



The West Hereford Team Ministry
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Hello everyone,

This Sunday we celebrate Christ the King, which marks the last Sunday before Advent. This year, perhaps more than most, it seems like the time has vanished. This year seems ruled by uncertainty and chaos, perhaps this is the perfect time to remember that Christ is King over all before we start looking to Advent and Christmas.

Advent is a period of time that we hold as very solemn in the church – a time of quiet reflection and preparation ahead of the great feast of Christmas.

In the rest of society, the period of Advent is one of heightening excitement. It might start anytime from after Halloween, to Bonfire Night or occasionally as late as the first of December. It's full of bright lights, parties, shopping and Christmas music blaring from speakers. This year we might not be rushing in and out of shops, but there seems to be a real feeling of Christmas starting early – of people wanting to squeeze every drop of joy from this otherwise very difficult year.

That said, many Christmas preparations are very much on hold – for many of us we are waiting for news about if, and when we can travel to see family, friends and of course enter our church buildings. It is an anxious wait – perhaps Advent has started early?

That feeling, like we are waiting in darkness, can be really hard to bear alone. Which is one of the reasons that we talk about hope so much – it is one of those things that brings a little light into the world. I think the hope of Christmas with its bright lights and laughter is part of why it is such an enduring holiday, and part of why this year it is good to get it started a little early. After all, this year feels like it could use a little more hope and joy.

Christmas, I know, is not easy for everyone. The darkness seems even darker when we are alone. Perhaps there is someone close to you who could use an extra phone call this year? Perhaps you're in need of that extra phone call. That extra bit of light and joy in a dark world.

As a team we're trying to help people to reach out and link together, so that no one is left feeling alone. But please do reach out to us too. Whether you need a chat or someone to fetch some shopping - whatever help you need the churches are here. You can phone 01432 273086 or by contact your Pastoral Coordinator.

We are working hard to find ways for everyone to celebrate Christmas and we hope these resources help you feel connected as we worship as a scattered Church. Please be assured that you are not forgotten and that you are remembered in our prayers – and that we long for the day when we can meet again as the whole church in one body and one place.

God Bless,

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