

ST PETER'S CHURCH BRACKLEY

"Loving God, loving each other, loving Brackley"



Revd. Rich Duncan writes.....



December is usually a mix of heightened emotions: a unique blend of excitement, stress, joy, grief and exhaustion for each of us, depending on our personality and personal circumstance. How can we navigate the intensity of this Advent and Christmas season? With credit to a blogger called Kevin DeYoung for the inspiration, let me suggest... **7 ways to be a Christian this December:**

1. Receive all over again. Contrary to popular opinion, Christmas is more about receiving than giving, for humanity: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). So whether it's by finding a time to be quiet or attending a church service, make sure you receive into your hearts and lives (all over again or for the first time) this most priceless of gifts: God himself. If you do, the rest of this list will take care of itself and you'll actually have the resources to be truly giving.

2. Sing like you mean it. Whether it's the bittersweet yearning of the Advent hymns or the wonder and glee of Christmas carols (Luke 2:10-14), enter into the drama and sing with gusto. Savour the familiar sounds and sentiments of the season. The opportunity to belt them out won't come round again for another 11 months.

3. Quit complaining. Things will go wrong this Christmas. Someone will probably hurt your feelings. Obnoxious friends may be extra obnoxious. But choosing gratitude over grumbling will make you incredibly distinctive – dazzling even (Philippians 2:14-16).

4. Enjoy some good food. Greed and gluttony are obvious dangers, but Christians are not called to be ascetic either. So tuck in, within limits! God created food to be received with thanksgiving (1 Timothy 4:3-5), so be filled with grub and gratitude.

5. Be generous. Not everyone can enjoy good food this Christmas. Charities have been struggling across the board since the pandemic. That means the people they support will be struggling even more than

usual. The range of desperate needs at home and abroad can seem overwhelming, but start somewhere and be generous. You will never out-give God (2 Corinthians 8:9).

6. Speak to your family. For most of us, it takes effort to engage with our relatives, especially those we don't see often. Could you put in five minutes of thought on the way to their house (or before picking up the phone) to think of five questions to ask? The gift of your curiosity will probably be much appreciated.

7. Pray for opportunities. What if we prayed for a chance in the next week or so to invite a neighbour along to the Carols by Candlelight service at St Peter's, or a young family to Saltmine's Rapunzel performance at Southfields (both on Sunday 12th)? Or for a conversation in which to share why Christmas brings us comfort. God may well honour that prayer. Perhaps we do not have such opportunities often because we do not ask (James 4:2).

All that remains now is for me to take my own advice (gulp), and to wish you a very happy Christmas!





St Peter's Kids

Advent



In Junior Church and Tots we are
learning that Jesus is...

Immanuel -
God with us

Isaiah 1:14

Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9:6

The Root
of Jesse

Isaiah 11:10



Would you like to hear more from St Peter's?

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Bells Never Sound Any Sweeter

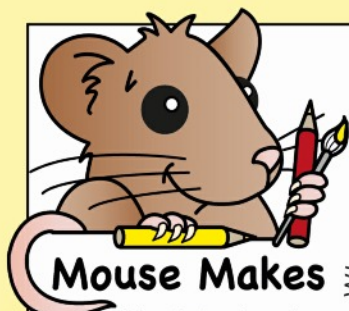
Bells never sound any sweeter
Than when at Christmas they ring;
Angels on wings never fleeter –
Message of gladness they bring!
*As they once sang on that first Christmas night
Bells sing of God's Holy birth
Ringing throughout the whole earth!*

O, when those sweet bells are ringing
Even in Heaven they're heard;
Angels soon join with their singing
Bringing us God's Holy Word.
*Sing of the father, the mother, the child
Bells sing of God's Holy birth
Ringing throughout the whole earth!*

Ring with those beautiful tones
Across the far ocean wide
Joy to all folk in their homes
This blessed Christmastide!
*All sing with joy the wonderful song –
Bells sing of God's Holy birth
Ringing throughout the whole earth!*

By Nigel Beeton





Mouse Makes

Colour the tree then colour in one star each day until Christmas. Leave the large star at the top of the tree to colour in on Christmas day!

What's on the Christmas Tree?



A STAR
shows the way
to Jesus

Read
Matthew 2:1-12

ANGELS
bring messages from God

Read about
Gabriel's message in
Luke 1:26-38

Read the
shepherd's story in
Luke 1:26-38

**LIGHTS
AND CANDLES**
remind us that Jesus
lights our way to God

Read Luke 2:29-32

PRESENTS
remind us of God's
special gift to us ... **JESUS!**

"For God loved the world so much that He gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life." John 3:16

Presents at Christmas
under the tree,
A red Christmas stocking
waiting for me,
But what really is Christmas,
What is it about?
Just look and the Bible
and you will find out!
It's about **JESUS**
- the best present of all,
JESUS our **Saviour**,
God's gift to us all!

Brackley & District Band



Your local Brass Band present their

Christmas Concert

Monday 20th December 2021, 7.30pm

St Peter's Church, Brackley

Free admission

Refreshments available

Retiring collection



@brackleyband



brackleybrass



brackleyband.org.uk



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