

## THE MIRACLE OF Christmas

Celebrating the Birth of Jesus

*Unto us a child is born,  
a Saviour who is Christ the Lord.  
Luke 2:11*



December 2025

# Advent:

## The Art of Waiting Well

There's something in the air at this time of year - a kind of charged stillness, like the pause before the first note of a symphony. Advent is the season of waiting, but not the sort of waiting we do in a queue at the Post Office, shifting from foot to foot and checking the clock. Advent waiting is different. It's active, alert, expectant - the sort of waiting that leans forward rather than slumps back.

We know what we're waiting for, of course: Christmas. But the Church has always taught that Advent isn't just about looking back to Bethlehem, but also looking ahead - to Christ's coming again, and to his quiet coming among us in the everyday moments of now. It's a season that stretches our sense of time, reminding us that God's promises are not bound by our calendars, and that sometimes what we need most is to be still and make room.

That's not easy in December. The shops have been in full festive throttle since October, and our diaries fill faster than our stockings. The temptation is to rush through Advent so that we can "get to" Christmas. Yet if we skip the waiting, we miss the wonder. The early Christians called this time *Adventus*

- a word meaning both *arrival* and *presence*. The two belong together: if we never learn to wait, we never truly recognise the presence when it comes.

Perhaps the waiting itself is a gift. Like a seed beneath the soil, there's a quiet work going on in us while we wait - a deepening of hope, a strengthening of trust. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "*Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.*" Waiting is not wasted time; it's soul-building time.

So this Advent, perhaps we might practise waiting well. Light a candle in the window, take a few quiet moments each day, resist the rush to finish everything, and simply notice. Notice where hope is stirring. Notice where love is already at work. Notice how Christ is nearer than we thought.

When the angels sing "Glory to God in the highest," they will not be breaking the silence so much as completing it - the long, beautiful silence of a people who have learned how to wait. And that, perhaps, is the real miracle of Christmas.

*Reed Jonathan*

# Services in December



## Friday 5 December

**2.00pm**      **Communion**  
- 1st Sun of Advent  
**Advent**  
**Priest:**      **Robin Paterson**

## Friday 19 December

**2.00pm**      **Communion**  
- 4th Sun of Advent  
**Advent**  
**Priest:**      **Robin Paterson**

## Sunday 7 December

**9.30am**      **Morning Worship**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
**1st Reading:** **Romans 15:4-13**  
Stella Ambler  
  
**Gospel:**      **Matthew 3:1-12**  
Chris Prior  
  
**Intercessions:** John Prior

## Sunday 21 December

**9.30am**      **All Together Worship**  
**1st Reading:** **Romans 1:1-7**  
**Gospel:**      **Luke 21:5-19**  
  
**6:00pm**      **Carol Service**

## Friday 12 December

**2.00pm**      **Prayer Meeting**

## Sunday 14 December

**9.30am**      **Communion**  
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
**1st Reading:** **James 5:7-10**  
Jill Dorrington  
  
**Gospel:**      **Matthew 11: 2-11**  
Simon Carlton  
  
**Intercessions:** Beckie Briggs

## Wednesday 24 December

**4:00pm**      **Crib Service**

## Thursday 25 December

**10:00am**      **Communion**  
- Christmas Day  
**1st Reading:** **Hebrews 1:1-12**  
Sue Saxton  
  
**Gospel:**      **John 1:1-14**  
Gill Sinclair  
  
**Intercessions:** John Edward

## Sunday 28 December

**10:00am**      **Benefice Communion**  
**@ St Peter's Thorner**  
  
**6.30pm**      **Taizé @ Barwick**



## Foodbank Christmas Bag



We are aiming to provide a special Christmas bag for each family visiting. Thank you for thinking about those individuals and families who need to go to a foodbank, as their money will not provide sufficient food for the week.

As in previous years, St Richards will be additionally giving out a “special” Christmas bag. These have always been so gratefully received, and we try to include some treats / items they would not usually be able to afford.

The items we are aiming to include in these bags include:

- Tinned ham (large size ~ 300g-400g)
- Some very nice / luxury biscuits
- Mince pies
- Evaporated or Condensed milk tins
- Tinned fruit
- Some fresh cheese & cheese biscuits
- A small Christmas cake / fruit cake / pudding (if affordable)
- Vegetables (fresh or tinned)
- Small selection boxes
- Satsumas

**Our Benefice has agreed to concentrate on getting sufficient tins of ham for the bags... so would be very grateful if you could collect as many as you can. And drop off by the first week in December, after which we will then be making up the bags.**

Donations, financial or in any of the items on this list would be so gratefully received. We will do a bulk discount shop as well to be able to supplement and cover all the items if we can.



**ALL SAINTS', BARWICK  
SUNDAY  
28 DECEMBER @ 6:30pm**

If you've never been to Taizé worship service before, why not consider coming along.

It involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, periods of silence and liturgical readings.



## HOME GROUP



**Friendship  
& Fellowship**



**Prayer**



**Laughter**



**A traditional  
hymn or two**



**WHERE: John & Sally Edward's home  
73 Nook Road, Scholes LS15 4AX**



**WHEN: First Wednesday of the Month  
7:30pm - 9:00pm**

**Everyone is welcome!**

**Especially if you are not a regular at a home group — no need to book, just turn up.**



# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Mothers' Union is a global Christian movement working with people of all faiths and none to develop communities, strengthen families and advocate for change. Our members are active in 83 countries and work tirelessly to serve their communities to build a future where everyone thrives.

Ending violence, ending poverty, ending injustice. We are a truly worldwide Christian movement. And a local one!

We usually meet on the first Monday of each month at 7.30pm at St Philip's church.

If you want to know more, please contact:

- Sue Saxton ~ 07757 509 072
- Sally Wray ~ 07484 152 886

***On 1st December we are going to The Gascoigne Arms in Barwick for our Christmas meal and party.***

## Need prayer?



Got something on your heart and need a listening ear? Our Prayer Team are here every Sunday after the morning service, just come over to the Prayer Area on the right side of the church. It's private, confidential, and you'll be with people who care.



The Café will be open on **Friday 5th, 12th & 19th December**, from 9:00am to 12:00pm with Children's Christmas Crafts on the 12th.

Please note there won't be a café on Saturday 27th December.

Re-opens Friday 9th January.



## St. Philip's Flowers

Thank you to everyone who sponsored flowers in St. Philip's church this year. We still have some vacancies if anyone would like to remember a loved one next year.

Please see Pat Ridsdale or any of the Flower Ladies.



# St Philip's Church Weekend Away

18th-20th September 2026  
at Wydale Hall



*Join us for a refreshing and faith-filled weekend at beautiful Wydale Hall, set in the peaceful North Yorkshire countryside. It's a chance to pause, pray, and enjoy good company, good food, and plenty of laughter together. There'll be time for worship, reflection, walks, and rest – something for everyone!*

*Come and be part of it – a weekend to reconnect with God, with one another, and with yourself.*

**Cost: £224** per person

Children under 2 years: **Free**

Children aged 2-11: **40% of adult price**

Children aged 12-16: **60% of adult price**

All accommodation is En-Suite and Full Board will be provided

**For more information and a Booking Form  
please see Alan Stanley or Revd Jonathan  
A £25 Deposit per person will be required**

The Wydale logo, featuring a stylized blue bird above the word "Wydale" in a green, cursive-like font.

[www.wydale.org](http://www.wydale.org)







# *Christmas* **TOY COLLECTION**

WE ARE COLLECTING NEW TOYS  
FOR CHILDREN AGED 0 TO 16 YEARS

**FINAL DAY TO DONATE:  
SUNDAY 7 DECEMBER**

Drop off your unwrapped  
gifts at any of the  
Benefice Churches





## Prayer Group

What is prayer?

And why do we do it?

Prayer is our way of communicating with God and, incidentally, with each other.

We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday afternoon of every month to discuss and then pray for people and events within our local community and in the wider world.

If you want to know more, please speak to Ros Loach or email [admin@elmetetrinity.org](mailto:admin@elmetetrinity.org).

You would be very welcome to come along at any time, as and when you can, for a cup of tea and chat to find out what it is all about.

## CARING FOR EACH OTHER...

If you haven't seen someone for a while, please either try and find out how they are or let us know and we will try and make contact. Please also ask the person if they would like to go on the prayer list (using their full name or just first name). A note to us giving a contact number or address of the person concerned often helps.

## PRAYER REQUESTS



Is there something you'd like us to pray about? You can send your prayer requests by using this QR Code and completing the form. All prayer requests are confidential.

## Prayer for Growth

*God of Mission,  
who alone brings  
growth to your Church,  
send your Holy Spirit  
to give vision to our planning,  
wisdom to our actions,  
and power to our witness.*

*Help St Philip's to grow  
in numbers, in spiritual  
commitment to you,  
and in service to our  
local community,  
through Jesus  
Christ our Lord.  
Amen*



## Foodbank

FOOD FOR PEOPLE IN NEED

The Food Bank is short of the following items and any donations are much appreciated:

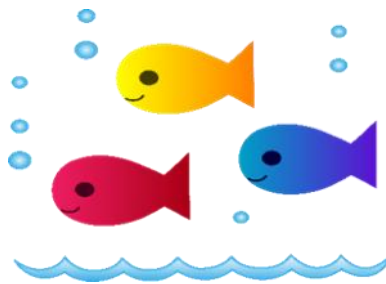
- ⇒ **Tinned Meats**
- ⇒ **Tinned Fruit**
- ⇒ **Tinned Potatoes**
- ⇒ **Packet Mash**
- ⇒ **Pot Noodles/Super Noodles**
- ⇒ **Toilet Rolls**
- ⇒ **Shower Gel / Toiletries**

If you can pop an extra item into your shopping basket, it really does help.  
Thank you!





# Little Fishes



## Parent & Toddler Group

For ages 0 – 4

Tuesdays 10.30am – 12.00pm

## Christmas Party with Santa & Posada

Tuesday 9th December



Drop in for friendly chats,  
craft activities and coffee & cakes



Find us on Facebook  
[www.stphilips-scholes.org](http://www.stphilips-scholes.org)



## WAITING

In this Advent time,  
When the darkness seems to enter our souls,  
And our longings settle deep within,  
We wait.

And as we wait,  
We return to the breath and the silence.  
To the breath of God that gives us life.  
To the silence where we hear God's whispers.  
May we weep for the brokenness within  
And without.

May we cry out against our distractedness.  
And return to the eternal One  
Whose love fills every fibre of our being.

A voice cries out  
in desert air,  
"Prepare the way  
make straight, repair."  
The barren hills  
begin to bend,  
For God draws near  
whom prophets send.

A virgin sings  
her brave amen,  
The Promise clothed  
in flesh again.  
In Bethlehem  
the Word takes breath,  
Light rising strong  
to conquer death.



Lord God, we adore you because you have come to us in the past.  
You have spoken to us in the Law of Israel.  
You have challenged us in the words of the prophets.  
You have shown us in Jesus what you are really like.

Lord God, we adore you because you still come to us now.  
You come to us through other people and their love and concern for us.  
You come to us through men and women who need our help.  
You come to us as we worship you with your people.

Lord God, we adore you because you will come to us at the end.  
You will be with us at the hour of death.  
You will still reign supreme when all human institutions fail.  
You will still be God when our history has run its course.

We welcome you, the God who comes.  
Come to us now in the power of Jesus Christ our Lord.

*- Caryl Micklem*

# WAITING – POEMS FOR ADVENT

You keep us waiting.  
You, the God of all time,  
want us to wait for the right time  
in which to discover who we are,  
where we are to go,  
who will be with us, and what we must do.

So thank you... for the waiting time.  
You keep us looking.  
You, the God of all space,  
want us to look in the right and wrong places  
for signs of hope,  
for people who are hopeless,  
for visions of a better world which will appear  
among the disappointments of the world we know.

So thank you... for the looking time.  
You keep us loving.  
You, the God whose name is love,  
want us to be like you—  
to love the loveless and the unlovely and the unlovable;  
to love without jealousy or design or threat;  
and, most difficult of all,  
to love ourselves.

So thank you... for the loving time.  
And in all this,  
you keep us.  
Through hard questions with no easy answers;  
through failing where we hoped to succeed  
and making an impact when we felt we were useless;  
through the patience and the dreams  
and the love of others;  
and through Jesus Christ and the Spirit,  
you keep us.

So thank you... for the keeping time,  
and for now,  
and for ever,  
Amen.

– John Bell (Iona Community)





## At the Shops

- ⇒ Think before you buy: gold does not always glitter brightly. A new £500 gold necklace has a carbon emissions tag of 400kg CO<sub>2</sub>e, the mining process damages landscapes, ecosystems and contaminates water, and can be associated with human rights violations.
- ⇒ Think before you buy: the manufacture of a new car uses a lot of energy and resources which generate 6 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e for a small vehicle (more than half your total year's carbon budget), 17 tonnes for an estate car and up to 35 tonnes for a top of the range Land Rover.
- ⇒ Buy local and in season produce and look forward to seasonal changes. For example a punnet of strawberries flown in or grown locally in a hothouse in winter has a 1.8kg CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions cost. Whereas locally grown in the UK in summer its only 0.15kg a punnet.
- ⇒ Do you really need a new computer, laptop or phone? Manufacturing new goods has a high environmental cost. A new laptop has a carbon footprint of 200kg and a high end desk top 800kg CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- ⇒ Think ahead to Christmas! How can you show love in your gift giving without costing the earth? Discuss having a Secret Santa or a price limit with family members, choose small thoughtful presents, or hand make gifts.



## SUPPORT THE WORK OF ST PHILIP'S

St Philip's is a charity which receives no funding from the government and is entirely dependent on donations to keep its doors open, continue its work in the community and maintain its buildings and surroundings.

If you would like to support us, you can donate in the plate or use the contactless device at the entrance to church. If you would like to give regularly, you can set up a Standing Order or use a Giving Envelope.

More info from Tim South, the Treasurer or Revd Jonathan.



Standing Order

Giving Envelope



Contactless



Collection Plate



*giftaid it*

If you pay UK Income Tax, we encourage you to Gift Aid all your giving to church. Gift Aid in the UK is a scheme enabling registered charities to reclaim the tax from the Government on a donation made by a UK taxpayer, increasing the donation by 25p for every £1 you give, without costing you any extra.

# Elmete

## *Elderberries*



*Every Monday 1pm - 3pm*  
*(except Bank Holidays)*

**Each week we offer:**

- \* Gentle, chair-based, exercise
- \* Help with family history research
- \* Crafting & card-making
- \* Games, Bridge, Jigsaws & Dominoes
- \* Drawing & Painting
- \* Brass Band & Folk Singing
- \* Knitting, Crochet & Needlework
- \* Computer & Camera assistance
- \* Refreshments & a warm welcome

*Drop in to learn new things,  
make new friends and enjoy a cuppa*

*For Everyone: body, mind and spirit*



# ADVENT

WORD SEARCH : LOCATE THE VOCABULARY LISTED BELOW  
IN THE GRID, SEARCHING IN ALL DIRECTIONS, INCLUDING BACKWARDS.



Advent  
Angels  
Blessings  
Candle  
Carols  
Celebrate  
Christmas  
Countdown  
Decorations  
Emmanuel  
Faith  
Family  
Gifts  
Hope  
Jesus  
Joy  
Light  
Love  
Manger  
Nativity  
Peace  
Prayer

Prepare  
Prophecy  
Rejoice  
Shepherds  
Spirit  
Stories  
Traditions  
Wreath





# ADVENT

# WAITING FOR JESUS

“ I am the light of the world  
John 8:12 ”

PEACE JOY LOVE  
HOPE

How many  
can you find?



## BIBLE THOUGHT:

Advent reminds us to  
prepare our hearts for  
the coming of Jesus -  
the light of the world.

## TIC TAC TOE

## WORD SEARCH

ADVENTLFC  
WRNJOYIAA  
RVBELUGIN  
ERESONHTD  
ADIUVSTHL  
THISEHOPE  
HPEACETAW

ADVENT JESUS WREATH  
PEACE LOVE HOPE  
FAITH JOY LIGHT

## WORD SCRAMBLE

HTREAW

EAPCE

YOJ

EANTDV

OPEH

EVLO

(LOOK AT THE WORD SEARCH FOR CLUES!)

What is  
your  
prayer  
today?

DEAR GOD.





# How to Contact Us

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Leeds

## Rector

**Revd Jonathan Brennan**

☎ 0113 289 2437

✉ rector@elmetetrinity.org

## Licenced Lay Minister

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## Licensed Lay Minister

**Beckie Briggs**

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## Reader Emerita

**Ros Loach**

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## Churchwarden

**Ann Riley**

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## Treasurer

**Tim South**

☎ 0113 265 1742

✉ tim@thesouths.uk

## Interim Rector's PA

**Diane Brennan**

✉ admin@elmetetrinity.org

## Safeguarding Officer

**Beckie Briggs**

☎ 07794 155158

✉ safeguarding@the-briggs.co.uk

If you would like to speak to someone about any aspect of St Philip's Church safeguarding policy, or you have any concerns, please speak to Beckie in the first instance. You can also contact Revd Jonathan Brennan.

## Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for entries into the January issue of this Newsletter is

**Saturday 3rd January 2026.**

Please send any items to  
admin@elmetetrinity.org

If you need anything advertising between editions of the Newsletter, please contact Diane who will send out information via email and Facebook.

