

Mike's message

A very different Advent!

Advent is here! The four Sundays that lead up to Christmas are a season in themselves. A time of preparation to celebrate again the birth of Jesus, but also to prepare ourselves to meet him in glory.

With Christmas Day falling on a Sunday this year Advent starts as early as it can. It begins on Sunday 27th November. If you've managed to find a Christian Advent Calendar, as distinct from those that start on 1st December, you'll have a whole extra four days to enjoy it.

I thought we'd do Advent a little differently this year. Part of our preparation to meet Jesus Christ in glory is to ensure we live lives in which we practice loving our neighbour and care for all in need. During Advent we'll be collecting for the Food Bank. Instead of our usual Advent Candles there'll be a basket for each Sunday with a candle alongside. As the candle is lit people can bring forward a donation of goods for the Food Bank. I've tried to link ideas for donations to the readings of the day. I hope that you have as much fun choosing items as I did thinking of categories.

In order that you can buy ahead here are the themes for the four Sundays:

Sunday 27th November: Canned Goods, especially fish (sardines, salmon etc)
Jesus saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew, casting their nets into the sea, for they were fishermen (Matthew 4 .18)

Sunday 4th December: Dried Goods, especially pasta, and crackers
He will gather the wheat into the granary (Matthew 3 .12)

Sunday 11th December: Toiletries, especially soap, shampoo and baby items
Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees (Isaiah 35 .3)

Sunday 18th December: Treats, such as sweet things like chocolate and biscuits
He shall eat curds and honey (Isaiah 7 .15)

We are always happy to receive any donations of items for the food bank of course, regardless of week, theme or reading. Please bring what you can for those in need.

Have a very Happy and Holy Advent that we may be ready to celebrate a Christmas full of joy when it arrives.

