



ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
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Sunday, 10 December 2017

Letter from Archdeacon of Worcester Robert Jones

It seems that Christmas has been coming for several months now. I saw a Christmas tree lurking in my local pub at the beginning of September – surely a record! And yet it doesn't feel very 'Christmassy' as we look at world affairs, politics and what goes on in the lives of so many people.

It doesn't feel very Christmassy, of course, because we've made Christmas in our own image, rather than in the image and likeness of the very first Christmas. The very first Christmas was a tale of a birth – always a joyful event – in the midst of considerable human turmoil. It was not at all different from what so many of us are experiencing today; a real life born in the real circumstances of the day.

We dress up holy seasons, and we dress up holy places. One of the great excitements of today's church is the way we are opening up the buildings to much more community activity. We have holy space and community space, and they rub along well together, which should not surprise us as Christmas people believing in the God who came to be among us.

Maybe we do it for ourselves too. I sometimes wonder whether we simply need to re-learn wonder and awe at God's beautiful creation and re-creation. At the feast of Epiphany the Magi come without commentary or explanation simply to worship and bring their gifts.

Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, these festivals give us a wonderful excuse to celebrate the God who shows us in Jesus just how much He loves us and reminds us just how valuable human beings really are. And if I was nudged to think about that a couple of months back in my local perhaps that was really no bad thing.

Seasons' greetings!

Next Sunday evening

Ian Evans will be leading us in a time of Advent Reflection - waiting in the darkness, do join us if you can.

Christmas Fayre

Thank you if you donated bottles or chocolate, baked cakes or helped in any way at the Christmas Fayre yesterday and thank you to Eileen for organising this enjoyable event. A good time was had by all whilst raising funds for use in the community. The fayre raised £1238.

Messy Church

Christmas Messy Church in Woodrow saw new faces as children from schools the Open the Book team go into, attended with their parents. It was lovely to hear the children answer questions about, who, what, where and why around the birth of Jesus. Thank you to all who helped in any way or attended. The next Messy Church is Saturday 13th January 10-12noon at Woodrow Community Rooms. Please be praying about this wonderful outreach.

Town Centre Carols

The annual Town Centre Carols will take place on Saturday 16th December at 11am on the mezzanine level above Primark & The Works.

Touchstones Lantern Walk

If you would like to join in with this annual walk at the beautiful Morton Stanley Park which includes a time of reflection for those we have loved and lost, please see Vicki and Rob for details or the poster in the foyer.

Come on and Celebrate!

St John's will be playing host to two local schools during Advent. On Tuesday 12th December at 7pm we will be welcoming Tudor Grange Academy for their Carol Service. On Thursday 14th December we will be welcoming Woodrow First school for their Christmas celebration at around 1pm. Time to be confirmed. We would encourage members of the congregation to come along and support both these events.

Radiate Redditch

Please pray for the people taking up the opportunity of shelter, hot food and friendship from Christmas Eve until 2nd January and for the volunteers giving of their time, for more information speak with Ann

Faith at Work in Worcestershire

Faith at Work in Worcestershire will be providing refreshment to shop workers in the Kingfisher Centre w/c 18th December, please speak with Sharon if you would like to support the work of the work of the Chaplains in any way.

Services

Advent 2

10:30am Worship for Everyone with Rosemary Humphrey and Vicki Quarton - 'End of exile' *Isaiah 40:1-11 & Mark 1:1-8*

6:30pm Carols by Candlelight with Ian Evans & Rosemary Humphrey

Next Sunday - Advent 3

10:30am Holy Communion with Ian Evans - 'What do you say about yourself?' *Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11 & John 1:6-8,19-28*

6:30pm Advent Reflection with Ian Evans 'Waiting in the darkness'

Lectionary Readings

Week - Advent 2

Mon Is 35; Ps 85.7–end; Lk 5.17–26

Tues Is 40.1–11; Ps 96.1, 10–end; Mt 18.12–14

Wed Is 40.25–end; Ps 103.8–13; Mt 11.28–end

Thurs Is 41.13–20; Ps 145.1, 8–13; Mt 11.11–15

Fri Is 48.17–19; Ps 1; Mt 11.16–19

Sat Eccclus 48.1–4, 9–11 or 2 Kgs 2.9–12; Ps 80.1–4, 18–19; Mt 17.10–13

Collect for the week:

Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God. Amen

Also remember members of St Johns prayer Healing Ministry team are available most Sunday mornings and a prayer chain is available everyday, to pray in confidence for you or someone you know. Call Ann Donovan (for prayer chain) in the first instance on 01527 527789.

Diary dates

Thurs 9:30am Holy Communion - St. John's, followed by coffee morning.

Tues 12th Dec 7pm Tudor Grange Academy Carol Service - St. John's

Thurs 14th Dec around 1pm Woodrow First School Christmas celebration - St. John's

Sat 16th Dec 11am Carols in the town centre, mezzanine level above Primark & The Works

Sat 16th Dec Lantern Walk at Morton Stanley Park for Touchstones

Saturday 13th January 10-12noon Messy Church at Woodrow Community Rooms.

Fri 22nd & Sat 23rd Dec 6:30pm Carol Services at Worcester Cathedral (Free admission - arrive early to ensure a seat)

Please pray for:

- ❖ Garth and Jenny, Richard and Wendy, Ian and Judy.
- ❖ *Licensed Lay Ministers* – Maureen, Rosie and Vicki.
- ❖ *Wardens* – Barry Humphrey and Sharon Forrest.
- ❖ Garth and Jenny as Garth recovers from his operation.
- ❖ The Kigezi Water and Sanitation project we are supporting.
- ❖ Graeme and Jackie Russell as he fulfils the role of Community Missioner in Christ Church.
- ❖ Paramedic and Ambulance staff over Christmas, in particular for the people they go and visit in the community, and the response they receive which often isn't welcoming.
- ❖ Outreach in the Town Centre over Christmas
- ❖ Parish Prayers: : Breaches Lane, Matchborough, Ombersley Close, Woodrow, Watery Lane, Greenlands, Jakeman Close, Winyates

Please keep praying for:

Nancy Borthwick

Sylvia Czink

Peggy Snellgrove

Linda Beasley

The family of Isabel Stephens

The family of Sylvia Laight

Vicki and Rob Quarton & family on the passing of Vicki's father.

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