



December Newsletter 2020

Watching and waiting. Advent is all about watching, waiting, preparing. While this year we do not have the comfort of preparing with others together, I guarantee that everyone is preparing quietly at home. The Christmas card list, the present list, the Christmas cake will already be baked. Advent is here! Christmas is not far off! So much to do!

This is also a time for reflection and personal preparation for the wonderful gift of our Lord. Susan Price's prayer is of thanks for what we have:

Dear Father God, in a world where many are lonely, we thank you for our friends and family.

In a world where many are in doubt or ignorance, we thank you for our faith.

In a world where many are homeless, we thank you for the warmth and security of our homes.

In a world where many are sick and dying we thank you for our health.

In a world where many are oppressed or at war, we thank you for our peace.

In a world where many are hungry, we thank you for our food

Help us always to be aware of the needs of other people and to share the good things which we enjoy.

Amen

This month, I am including things to do at home, so that Christmas comes to you. We can't be sure that we shall be able to worship in church, but perhaps we will be able to gather outside to pray and listen to some carols. Some members will not feel safe leaving their homes, but our church at least is being scrupulously careful about following safety guidelines. The new year will come, and eventually this current

time will be behind us. Meanwhile, we pray for the hospital staff and for all suffering from Covid-19.

I considered the Nativity scene.

JOSEPH

Father, we hold in our hearts and bring to you the man who did your will, who cherished Mary and brought up Jesus as his own son. We pray for all father figures, who provide for their families, we pray for those who have lost their jobs this year.

MARY,

Father, we hold in our hearts and bring to you all heavily pregnant women and new mothers, with their tiredness and their pain and their worries. We thank you for Mary, who did your will and faced the unknown future in faith.

THE SHEPHERDS

Father, we hold in our hearts and bring to you the lowly shepherds, the despised and derided, the lonely and rejected, who did your will and went to Bethlehem. We pray for the homeless, the hungry, the desperate of our current society.

THE ANGEL GABRIEL

Father, we hold in our hearts and bring to you all who give us your message. Give us the ears to hear and the readiness to do your will.

JESUS

Father, we hold in our hearts your blessed Son, who came to us as a baby, totally reliant on those round him, trusting that they would do your will. We pray that at this holy time of year we may do your will, and share your love with everybody, now and always.

THE INNKEEPER

Father, we hold in our hearts and bring to you all the busy people, with responsibilities and heavy workloads. We pray that in the middle of making life festive and enjoyable for others they will find the quiet joy of serving you and recognising the joy of the Christchild.

THE DONKEY

Father, we hold in our hearts and bring to you all working animals. We pray for the families around the world who still rely on their beasts of burden to make a family living.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless His holy name. Psalm 100 v4

A selection of carol verses to get you singing:

Mary:

The first good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of one:
To see the blessed Jesus Christ
When he was first her son.

Shepherds

While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground
The Angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around.

The star

O star of wonder, star of light
Star with royal beauty bright!
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Joseph

Joseph was an old man,
And an old man was he,
When he wedded Mary
In the land of Galilee.

Jesus

Joseph dearest, Joseph mine,
Help me cradle the child divine;
God reward thee and all that's thine in Paradise,
So prays the mother Mary.

O Little One sweet, O Little One mild,
Thy Father's purpose thou has fulfilled;
Thou cam's't from heaven to mortal ken,
Equal to be with us poor men,
O Little One Sweet, O Little One mild

Donkey

Little donkey, little donkey
On a dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards
With the precious load.
Bethlehem, Bethlehem.
Been a long time little donkey
Thro' the winter's night.
Don't give up now little donkey
Bethlehem's in sight.

Angels

Angels from the realms of glory
Wing your flight o'er all the earth:
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light,
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

M U T I A L M A N G E R Q M B
G K N A J E V K M I J V W F A
Z D E D O G E N X J R F G E B
D L V B S N D O Z Y W K E L Y
V Y D Y E A R N H S X X H B M
X N A R P T E M E L S S W A S
R F W A H M H Q A P U E E T S
B E P M H Q P L B S W Z S S H
C D P D D Y E X E S N N A Z Y
P A O E L T H J M H E G Z L J
O V L N E Q S E P K E X L Q L
M J A T K K V C C I H M A L B
I E C L I E N L R Y E D H S D
D H I B X B Y N Y Z W X G R F
M L L P E W L W I L M C U P N

ANGEL MANGER BABY SHEPHERD JOSEPH MARY
JESUS BETHLEHEM DONKEY STABLE INNKEEPER
ADVENT

GENDER JUSTICE, 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 25TH NOVEMBER TILL 10TH DECEMBER

Sadly, the arrangements for Wednesday 2nd

December in the Cathedral had to be cancelled. The clergy will however still be praying with us, lighting candles during the 16 days of Activism. Please pray at midday with us all, whether or not on facebook, and light your own candle. It will be on the Cathedral the Facebook page, linking to our MU resources and help lines, including the Bishop of Gloucester's podcast. The Cathedral can put a post out every day. They will include a petition in the intercessions at the daily live-streamed Eucharist every day of the 16 – raising awareness of the MU campaign. There might be even a blue votive candle on the altar which is lit during the 16 Days during the service. **December 5th is the national No More 1 in 3 action day**, praying for the 1 in 3 women who suffer domestic violence.

Remember to **wear black on every Thursday**, to highlight the offences of rape and violence towards women, as per the World Council of Churches.

C of E hope prayerline: 0800 804 8044