



Thoughts, notices and reminders
December 3 2017

The Advent story
of hope and mystery, anticipation,
preparation, a kingdom of this world and the next,
and a king appearing when we least expect.
Heaven touching earth, the footsteps of the divine
walking dusty roads as once they did in Eden,
and a people, searching for a Saviour,
and walking past the stable.
Open eyes and hearts,
that this might be
an Advent of hope to the world.

John Birch

Please feel free to contact Fr. Stephen at any time,
but please remember that his usual day off is Friday.
Telephone: 01522 525621 mobile: 0794 371 5279
e-mail: fr-stephen@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk

Fr Ruben Angelici Telephone: 0774 145 3080
Revd Philippa White 0747 495 8658

Web site: www.stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk

Any items for this weekly sheet should be received by Rachel Fleshbourne
no later than Wednesday evening.

If you would like to receive this weekly sheet by email, please e-mail Rachel:
admin@stjohnthebaptistparishchurch.org.uk

THE PRAYER PAGE

Saint's Day	Prayer in the parish	Prayer in the diocese
Sunday Advent Sunday	Our Lady of Lincoln church and school Fr Colin, the clergy and people; the staff, governors and pupils of Our Lady Primary School Residents of: Barkston Gardens, Bassingham Crescent, Bilsby Close, Blankney Crescent	REVD KAY JONES AS SHE IS LICENSED AS PRIEST-IN-CHARGE OF ST JOHN AND ST STEPHEN, NEW CLEE
Monday	Ermine House; Ermine Voices Residents of: Brattleby Crescent, Broxholme Gardens, Buchanan Street, Burnside Close	GRIMSBY AND CLEETHORPES DEANERY AND REVD LOUISE VINCER LICENSED THIS EVENING TO SERVE AS INTERIM MINISTER OF HUMBERSTON
Tuesday St Nicholas	Our parish visitors Residents of: Burwell Close, Cabourne Avenue, Carlton Grove, Carlton Walk	ST JOHN AND ST STEPHEN, NEW CLEE Revd Kay Jones
Wednesday St Ambrose Bishop of Milan	Flower arrangers, Community Larder Residents of: Chatterton Avenue, Clarendon Gardens, Clarendon View, David Avenue,	GREAT GRIMSBY ST ANDREW GROUP Revd Edward Martin
Thursday Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Staff and users of the church hall Paul Musson, Olive Musson, Liz Straw, Tim Wright, the hall committee and all hall users Residents of: Dunholme Court, Dunston Close, Edendale Gardens, Edendale View	LINCOLN CHRISTMAS MARKET
Friday	Guides and Brownies Residents of: Edlington Close, Epworth View, Ermine Close, Escombe View	ST MARY & ST JAMES GREAT GRIMSBY Canon Fr Andrew Dodd
Saturday	Our charity for this year War Child Residents of: Fiskerton Drive, Garfield Close, Garfield View, Gayton Close	SCARTHOS ST GILES WITH ST MATTHEW Revd Sheena Cleaton

Give thanks for:	Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's engagement
Special prayers this week for:	Victims of the attack on the mosque in Egypt People living under the shadow of the volcano in Bali
People in need:	Mary Bayston, Vicki and Terry Barnes, Doug Bradley, Fr John Clark, Ann Gray, Jan Hunter, Sarah Lusby, Sheila Lusby, Joan Pratt, Lyn Sawyer, Doug and Anita, Vanessa Williamson, Gerrard
Rest in peace:	Vera Coles, Thomas Edwards

Coming up this week:

Sunday 3	10:00am 12:00pm	Eucharist Baptisms
----------	--------------------	-----------------------

	6:00pm	Prayer for healing
Monday 4	7:00pm	Advent stations
Tuesday 5	4:30pm 6:00pm	Choir practice Brownie carol service
Wednesday 6	9:30am 10:30am 11:15am 12:00pm	Eucharist Ruckland Court Eucharist Ermine House Eucharist Christmas Lunch club in the hall
Thursday 7	2:00pm 2:45pm	Ermine Primary KS2 rehearsal in church Fr Ruben taking assembly at Ermine Academy
Sunday 10	10:00am 12:00pm 2:30pm	Family Eucharist Parish Christmas dinner Ruckland Court carol service

Coming up soon:

Monday 11	7:30pm	St John's Singers
Tuesday 12	2:00pm	Ermine Academy KS1 nativity in church
Wednesday 13	9:30am 1:00pm	Eucharist with advent stations Knit and natter
Thursday 14	9:00am 2:00pm	Fr Stephen taking St Francis assembly Ermine Academy KS2 carol service in church
Friday 15	10:00am	Ermine Academy Christmas service in church
Sunday 17	10:00am 6:00pm	Eucharist Carol service
Tuesday 19	7:00pm	Advent stations
Wednesday 20	9:30am	Eucharist
Thursday 21	1:30pm	Bingo and coffee in the church hall
Saturday 23	10:00am	Christingle making
Sunday 24	10:00am 6:00pm 11:45pm	Eucharist Christingle service Midnight Mass
Monday 25	10:00am	Mass of the Nativity
Tuesday 26	9:30am	Eucharist
Wednesday 27	9:30am	Eucharist with prayer for healing
Thursday 28	9:30am	Eucharist
Sunday 31	10:00am	Eucharist
Wednesday 3	9:30am 10:30am 11:15am 12:00pm	Eucharist Ruckland Court Eucharist Ermine House Eucharist Lunch club in the hall

AT THE PCC

The main item on our PCC agenda last week was the arrangements that we need to make to prepare for the time after Fr Stephen has left. He had provided a sheet that helped to answer many questions that people have been asking, and from that, the PCC decided to set up a small "transition" group to work with Fr Stephen to identify what needs to be done, how things may be tackled without a priest in post and to

begin to put some ideas together for the future. This group will consist of the churchwardens, Jackie Howell, Rachel Fleshbourne and Fr Stephen.

The PCC also agreed that it would be important for the post of parish administrator to be continued; at the moment, the diocese pays for the administrator's hours, to allow Fr Stephen some time to develop his diocesan spirituality role, but from October, the parish will need to cover these costs. The PCC recognised the invaluable work that Rachel does and felt it would help to ensure that as much as possible can carry on uninterrupted during the interregnum.

We then moved on to look at safeguarding. The Diocese had sent a series of papers through for us to look at, including the new Whistleblower's Policy and a number of helpful charts showing how safeguarding issues need to be tackled, if and when they arise in local churches. We agreed that all our safeguarding policy documents should be available for people to look at and Liz Straw will draw these together and make them available at the back of the church.

We were pleased to hear that our finances are beginning to settle a little. We have been told that our parish share for 2018 will be £11,469.15, which is down on the amount we were asked for in 2017. Although we are unable to pay our full parish share this year, we are confident that we will be able to pay around £9,000 (the share this year is around £12,000), which, given the electrical work we have had done this year, is a great achievement. We had also been able to claim £840 VAT back from the listed churches repair fund following on from the electrical work.

We noted that the bulk of the electrical work has now been completed and that the heating, whilst not ideal, is about adequate (unless it gets really cold) and in normal weather more than adequate. However, we have been made aware that these heaters are not really suited to use in our context and will eventually give up; the electrician is looking at possible alternatives for us.

We approved a proposal to increase the fees in the church hall by 50p an hour for regular users and £1 an hour for one-off bookings. This still means we offer very good value for money in comparison with most other similar venues. We also congratulated Sue Fleshbourne and her team on being awarded another 5* from the Environmental Health department.

Tim Wright and David Rudeforth gave a brief report on the recent Deanery Synod meeting and Fr Stephen reported on the new Learning Communities strategy in the diocese. This strategy aims to bring people (lay and clergy) together from similar areas to discuss their ministries and to learn from each other's experience. This is still at an early stage of development, but will form a central part of the way in which the diocese develops in the future. The PCC noted this, but felt that we had more than enough to cope with in the immediate future, and so would look at becoming involved at some point in the future.

We looked at a possible design for a new baptism application form and noted that we need to do a reprint of the red mass booklets. The PCC was also pleased to hear that

Frances Burton had accepted an invitation to become part of the Chalice Assistant team.

If you would like any more information on what was discussed at the PCC, please ask any of the PCC members who were present: Sue Young, Jackie Howell, Liz Straw, Susan Fleshbourne, Tim Wright, Phil Bett, Fr Ruben, David Rudeforth, Philippa White, David Fleshbourne and Fr Stephen.

PARISH CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Our parish Christmas lunch will take place on Sunday 10 December at 12:00pm. The price is £4:00 for adults and £2:00 for children. If you wish to attend, please add your name to the list at the back of church and pay Sue Fleshbourne.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

If you would like to send a Christmas greeting to people at church and help raise funds for our charity, Warchild, all you need to do is to note your greeting below and leave it in the basket at the back of church or give it to your church visitor. Please place your greeting in a sealed envelope with your donation – if you wish to make a donation by cheque, please make the cheque payable to “St John the Baptist PCC”. All greetings in by December 10th please. Your greeting will be included in our Christmas greetings leaflet and our charity benefits as well – and don't forget not to send anyone in church a Christmas Card, use the Christmas Greetings instead!

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

My message

My name

Please put this slip with your donation in the basket at the back of church

A LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF GRANTHAM

Dear Friends,

Earlier in the autumn, I was enjoying my favourite day-off activity, which is to browse in charity and second-hand shops. I came across a slim volume of poetry by a man called Shane Jagger. I would like to share one of his poems with you:

At Christmas
we give each other
small gifts

So why at this time?

It

reminds us
a child was born
who would grow up
amongst ordinary people
and by his coming into this world
would bring an extraordinary great gift
of news
The
Real
could be
approached
without intermediary
by
all men
simply by the means of love

*This is why we gift each other at Christmas
if we remember*

I was – and am – struck by the authenticity of this man’s response to the birth of Jesus. It might be quite possible to debate whether he has got the theology of the incarnation perfectly ‘spot on’. But what I am hearing is a response from the heart that is genuine, and that, to me, gives voice to an instinctive ‘experience’ of Christmas. I do not know his faith background. I do know that he was born in 1960, worked in the fish markets in Hull, and from the late 1970s until his death earlier this year, lived in the Scottish borders. Reading Shane’s poem, got me to thinking: how would I describe the meaning of Christmas in just a few words? And I wondered whether I should set myself the task of trying to write a description, or to draw a picture, or to take a photo (I’m afraid, writing music is beyond me!) as I make my own preparations to celebrate the birth of Jesus this year? And if I set myself this task, would you perhaps like to join me? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if, across the Diocese of Lincoln, in our own ways, in our own voices, we were able to express something to ourselves – and to others – of what Christmas really means to us? For the Feast is a feast for all people; the celebration of the giving of God’s very self to the world in love; a giving that invites a response from us all.

May you know God’s blessing and love this Christmas, in whatever circumstances you celebrate it!

Bishop Nicholas

P.S. And if you want to send me your words or your picture, or whatever else your response to the birth of Jesus might be, please do!

We are most grateful to Beshara Publications (www.besharapublications.org.uk) for their kind permission to reprint the work of Shane Jagger here.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN LINCOLN & DISTRICT NOTICES FOR DECEMBER 2017

Monday, 4th December, 6.15 pm to approx. 9.30 pm – St. Hugh’s Film & Supper Night – “It’s a Wonderful Life” (1946) starring James Stewart as suicidal George Bailey, who gets his life back on track with the help of Clarence the Angel. Supper will be a Christmassy buffet with mince pies and mulled wine. Tickets £5/£4 students via Mary Wilford (mwilford@virginmedia.com 01522 800114,) or via Deacon David Knight. Parking in St.Hugh’s carpark off Friar’s Lane via Unity Square.

Tuesday 5th December, at 2 pm – B.G.University Carol Service at Lincoln Cathedral - further information at www.lincolncathedral.com

Sunday 10th December, at 2.30 pm – St. Barnabas’ Hospice Christmas Carol Concert at All Saints Church, Monks Road, Lincoln. The Salvation Army Band will take part in the Concert. Tea, coffee and mince pies after the service. Free entry. Further information at fundraising@stbarnabashospice.co.uk or call 01522 540300.

Sunday 10th December, at 5 pm – A Night of Praise & Carols at the Redeemed Church of God, Victory Centre, 6 Dixon Way, Lincoln LN6 7DD.

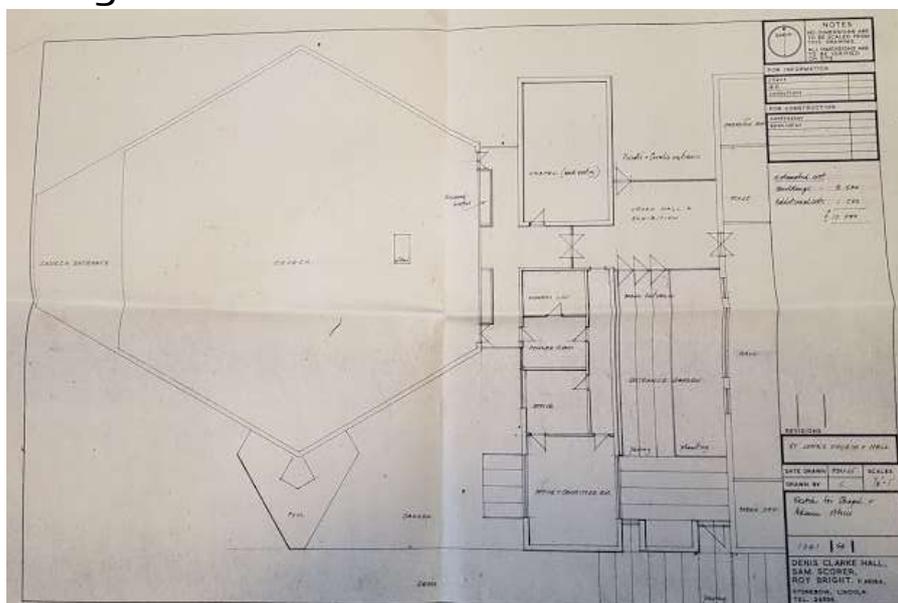
Sunday 10th December, from 7-8 pm – “La Nativite du Seigneur” at Lincoln Cathedral - further information at www.lincolncathedral.com

Wednesday 13th December, 7.30 - 9pm – Concert of Carols by Candlelight at Lincoln Cathedral - further information at www.lincolncathedral.com

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Here is yet another design for a proposed extension to the church, similar to the one we printed last week, but with some changes of emphasis, purpose and use.

Things to note:



There is a separate chapel to the top of the design, which is also designated as a vestry, with an entrance to its right for the priest and curate.

The entrance garden to the bottom of the design is quite large and appears to have access both from the street and the exhibition area.

There are two offices/committee rooms, but whereas the men's toilet is located in the hall, this design has the female toilet and powder room in a much more accessible location.

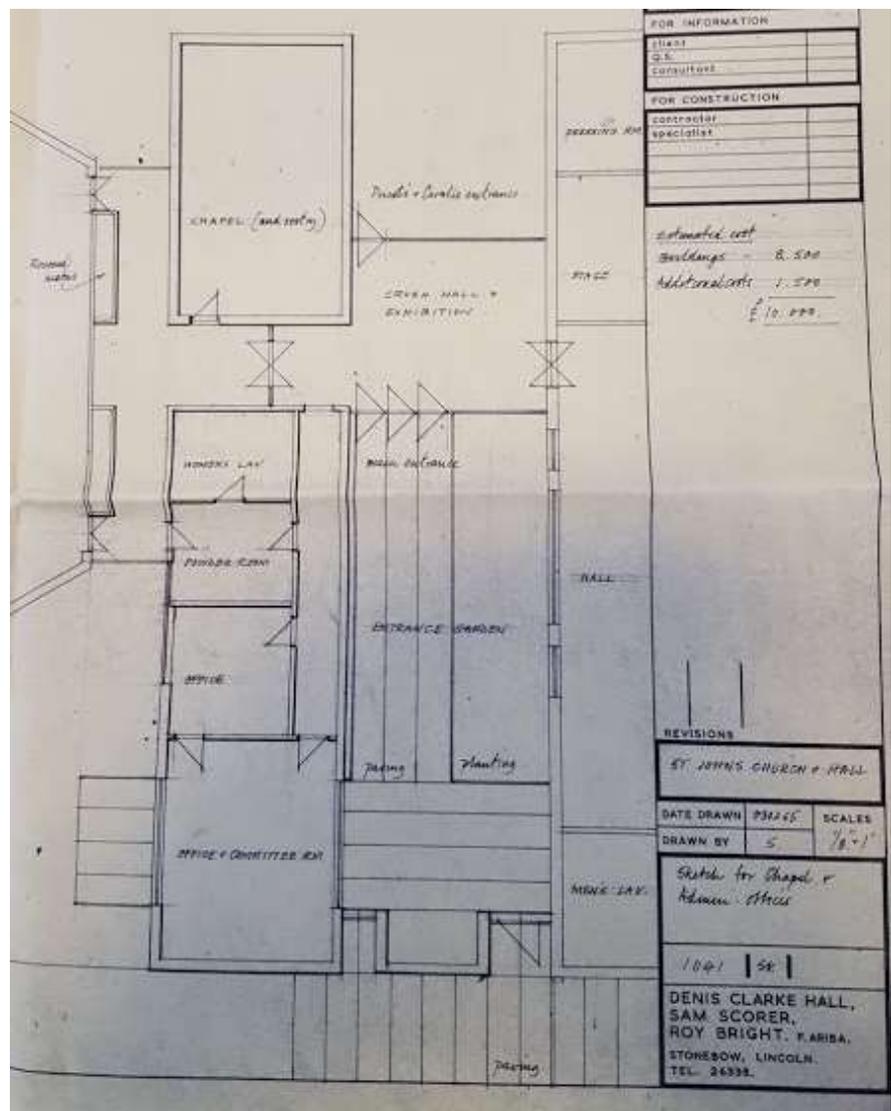
The pools at the side of the church have once again changed shape and there is only one shown which extends out to the pavement!

Total cost for the extension was £10,000!

A MEDITATION FOR THE START OF ADVENT

We are about to enter advent, a time of waiting on the coming of our Lord. During the season, we are constantly looking forward to the fulfilment of God's promises that he will send a Messiah, who will bring the very life of God into the world, who will show us the way to live his Kingdom. We know that Jesus will come, that he will be born in an animal shelter, that he will begin his life as a refugee, that he will walk amongst us healing and preaching and teaching. We know the beginning, the middle and the end of the story and beyond.

But advent is a time of waiting. In the Old Testament, the faithful people of God waiting in patient hopeful expectation that the Messiah would come, the promised one. It was an active waiting, a



waiting in which the trust they had was complete, if not for then in their own life time, but certainly to come. Isaiah declares:

I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on dry ground; I will pour my spirit on your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring. They shall spring up like a green tamarisk, like willows by flowing streams. This one will say "I am the Lord's".

That waiting is also present in the faithful people we encounter at the beginning of the New Testament, who begin not only to wait in hopeful expectation, but look around them at the signs that God sends to assure them of the completion of his promise. Angel messengers, stars, and the stirring of new life. Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, declares:

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has raised up for us a mighty saviour in the house of David his servant as he spoke through the mouths of the prophets from of old.

Waiting comes too with the promise of new life. Mary receives the child conceived of Holy Spirit and within her life begins to stir, not just any life, but the life of God himself. But here too there is waiting, waiting on the growing within, waiting on the right time for the Word of God to be shown to the world. And as she waits, she proclaims the priorities of God:

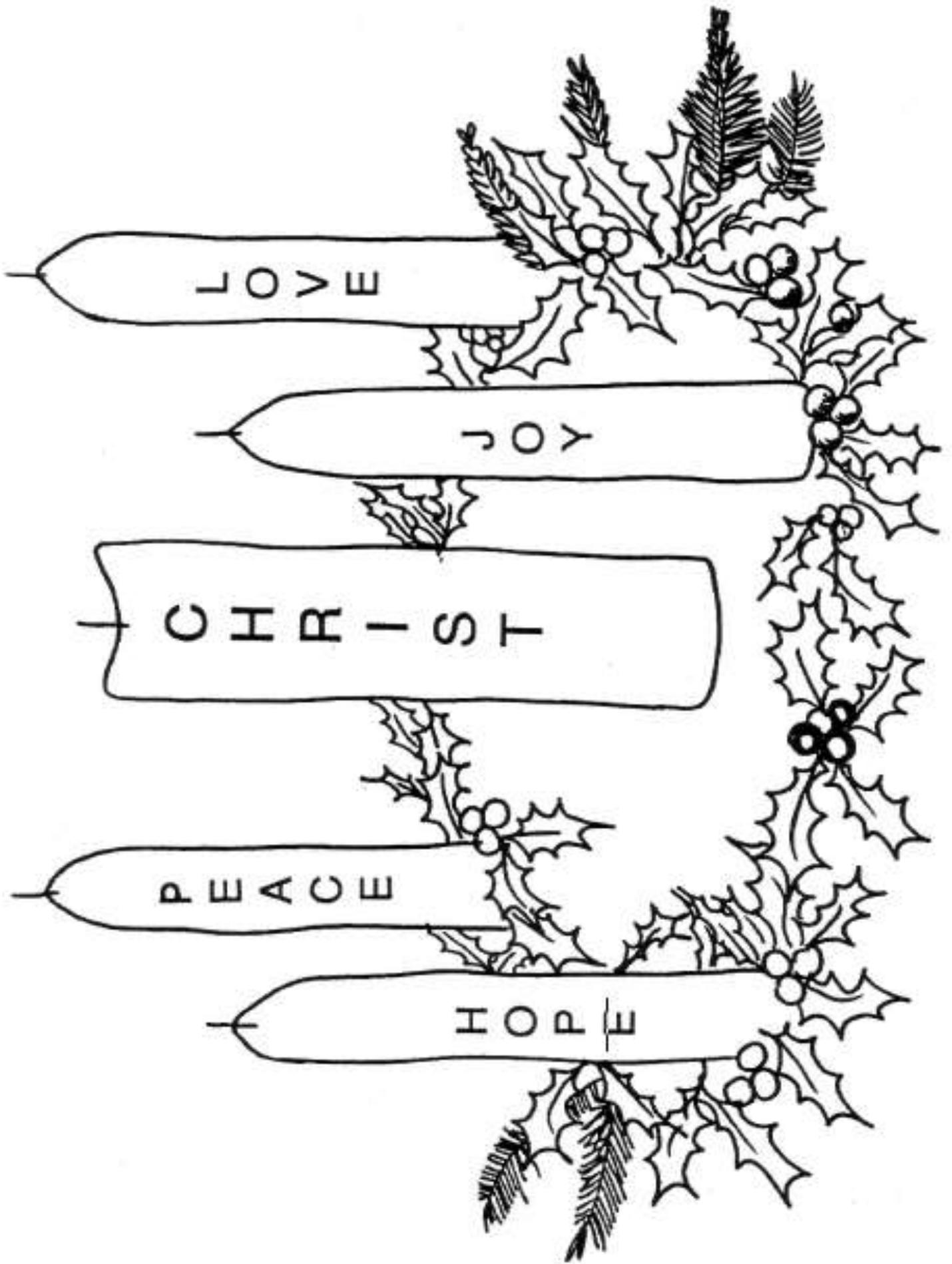
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly, he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

Waiting in hopeful expectation, looking around for the signs of God's action, waiting on the stirring of new life within. These are not passive actions, but the waiting we encounter within the Bible is one that is filled with the possibility of God. So what is our waiting in advent all about? We know the story, so no surprises perhaps there, but spiritually we are called to prepare ourselves to experience once more the longing for Christ and to open our hearts to his possibilities. Advent is a chance for you to open your hearts and to ponder some questions about your waiting.

What are you waiting for? What do you long for God to bring to life in you? What promises do you want God to fulfil for you? What is your prayer at this time:

save me Lord,
help me know you better,
lead me to your kingdom?

Whatever your prayer, God needs you to express it to him – he is waiting in hopeful expectation, reading the signs of your life and longing to grow his new life within you.



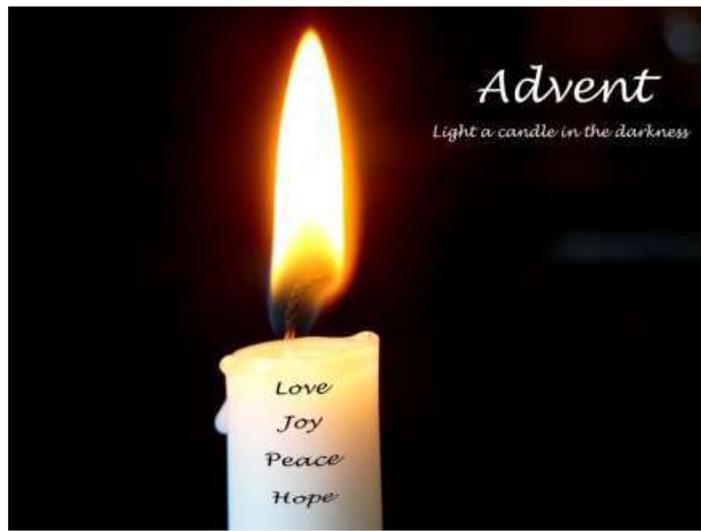
LOVE

JOY

CHRIST

PEACE

HOPE



THE LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors:
To you be praise and glory for ever.
You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith
and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment.
May we be obedient to your call
and be ready and watchful to receive your Christ,
a lamp to our feet and a light to our path,
for you are our light and salvation.
Blessed be God forever.

The first Advent Candle is lit in silence, then we say together

**Lord Jesus, light of the world
Born in David's city of Bethlehem
Born like him to be a king:
Be born in our hearts at Christmas
Be King of our lives today.**

We sing

Come my Lord, my light, my way
Come my lantern, night and day
Come my healer, make me whole,
Come my Saviour, protect my soul.
Come my King, enter my heart
Come Prince of Peace and never depart