



St Paul's Church



Dear all

The second Sunday in Advent is the time that we light the PEACE candle in the Advent wreath. Peace seems to something that seems to be somewhat elusive in the world right now but this Sunday, we have the pleasure of welcoming our guest preacher, the Very Reverend John Richardson, vicar of All Saints, Maidstone, and I know that John will be picking up the theme of PEACE as he talks about 'God the Comforter' from Isaiah 40.

We hear a good deal in the lectionary from Isaiah in Advent. That's partly because Christians regard Isaiah as a prophet who foretells of the coming of Christ, but it's also because Isaiah reminds us that God is our ultimate comforter in times of turmoil, guiding us with a steady hand and offering us a peace that will always prevail. Isaiah's vision of a level highway and a straight path amidst valleys and mountains symbolises God's promise to lead us through the uneven terrains of life, and offers us an assurance that divine comfort and peace will light our way through the darkness.

This imagery of light in the darkness is of course a recurring theme during Advent, symbolising the arrival of Christ, the Light of the World. As we prepare to light the second candle this Sunday, my prayer is that we will all come to know God's comfort and peace this Advent season. In a world where peace often seems an impossible dream, may we in turn bring light, comfort and peace to those around us.

May the wisdom of our Mighty God light our path,
the embrace of our Wonderful Counsellor comfort us,
the love of our Everlasting Father surround us,
and the peace of the Prince of Peace enfold us.

Amen.

Rev Anthea

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

All services are in church, zoom is available for some services.

SUNDAY 10th DECEMBER – Advent 2 (ZOOM)

10 am All-Age Worship – Rev Anthea & Rev John Richardson

SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER –Advent 3 (ZOOM)

10 am Experimental Worship - Gwyn

SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER –Advent 3 (ZOOM)

10 am Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

SUNDAY 24th DECEMBER – Christmas Eve (ZOOM)

4 pm Crib/Christingle Service – Rev Anthea & Robin F

SUNDAY 25th DECEMBER – Christmas Day (ZOOM)

10 am All-Age Communion – Rev Anthea

SUNDAY 31st DECEMBER – First Sunday of Christmas (ZOOM)

10 am All-Age Communion – Rev Anthea

FOOD BANK

The next collection will be on Friday 22nd December.

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Sunday, 10th December 2023

'Our Lord, come!' (1 Corinthians 16: 22)

'Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!' (Revelation 22: 20)

This week we give thanks for:

- The miracles of nature as Autumn turns to Winter and may we wonder anew at God's creative genius.
- The invitation to follow the star and find out what it is pointing to: the person of Jesus and the light he brings to each of us.

Please pray for:

- Peace in our world this Advent and Christmas: pray for an immediate ceasefire and an end to violence in areas around the world torn apart by conflict, and for comfort and hope for all people who are in despair, terrified, mourning and suffering.
- Humanitarian workers: for protection and strength as they provide assistance and medical help to those in need.
- People living in the most vulnerable regions of our world where climate change is having a catastrophic impact on their ability to produce food and supply water.
- All who are travelling across countries and between nations in these cold months of winter; pray that where there is fear, bring peace; where there is exploitation, bring justice; and where people suffer, bring relief.
- Our Church family: all who are struggling and especially for Trevor who is in hospital following a number of falls at home this week; and for Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Maureen, Sandra and Brenda; and for Ruth, Helen and Meaghan.
- The Christmas story to be heard afresh and for those who hear it to be changed by it.

You may like to use this prayer during the week:

Loving God, by the leading of a star you revealed Jesus, the Light of the World. As I follow the star, lead me out of darkness into his wonderful light. Amen.