

St Thomas Becket Anglican Church

“A welcoming, active and inclusive church, growing in our relationship with God and the wider community.”

22 February 2015

Dear Members and Friends of the Anglican Church of St Thomas Becket, Hamburg,

Today I announced to the congregation that Bishop David has accepted my resignation as Chaplain in Hamburg, and that I will be leaving Hamburg and returning to Australia to take up the position as Rector of the parish of Ballina, within the Diocese of Grafton. My last Sunday in Hamburg will be 28 June, 2015.

This decision has come after much prayer and consultation as I have struggled to discern God's will for me. Over time, it has become clearer to me that I am being called back to Australia, but this has still been a very difficult decision. I have loved my time in Hamburg and have met some wonderful people. In my letter to Bishop David, I wrote that it was with 'a heaviness of heart' that I asked him to accept my resignation.

From the first day I arrived in Hamburg, I have been made to feel welcome, and it has been a great privilege, and might I also say an honour, to be the Chaplain in this historic church community. To be able to be a part of the restoration of the beautiful building was also a great joy and I have enjoyed getting to know the many people associated with this vibrant community of faith.

When I was asked if I would consider returning to Australia, I found myself really struggling with the idea that I might be leaving Hamburg. I have come to love the people and the lifestyle and it has been a very challenging time of discernment. Together we have achieved many great things in the past three or more years and it would be so easy to stay and enjoy more of this. However, a vocational calling from God often means sacrifices and sometimes we have to do things that take us out of our comfort zone. I am both anxious and excited about returning home, but I will miss the people of St Thomas Becket, Hamburg, very much indeed.

Thank you for your support of me and the wonderful work so many have done in building up the church. I will take away very happy memories and will follow with great interest the continuing growth of this amazing church community. Please pray for me as I prepare to relocate back to Australia, and please pray for the Church Council as they work closely with the Archdeacon and Bishops to find the right person to be the new Chaplain at the Englische Kirche.

Every blessing to you all,

Matthew

The Reverend Matthew Jones
Chaplain