

**"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had."**

**Romans 15:5**

Advent is a season of preparation, and at last week's Sunday services we asked this question:

*"If Jesus were to return today, would you be ready to meet him?"*

One of the main ways in which we can ready ourselves for the return of Jesus is to take seriously the Bible and all that it teaches. In a Sunday sermon a couple of weeks ago we heard the story of an older Christian being asked, *"Have things changed in the UK Church since you were a young person?"* to which the old, wise, Christian replied, *"When I was young and someone became a Christian, they would read the Bible and say, 'I need to change what I think in order to live as the Bible teaches,' but today, many Christians read the Bible and say, 'I really think that the Bible should be changed to suit what I already think and how I want to live my life.'"* As you might imagine, this isn't a healthy development in the life of the UK Church!

As we prepare to stand before Jesus - as we will all one day do - let's be sure to take seriously everything God has so clearly spoken to us through his word.

### **Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent**

Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God.

## Bible Readings for 4th December

### Romans 15:4-13 (NIVUK)

**4** For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

**5** May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, **6** so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**7** Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. **8** For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed **9** and, moreover, that the

Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:  
'Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;

I will sing the praises of your name.

**10** Again, it says,

'Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.'

**11** And again,

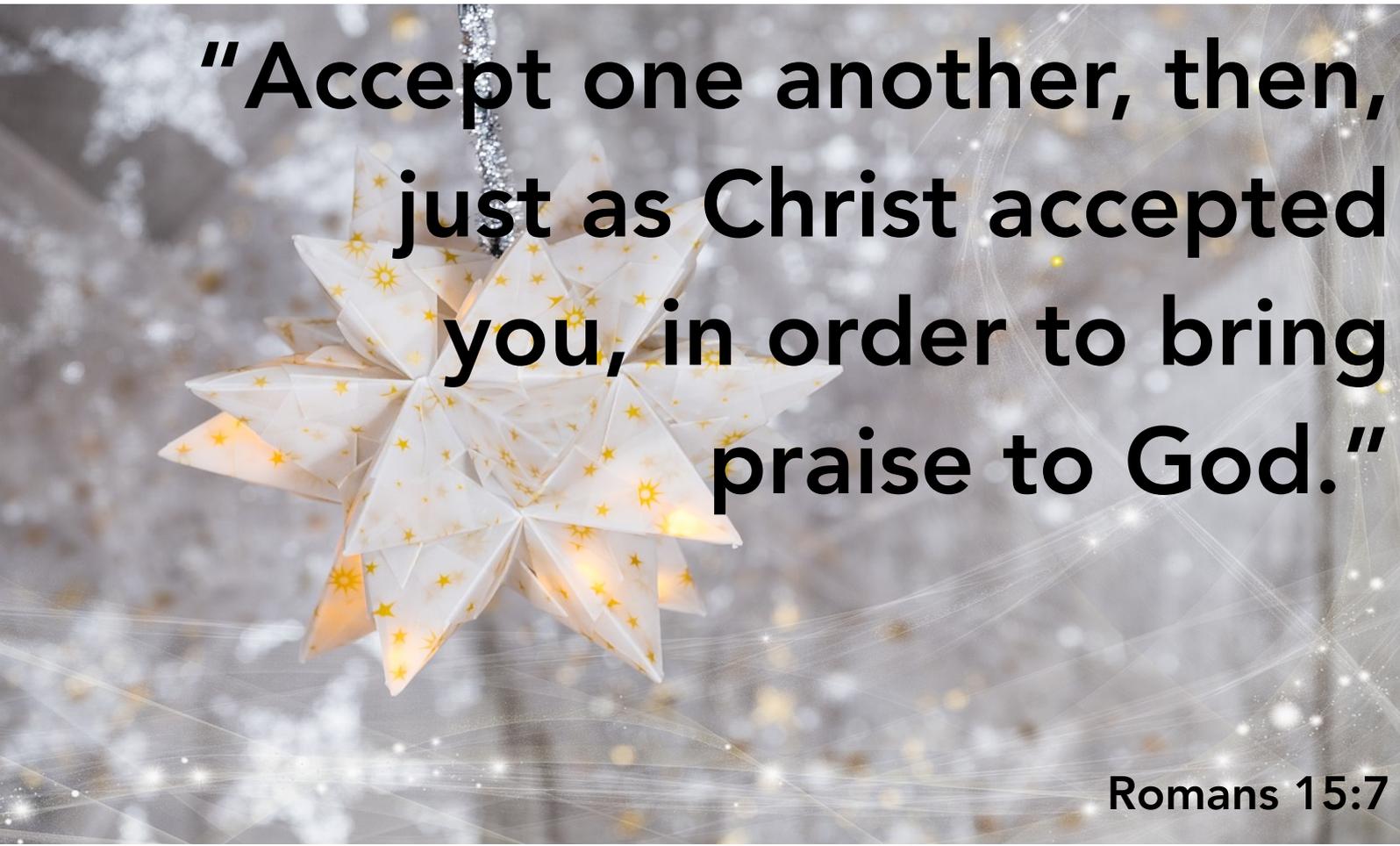
'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;  
let all the peoples extol him.'

**12** And again, Isaiah says,

'The Root of Jesse will spring up,  
one who will arise to rule over the nations;

in him the Gentiles will hope.'

**13** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.



**"Accept one another, then,  
just as Christ accepted  
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praise to God."**

## Matthew 3:1-12 (NIVUK)

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea **2** and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' **3** This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

'A voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

**4** John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt round his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. **5** People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. **6** Confessing their sins, they were baptised by him in the River Jordan.

**7** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptising, he said to

them: 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? **8** Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. **9** And do not think you can say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. **10** The axe has been laid to the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

**11** 'I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **12** His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'

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## Grace & Prison Ministry

Last Sunday at the 11 o'clock service, we heard a tiny bit about the Christian ministry that Grace (a member of Andrew & Kate's DG) is involved with in [Ford Open Prison](#). Grace has [invited church members to join her on future visits to help lead chapel services](#). In

order to visit, you'll need to go through a security clearance which takes a week. Sadly, this means that there's not enough time for new people to join Grace when she visits the prison next week, but we can support her in prayer! [Please do pray that Grace and the team she works with have a truly blessed visit when they lead the prison's carol service on Tuesday](#).



## Christmas Quiz!

On [Friday 9th December at 7.00 pm](#), here at All Saints', our next Quiz Night will be taking place! Book your place by calling Jayne Martin on 07557273554, or sign-up on the noticeboard. It's just £8 per head, to include supper - [all proceeds will go to ARK Eastleigh](#).



## No Rehearsal Nativity

It's back! Our annual, slightly chaotic, Nativity Service will be held at **11am on Sunday 11th December**. Here's a few details:

- Please, please, **invite friends, family & neighbours** to join us.
- Everyone is invited to **dress up** as their favourite nativity character.
- We will have quite a lot of dressing up clothes for you and your guests to borrow. They'll be available to put on before the service.
- Some **festive refreshments** will be available following the nativity.
- And why is it called "No Rehearsal Nativity"? Well, there's no rehearsal! The script will be on the screens, and anyone can play any part they want! Last year we had just 1 shepherd, but 10 sheep. This year, we might have 10 Marys and 7 Josephs... **Just choose the part you want to play, and enjoy!**



## Warm Welcome: A Dry Run on December 14th

As you might know, we're hoping to launch a "Warm Welcome Space" in the near future in order to offer our neighbours a warm, safe venue in which they can spend some time during the winter months (see <https://www.warmwelcome.uk/>). Thanks to your enthusiastic response to the idea, we now have the beginnings of a great team and an outline plan.

In the first instance, we will be having a 'dry run' on December 14th. YOU are warmly invited to attend, and we'd encourage you to invite others too. **There'll be 2 sessions of "Warm Welcome" on 14th December:**

- **Lunchtime: 11am-1pm**
- **Teatime: 3:30pm-7pm**

At both sessions, you can expect to find **hot food & drinks, good company, some optional activities and a very warm welcome**. Entrance, food & activities are all free (there will be an option to make a donation - but no pressure whatsoever for people to do so). Based on what we learn from this dry run, we aim to advertise widely in readiness for a January launch of the project. We're not planning to advertise this dry run beyond Outlook - but please don't let that stop YOU from inviting guests to attend.



## Sunday Walk and Talk

Do pop the date of our next 'Walk and Talk' on your calendar - **Sunday 18th December** - details to follow nearer the time. If you'd like to find out more about this new opportunity to spend time with church family, please speak to Rachel Price or Andrew & Kate Ross.





## Can you help?

We need sides-people for our Uniform Christingle Service, taking place at 7pm on Wednesday 7th December, in All Saints'. In addition, we are also looking for sides-people for our 'Carols for Christmas' event on the 17th December, our Christingle services, the Midnight Communion Service on the 24th, and our Christmas morning service. We would also love to be able to serve refreshments after Carols for Christmas on Saturday 17th December, and need 2 people to help! There will be sign-up sheets on the noticeboard, or do chat to Sue about how you might be able to lend a hand!

## Save the Date: Christingle Making and lunch

To help you feel festive in the run up to Christmas Day, we're offering everyone the very exciting opportunity to come and assemble Christingle oranges ready for our Christingle services on Christmas Eve! We will meet at 10.30am on Thursday 22nd December, at All Saints', to begin the Christingle production line. Carols, refreshments (and full training!) will be provided. Then do stay afterwards for a 'bring and share' lunch together. If this sounds like the perfect advent activity, please do sign up on Churchsuite! There will be a sign up sheet on the noticeboard for you to let us know what food you are able to bring.



## Lastly, A Huge Thank You!



Thank you so much to all who gave their time last weekend to put up Christmas decorations inside and outside the church building - it all looks beautiful!

## Coming up at Eastleigh Parish this Christmas

Carols for Christmas, with the Sound Worship Orchestra - Saturday 17th December, 7.30pm

Christingle Services - Saturday 24th December, 4.30pm and 6pm

Midnight Communion - Saturday 24th December, 11.15pm

Christmas Family Communion Service - Sunday 25th December, 10am

Keep in touch by signing up to ChurchSuite, on Facebook, or via [www.EastleighParish.com](http://www.EastleighParish.com)

Ian Fletcher (Vicar): 07809 668 118 Sue Fletcher: 07502 427 693

Church Wardens: Phil 07966 159 684 / Keith 07905 249 860