

December blog - Let's get ready!

We are now officially in December! Advent has started and I have achieved one of the big decisions for St Martin's and answered one of the most asked questions: what is your view on the size of a Christmas tree?!? How I was not asked this at my interview?! I think I have passed the test and it's great to support local shop Santa Trees, who this year have made the Prime Minister's wreath!

Along with Christmas trees, we have been getting ready for all of the different services across the benefice. We are delighted to have school services with St Martins, Dobwalls, Hilfort, and Trewidland. Also, with numerous carol services and Christingles- and a spoiler alert- there will be an inflatable Christingle costume involved...

Yet in the busyness of Advent, I was drawn to our Advent service on Sunday when we prayed the Antiphons! Then on Monday, we started the advent course where each week we are exploring two of the antiphons, looking at what they mean and what God might be saying to us this advent.

This advent I believe these are two questions for us to ask ourselves.

In the Antiphons, there is an invitation to come and be still and wait. How does being still and waiting with God look like for you this Advent? How could you slow down? What could you say No to? Both in time and spending? To enable you to take a moment each day to stop and listen and wait. When we give space to do this, this will help us answer the second question: what might God be asking of you? What better time to seek God in this season than when we wait for Emmanuel, God with us. As we wait for his return what might He be saying to you?

This is a question we are going to be unpacking more in the coming months particularly on Saturday 25th Jan at 10am-3pm in St Martin's Church for our Benefice Vision Day, when we shall be exploring that question of what might God be asking of us In 2025.

So get that in your diary!

What might this mean for you this Advent? Maybe to start something, maybe to stop something? Maybe God calling you into a new season or maybe simply asking you to be still; to sit and wait. I was struck with the words of the final antiphon O come Emmanuel which says:

O King of the Gentiles, and their Desire, the Cornerstone, Who madest both one: Come and save man, whom Thou hast formed out of the dust of the earth.

Our cornerstone - how is he being our Cornerstone this Advent?

What does this mean to you? This Advent I look forward to serving and worshiping with you all, seeing God at work - what God is doing with us this Advent, and a season where we have so many opportunities to share the good news and hope of Jesus; and invite our friends and family too. May you have a blessed Advent and be expectant. May you have a Christmas filled with the light and promise of Christ and a new year centered on the hope of Christ!

God bless

Mark

Key dates!

Antiphon advent course

Monday 9th 12pm-1.30pm bring a packed lunch

Monday 16th 1pm-2.30pm

Monday 23rd 1pm-2.30pm

Alpha course

Tuesday 7th Jan 7pm invite and bring a friend! Evening meal provided!

Benefice vision day

Saturday 25th Jan 10am-3pm St Martins Church