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Dear Friends

## **Celebrating Advent and Christmas**

In the church's year, Advent begins on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November.

The season of Advent and Christmas is a wonderful opportunity for the church to help everyone to celebrate the birth of Jesus as 'God with us'.

I remember that when I was at school, as part of the English curriculum, we studied Shakespeare's Richard III. In the first scene of Act 1 come the following words: 'Now is the winter of our discontent, made glorious by this son of York.'

Advent invites us amidst the darkness, difficulties and 'discontent' of these times, to prepare for the glorious coming of the Son of God, shining light, faith, hope and love into our lives and our neighbourhoods.

So I invite you to come and join us on the journey of Advent to Christmas. The better we prepare during Advent, the more we can rejoice in the coming King at Christmas!

### **The Advent Adventure**

Each week I will be sending out a pastoral letter, which will highlight things going on at St Peter's and signpost you to the church website for more details. The main feature of each letter will be to point you to three areas for worship this season.

[Suggestions for the week beginning Sunday 29th November are HERE.](#)

- **Worship online**

The online service will include lighting the Advent wreath candles week by week, as we trace God's promises to his people and wait for the coming King.

You might like to make your own Advent ring and join in with the hopes and prayers or day by day light a candle as a reminder of God's presence and if it's safe to do so, put it in your window as a sign of hope, of Jesus, light of the world.

- **Worship outside**

We are rightly being encouraged to enjoy being outdoors for our own health and wellbeing. Many stories in the Bible are set outdoors but modern life can sometimes disconnect us from the natural world so this Advent, the invitation is to rejoice in connecting with our wonderful, beautiful world.

Perhaps our prayer can be 'Lord, we are coming to look at your universe! Heaven and earth are full of your glory!'

May you have a 'wild' Advent.

- **Worship at home**

Luke 2.7 reads 'she gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger – there was no room for them to stay in the inn.'

Jesus is 'the reason for the season' and so it would be so sad if we made no room for him in our hearts and homes this season. To say that is not to make us feel guilty, but to encourage us to make the most of the opportunity, turning ordinary Christmas activities into remembering 'God is with us'.

Let's prepare for the coming King this Advent!

### **And some notices ...**

- ❖ Hopefully you will all have seen that we have two new sections on our church website -PRAY and READ. In the PRAY section, you'll find Issue 2 of our new prayer journal and in the READ section, you can find the Bible reading for the following week's Sunday service, to look at ahead of the service, or refer to during the talk.
- ❖ A number of you will be starting to use the booklet 'Journey to the heart of Christmas' through the season of Advent. There will also be an online version of the booklet on our website and recordings have been made by families and individuals from St Peter's.
- ❖ Worship through Play takes place next Sunday afternoon (29<sup>th</sup> Nov). It's particularly for young families wanting to worship together using crafts and play. For more details contact Ruth Fletcher via the Hub.
- ❖ On Sunday 5th December we have two great crafty opportunities. There's a Children's Christmas Craft Party Zoom from 4-5pm in the afternoon and a Make-your-own Wreath Zoom at 7.30pm. Do check out the details on our website under the Hub@Home 'Connect' logo. You'll need to book for both.

- ❖ Normally in early December we hold our annual Toy service, and many of you bring new toys to church, which we then pass on to Kind, a charity that helps children and families across Liverpool and Merseyside cope with the effects of poverty and disadvantage. This year, we will be asking you to give the cost of a new toy instead, and you can do this in several ways: either by donating on [Kind's website HERE](#) or by passing a cheque (payable to Kind) in to the Rectory before December 7<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ We've had a number of requests for a list of names of those to pray for, and it's great that people want to pray for each other. Obviously confidentiality is the issue, so if someone wishes to have their name on a prayer list which will be included with next week's letter, please let us know. If you're putting someone else's name forward then you need to make sure they are willing to have their name published. There is a monthly prayer meeting on the second Saturday of each month, and we will pray for anyone on that list (and others) then too.

With my love and prayers,

Kip