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Dear Friends

### **REOPENING CHURCH FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP**

I am delighted that we are planning to open church for Sunday 10.30 am worship again from Sunday 6th December. The service will be simple, with social distancing in place, and no singing (unfortunately) but it's a start! We're waiting for more detailed guidelines from the Church of England, but will try and let people know via the website, Facebook and email. Please pray for all those involved in the planning for this to happen.

### **IDEAS FOR CELEBRATING ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS**

For the week beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent. (Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December onwards)

#### **❖ Worship online**

We begin the Sunday service by lighting the second candle on the Advent ring, remembering that each candle helps us to trace God's promises and wait for God's coming.

This week we remember the prophets. At home you could dress up as a prophet for the service. Many of you love the music of Handel's Messiah which puts verses of the Bible to music. The words of the prophets build up the excitement of the coming King.

'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.' (Isaiah 40)

'And the glory, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.' (Isaiah 40)

And who may abide the day of his coming?' (Malachi 3.2)

'Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us.' (Isaiah 7.14)

Let's rejoice in the words of the prophets as they foretell of Jesus' coming, bringing justice, mercy and salvation as we welcome the coming King with faith and trust.

Why not listen to Handel's Messiah at one point in Advent, or if you prefer modern music, have a look on YouTube for songs inspired by the prophets as well – one example is Everlasting God (strength will rise) by Chris Tomlin.

## ❖ **Worship outside**

Woolton and all the parks in South Liverpool are full of beautiful trees. Why not take a prayer walk among the trees? Don't forget to wrap up warm!

Being among the trees can give us a fresh perspective because they tend to be far older than we are. In this Advent season, when we are looking back and forward in time, trees can help our imagination and therefore our prayers.

Be in awe that each tree grew from a seed; thank God for trees; as you consider how old and how tall they are, thank God for the gift of this universe and for the gift of time itself. We can thank God that Jesus was born in time, as a baby a long time ago to bring us to know the God who made us and all the world. Jesus is Lord of all time, past and present and also the future. One day he will come again in glory.

After your walk, maybe it's time for home, and a nice cup of tea or a hot chocolate!

## ❖ **Worship at home**

The Christmas Tree: time to get the Christmas tree up (if you haven't already!) ...

Originally the baubles represented fruit, so let them remind you of the fruit of the Spirit.

'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.' (Galatians 5.22,23)

What a list! Imagine your life full of all these ingredients.

While you're decorating the tree you may like to play carols.

Preparing the cake, pudding and mince pies: in Jewish homes the ritual of preparing food is considered part of worship. As you put ingredients into a bowl one after another, why not make it into a prayer, asking God perhaps to stir up something good in you or others. You might want to sing this song as you add each ingredient:

'This is the way we add the fruit (and so on) ...

As we get ready for Christmas.'

Well, there are some ideas for making the most of Advent for the week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> December. God bless you on this journey to Christmas.

May the Sun of Righteousness shine on you and scatter the darkness from before your path.

With my love and prayers,

Kip

**And finally some notices ...**

- ❖ There are great Advent resources on the website, including a St Peter's **virtual advent calendar** giving you access to some beautiful art, Christmas videos and some music clips and dad jokes just for fun. We have an **Advent Trail** due to start on 13<sup>th</sup> December where you are invited to decorate a window in your house or decorate your garden that shares something of the Christmas story. More details on the website.
- ❖ On Saturday 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 <https://kind.org.uk/> or by passing a cheque (payable to Kind) in to the Rectory before 7<sup>th</sup> December.
- ❖ This year's **Christingle service** will take place online on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 4.00 pm. You will need to tell us you are coming and to book a Christingle bag to participate in the service please contact Lorraine Fletcher.
- ❖ A number of you have started to use the booklet 'Journey to the heart of Christmas' through this season of Advent. There is also an online version of the booklet on our website and recordings have been made by families and individuals from St Peter's.
- ❖ Please pray for the families and friends of all those who have died recently including: Joan Kneale, Leslie Baldwin, Dorothy Rogan, Dorothy Greenwood, Willian Farrington, Amy Kenyon, Ellie Murphy, George Fallows, Derek Kerr, David Mason, Evelyn Penny, Frances Cumbley.  
*If someone wishes to have their name on the prayer list, 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, at which we will also pray for anyone on that list (and others).*