofty praise in every place; Let heart and voice together sing — That name shall every ill efface.
- 5. O Jesus, of the Virgin born, Immortal honour be to thee;
  Praise to the Father infinite, And Holy Ghost eternally. Amen

Words: Latin (15<sup>th</sup> century), tr. Percy Dearmer (1867–1936) Music: Puer Nobis Nascitur, Melody adapted by Michael Praetorius (1571–1621) Harmony by G. R. Woodward (1848–1934) Priest: Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.All: Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** 

The Vicar welcomes the congregation, then this sentence of Scripture is read:

God spoke of old by the prophets; but in these last days God has spoken to us by a son.

Hebrews 1:1–12

Let us pray.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We sing together:

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

The ancient hymn Gloria in excelsis, which echoes the song of the angels on Christmas night, is sung by all:

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### Collect

Let us pray.

The people pray silently, and then the President 'collects' the silent prayer:

God our Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the name of Jesus to be a sign of our salvation: may every tongue confess that he, who for our sake became obedient to the law, is both Lord and Christ, to your eternal glory; for he now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**.

# THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### FIRST READING

Numbers 6:22-27

R.

R.

A reading from the book Numbers:

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

For the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

### PSALM 8

### Response: Your name, O Lord, is exalted in all the world.

- I. O Lord, our governor, how exalted is your name in all the world!
- 2. Out of the mouths of infants and children your majesty is praised above the heavens.
- 3. You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries, to quell the enemy and avenger.
- 4. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars you have set in their courses.
- 5. What are mortals that you should be mindful of them? mere human beings that you should seek them out?
- 6. You have made them little lower than the angels; you adorn them with glory and honour.
- 7. You give them mastery over the works of your hands; and put all things under their feet.
- 8. All sheep and oxen, even the wild beasts of the field,
- 9. The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.
- 10. O Lord, our governor, how exalted is your name in all the world! **R.**

### SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians:

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.

And because you are children,

God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.** 

## **G**RADUAL HYMN

- I. A Great and mighty wonder, A full and holy cure!
  The Virgin bears the Infant With virgin-honour pure. Repeat the hymn again! 'To God on high be glory, And peace on earth to men!'
- The Word becomes incarnate And yet remains on high!
   And Cherubim sing anthems To shepherds from the sky.
- Since all he comes to ransom, By all be he adored, The Infant born in Beth'lem The Saviour and the Lord.
- 4. And idol forms shall perish, And error shall decay, And Christ shall wield his sceptre, Our Lord and God for ay.

Words: St Germanus (in Greek) (634–734) tr. John Mason Neale et al. (1818–66) Music: 'Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen', German Carol Melody harmonised by Michael Praetorius

# GOSPEL

Alleluia! Alleluia!

"You will name him 'Jesus'; he will be called the Son of the Most High."

# Alleluia!

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

### Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven,

the shepherds said to one another,

'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph,

and the child lying in the manger.

When they saw this,

they made known what had been told them about this child;

and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus,

the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

#### For the gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

All sit.

A sermon is preached.

After the sermon, silence is kept.

#### All stand.

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead. and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

#### For the Anglican Church

We pray for La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico; The Diocese of Bathurst; St Silas' and St Anselm's Albert Park; St Stephen's Bayswater; Archdeaconry of Frankston.

#### For all in need

May all who are in trouble, sorrow, need or sickness find peace and refreshment in you especially: Ann; Anne; Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; Bruce, Elizabeth and family; Christina; Coral; Dorothy; Erica and Keith; Joan; John; Margaret; Peter; Ron; Tom.

#### For the Faithful Departed

We remember those whose anniversary of death occurs at this time: Renee Briggs; Mildred Budds; Colin Cave; Gwenneth Cunningham; Norman Eastaugh; John Gregory; Simonette Guest; Augusta Lesh; Alexandra McLaughlan; John Richard McPherson; Geoffrey Mogg; Beryl Pringle; Archelaus Richards; Ellen (Nellie) Richards; Margaret Stokes; John Richard Sylva; Nola Watson; Joyce Whitaker.

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Christ the grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all.

#### Silence is kept.

Let us bring our weaknesses and infirmities to him, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent and are sorry for all our sins. Father forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The President pronounces Absolution, and the people respond

#### Amen.

# THE GREETING OF PEACE

Christ has taken on an earthly body, that we may be united with him as his body. Therefore we boldly say,

We are the Body of Christ. **His spirit is with us.** 

The peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you.

All are invited to share God's peace with those around them.

### OFFERTORY HYMN

 Of the Father's heart begotten, Ere the world from chaos rose, He is Alpha: from that Fountain All that is and hath been flows; He is Omega, of all things Yet to come the mystic Close, Evermore and evermore.

 By his word was all created, He commanded and 'twas done; Earth and sky and boundless ocean, Universe of three in one, All that sees the moon's soft radiance, All that breathes beneath the sun, Evermore and evermore.

- 3. He assumed this mortal body, Frail and feeble, doomed to die, That the race from dust created Might not perish utterly, Which the dreadful Law had sentenced In the depths of hell to lie,
  4. This is he, whom seer and sibyl
- Sang in ages long gone by;
   This is he of old revealed
   In the page of prophecy;
   Lo! he comes, the promised Saviour;
   Let the world his praises cry!

 Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises; Angels and Archangels, sing! Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful, Let your joyous anthems ring, Every tongue his name confessing, Countless voices answering,

> Words: Prudentius (348–413), tr. R. F. Davis (1866–1937) Music: Divinum Mysterium, Melody from Piae Cantiones Theoredici Petri Nylandensis (1582)

# THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

The gifts are set up on the altar and the President offers prayers, to which the people respond:

Amen.

The President then begins the Great Thanksgiving Prayer

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.** 

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The President continues with a prayer appropriate to the season, concluding with:

... we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The President continues the prayer until:

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died, Christ is risen. Christ will come again. The President continues the prayer, which concludes:

...we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

# Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

#### Silence is kept.

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

### THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

As the President breaks the bread, the following is said:

As this broken bread was once many grains that have been gathered together and made one bread, so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your Kingdom.

#### Together, we sing:

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us. Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven. Lord, give us this bread always.

The clergy and people receive the sacrament. All who wish to come to receive communion are welcome. Please note: in keeping with current health advice, Communion will be administered in both kinds, but 'Intinction' (the 'dipping' of the host into the chalice) is not

**permitted.** (It is entirely appropriate to receive the sacrament in only one kind – the ancient and long-held practice of the Church – as the Church has always taught that full communion in the body and blood of Christ occurs in consuming either element.)

If you wish to receive a blessing rather than the sacrament, please come forward and stand with your arms crossed.

# THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

#### All stand.

A prayer is offered by the President, which ends

Father,

we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

FINAL HYMN

 At the name of Jesus Every knee shall bow, Every tongue confess him King of glory now;
 'Tis the Father's pleasure We should call him Lord, Who from the beginning Was the mighty Word.
 Humbled for a season

 Humbled for a season, To receive a name
 From the lips of sinners
 Unto whom he came,
 Faithfully he bore it
 Spotless to the last,
 Brought it back victorious
 When from death he passed: 3. Bore it up triumphant With its human light, Through all ranks of creatures, To the central height, To the throne of Godhead, To the Father's breast;
Filled it with the glory Of that perfect rest.

4. In your hearts enthrone him; There let him subdue
All that is not holy, All that is not true:
He is God the Saviour, He is Christ the Lord,
Ever to be worshipped, Trusted and adored.

> Words: Caroline Noel (1817–77) Music: Evelyns, W. H. Monk (1823–89)

# THE BLESSING

The President pronounces God's blessing on the people, to which all respond:

#### Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: In the name of Christ. Amen.

#### **READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK: THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD**

Isaiah 42:1–9 Acts 10:34–43 Psalm 29 Matthew 3:13–17

### THE WEEK AHEAD

Weekdays Monday – Saturday	9:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.	Morning Prayer Evening Prayer
<u>Day</u>	Morning Prayer in Chapel and by	<u>Evening Prayer</u> Zoom (details below)
<b>Monday, 2 January</b> Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, bishops and teachers	Psalms 5; 6 Isaiah 32 John 3:1–21	Psalms 7; 8 Isaiah 63:10–19 Ephesians 2:1–10
Tuesday, 3 January	Psalm 9 Isaiah 33:1–16 John 3:22–36	Psalm 10 Isaiah 64 Ephesians 2:11–22
Wednesday, 4 January	Psalms 11; 12 Isaiah 33:17–24 John 4:1–15	Psalms 13; 14 Isaiah 65:1–16 Ephesians 3:1–13
Thursday, 5 January	Psalms 15; 16 John 4:16–26 Ephesians 5:21–33	Psalm 19 2 Samuel 22:47–51 Romans 15:8–21
Friday, 6 January The Epiphany of our Lord Holy Eucharist, 9:30 a.m	Psalm 104:11–24 Numbers 24:12–17a Matthew 12:1–12	Psalm 87 Baruch 4:36–5:9 Ephesians 4:1–16
& 6:00 p.m. Saturday, 7 January	Isaiah 60:1–6; Ps. 72:1–7, 10–14 Psalm 19 Song of Songs 1:1–11 John 4:39–54	Ephesians 3:1– 2; Matthew 2:1–12 Psalm 63 Joshua 3 Mark 10:32–45
Next Sunday, 8 January The Baptism of our Lord	8:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist Holy Eucharist Holy Eucharist & Meditation

#### **Morning Prayer**

9:00 a.m., Monday – Saturday

Meeting ID: 709 867 2691; Passcode: 630283 https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7098672691?pwd=TFBBSGYxb2lhcUI3RWR1dm1XWDQ4Zz09

**Evening Prayer** 

5:00 p.m., Monday – Saturday

Meeting ID: 709 867 2691; Passcode: 630283 https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7098672691?pwd=TFBBSGYxb2lhcUI3RWRIdmIXWDQ4Zz09

### NOTICES

This Friday, January 6 is the **Feast of the Epiphany** (or *The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles*). It is the Twelfth Day of Christmas, and brings the Christmas season to a close. As it is one of the great feasts of the Church year (a 'holy day of obligation', in old-fashioned terms!), there will be a eucharist at 9:30 a.m. (to replace the usual Thursday 10:15 a.m.) and at 6:00 p.m. on that day. Do endeavour to join the Wise Men (who, by that stage, will have reached the crib!) in their adoration of the Christ child, which we mark on this day.

**New Director of Music**: The Vicar is pleased to announce he has appointed Mr Tom Baldwin as the new Director of Music. Tom is known to us as he assisted in playing the organ for some weeks in October and November. He comes with considerable experience (given his age) as both an organist and conductor of choirs, including some time as Organ Scholar at Trinity College, Melbourne; Choir Director at Downing College, Cambridge. He has degrees in Arts and Music, as well as a Master of Teaching from Melbourne University, and he holds a Master of Choral Music from the University of Cambridge. Thanks to all involved in the interview process, and for the expertise offered to the Vicar in reaching his decision. We will welcome Tom (back!) to St George's on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Please hold him in your prayers as he prepares to take up his new ministry here.

**Thanks to Claire Sheppard** for all of the work she undertook as Acting Director of Music over the last months. A small 'thank you', as a sign of the huge thanks we owe, to Claire for all she has done will be offered at this morning's service.

Vicar on leave: As the Feast of the Epiphany this year falls on Friday of this week, the Vicar will have Thursday as his day off. He will then be on leave from Sunday January 8 until Sunday January 15, returning on Monday January 16, ready to welcome the new Parish Administrator, Adrian Chong, who begins work that day. The Parish Office will re-open on Tuesday 17, allowing Adrian time to get his 'feet under the desk' (as it were).

During this leave, parishioners will be delighted (no doubt) that the Locum will be our Acting Archdeacon, The Venerable Canon Dr Colleen O'Reilly, AM, who is delighted to return to see you all again.

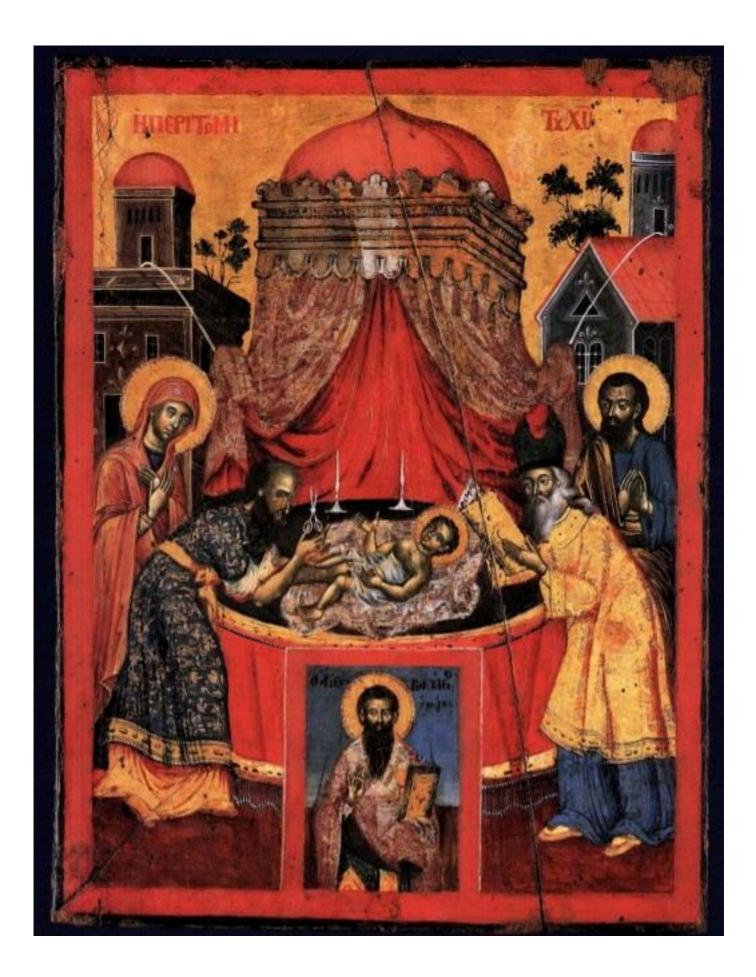
#### Looking ahead:

**Sunday, January 29** – one morning service, 'under the Gum Tree', to mark Australia Day, followed by a parish luncheon (BYO food and drink) on the lawn.

**Saturday, February 4** – ordination of deacons at St Paul's Cathedral from 10:30 a.m. Our new assistant curate, Dr Aaron Ghiloni will be made a deacon on that day. Please come along to support him on this important day; followed by

**Sunday, February 5** – the liturgical welcome to Aaron, with commissioning of him, the new Director of Music, and the new Parish Council and other officer bearers.

Saturday, February 13 – Parish Council 'Away Day'



#### **PARISH DIRECTORY** 296 Glenferrie Road, Malvern, VIC 3144

VICAR

The Reverend Dr Gregory Seach Phone: Email: Day off:

9822 4662 (h); 0408 505 646 (m) vicar@stgeorgesmalvern.org Friday (this week only:Tuesday)

### HONORARY ASSOCIATE PRIEST

The Reverend Matthew Dowsey

0412 852 697

### Acting ORGANIST

John Mallinson with sincere thanks to him as he continues to assist in the vacancy.

### CHURCH OFFICE currently closed until January 17

Adrian ChongMonday-Friday9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.Phone:9822 3030Email:office@stgeorgesmalvern.org

### WARDENS

Judy Mallinson Ravi Renjen Meg Winter 0414 752 957 0412 399 897 0408 124 246

We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Custodians and Owners of the land upon which we meet. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, acknowledge their continuing spiritual connection to Country, and affirm our commitment to walk together the path of reconciliation.

