

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 2nd December 2022



How are you?

This week is the start of advent, the time before Christmas where we wait and anticipate Jesus' birth and all the celebrating that goes along with that. It's also a time to reflect and think about Jesus' second coming, and to remember that Jesus coming to earth as a baby was just the start of the plan.

Going through a season of waiting is not a new thing - the Jews had been waiting for hundreds of years for a messiah to come by the time Jesus was born. Prophets like Isaiah had prophesied 700 years before that Jesus would be born and that he would be the one to save them.

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this." Isaiah 9:6-7.

Every year at Advent, I have great ideas of how to best use this time of waiting, to pray and to really take in afresh everything about Jesus coming to earth to save us. And every year the busyness of life takes over! I know I'm not alone in that - we're all human. Even the Jews gave up on their waiting, got distracted, and didn't recognise Jesus for who he was when he came.

So this year, once again, my prayer is that we would all experience again the awe and wonder of what it means for God to become man and to enter this world as a baby. I pray that God would open our eyes afresh to what that means to us, to the enormity of His love for us, to all the little details that make the Christmas story so amazing.

I just wanted to share with you a few resources you can use to journey through advent, which should help to keep our eyes and our thoughts on Jesus.

- The Church of England have got an app and an online advent calendar you can use for daily readings and reflections through advent <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe/advent-and-christmas/follow-star-great-invitation>
- Tearfund are doing a month of prayer through December, and you can sign up to receive their emails each day <https://www.tearfund.org/forms/month-of-prayer>
- MAF, who my brother-in-law works for, have got a family online advent calendar, with a story each day about a different country they work in. You might recognise the person reading the stories! <https://gb.mafadvent.org/sign-in/> Here's a sample of day 1 <https://gb.mafadvent.org/day-1-uk/>
- And here is an advent calendar you can print out and make yourself, with little acts of kindness and verses to do through December. [Action-Advent-Calendar-LICC.pdf](#)

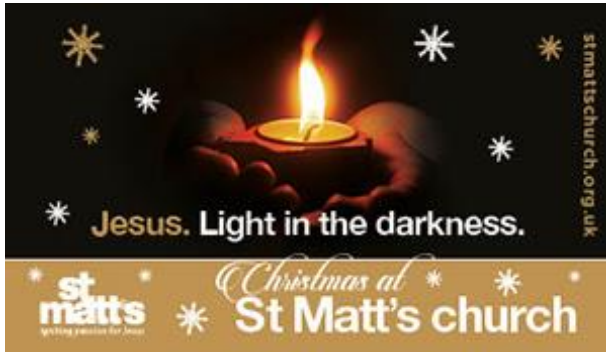
I'm sure there are lots more resources out there - do share if you have found anything else helpful.

Notices

This Sunday we have two services:

8am communion in church - a short service from the Book of Common Prayer

10am family service about advent



We now have our **Christmas publicity**, and I will get it on Facebook over the weekend.

There are postcards in church which you can give out to family and friends, and please do share any posts on social media. Christmas is a great time to invite people to church.

We have Christmas services to suit everyone!

Sunday 18th December 10am Family Nativity

Sunday 18th December 7pm Christmas Carols

Christmas Eve 4pm Christingle

Christmas Eve 11.15pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day 10am Family Christmas Celebration

Other dates for your diary:

Sewing Bee Hub - tonight at Ruth's house

Choir rehearsals for the carol service - Thursday 8th December and Monday 12th December

Knitting Hub - Monday 12th December 7.30pm

Last toddler group for the term - Thursday 8th December

Last Deeper for the term - Monday 12th December

Last Ignite for the term - Tuesday 13th December (but young people need to be booked in already)

St. Matt's Warm Space

Wednesdays 10am - 4pm
in St. Matt's Church Centre

Warm, welcoming, free

Our **warm space** is up and running, every Wednesday 10am - 4pm in the church centre. Please do let people know about it if you can.

Townwide prayer meeting

You are invited to join the next Townwide Prayer Meeting at St Philip's Church on Tuesday 6th December at 8pm to pray for God's Kingdom to come in our nation and in our town. All are very welcome.

That's all for now!

Have a lovely weekend.

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