



Dear all,

Have you put up any Christmas decorations yet? Do you have a favourite decoration? If so, what is it? One kind of decoration I love about Christmas time in the Northern Hemisphere are all the colourful lights adorning houses and places in our community. Unlike New Zealand where one has to stay up so late to enjoy Christmas lights (as it gets darker so much later), here we can enjoy them from late afternoon! Perhaps one day we may be able to 'light up' the Churchyard for December?!

Amongst all the decorations that surround us in church, there is a small but significant decoration consisting of a wreath of candles: one candle for each of the 4 Sundays before Christmas (the fourth Sunday is my favourite when we light 'four candles!'), followed by a candle for Christmas Day. The 'Sunday' candles remind us of another season we journey through before we get to Christmas and that is the season of Advent.

Whilst we celebrate the amazing gift of Immanuel, God with us, at Christmas Time, the season of Advent reminds us that this same Jesus, born into our world some 2000 years ago, will be coming again and what a difference this second coming will be from his first. Where his first coming was about a baby, poverty, a manger, a cave in Bethlehem, Jesus' second coming will be one where all of humanity will see Jesus's great power and heavenly glory.

At this time, Jesus will gather everyone together and administer His perfect judgement of all, and He will banish evil, sin and death for ever! Hallelujah! The question is are we ready to greet him when He comes again?

As we journey through Advent to Christmas and on into a new year, my prayer is that we will all continue to go deeper into God, learning, loving and living his purposes for our lives, together with preparing ourselves to welcome Him as Saviour, Lord and King.

With every blessing, Tim

## **Operation Christmas Child**

Help is urgently needed to check the shoeboxes collected in St Neots at the Processing Centre (3 Tebbutts Road – formerly Poundstretcher) before they are sent off. Please [click here](#) to find out how you can help.

## **Christmas Services & Events at St Mary's**

[Click here](#) to view the Christmas Services & Events taken place at St Mary's this year and some Christmas videos to feed the soul – do enjoy these!

Tickets are required for all Services (free) and Events (charge). Please book your tickets through the above link to avoid missing out!

## **Mince Pies**

Mince Pies are needed to hand out at the various Christmas Services, If you're able to supply us with a box or 2, please bring them along to Church by **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December**.

## **Christmas Sale at The Stables, Bolnhurst**

Come and visit the Christmas Sale at The Stables, Bolnhurst on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December between 10 am and 3pm. Homemade preserves, craft items and cakes will be available to purchase.

## **Warm Clothing Collection**

Warm Clothing is needed for the work of the Three Pillars. Please place in the box at the back of church.

## **Winter Fuel Gifts**

Whilst we know those who receive the Winter Fuel Payment will be appreciating it, especially at this time of Fuel costs increases, if you would like to help top up our Utility Fuel Fund with any gifts to help people in our community, please put them in an envelope marked 'Utility Fund' and place in the Collection Plate/Box at Church.

## **Used Stamps**

St Mary's World Mission Team collects used stamps to send to the Leprosy Mission a global Christian organisation leading the fight against leprosy. Working across 28 countries through partnering with governments, churches and other organisations to defeat leprosy and transform lives, the money raised from the stamps supports their work.

## **Thursday Food**

Thursday Food (formerly known as Friday Food) is a group made up of volunteers from many of the churches in the town that is planning to prepare and serve food in the Methodist Church Hall, Eynesbury once a week, starting in January, for homeless or vulnerably housed people within our community. It is an opportunity to share a meal and fellowship together with people who may otherwise be eating alone, or not at all. Do you have a heart for those who are facing difficult times? Can you cook for, serve food to or chat with our guests?

Please come along to our meeting at the Methodist Church, Berkley Street, Eynesbury on Thursday 2nd December at 7.30pm to find out more or contact Jane Gill at [the.bield@ntlworld.com](mailto:the.bield@ntlworld.com)

Under Aslan's paw,

Tim – Vicar, St Mary's Eaton Socon