

ADVENT APPEAL 2020

Several hundred years before Jesus was born, the Jewish prophets began to explain to the rest of the people that God was going to send someone special, a new leader, who would be like their great King David. This is what they said:

WORD OF THE WEEK

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
They live in a land of shadows, but no light is shining on them.

You have given them great joy, Lord;
you have made them happy.

They rejoice in what you have done,
as people rejoice when they harvest grain
or when they divide captured wealth.

For you have broken the yoke that burdened them.

A child is born to us!
A son us given to us!
And he will be our ruler.
He will be called, "Wonderful Counselor,"
"Mighty God," "Eternal Father,"
"Prince of Peace."
ISAIAH 9: 2, 6-7

This week's word of the week is not an easy one but it can teach us a lot as we get ready to begin Advent and our Advent appeal. This year we have all probably experienced in some way a time of isolation. And for many of us we may have had family around us at home and friends at the end of the phone to FaceTime with or Zoom on our tablets to connect with family around the country or even the world.

But for some in our community this time has been particularly lonely and filled with times of darkness, as we hear in our word of the week. Older people, many who live alone have been confined to their homes without much contact at all from friends or family (if they have any), and elderly people in care homes have not been able to be visited by family much at all.

However Advent and Christmas, the coming of Jesus, can bring light into the lives of these people, and this year that light and hope will come through us.

Our Advent appeal this year has the potential to reach out to hundreds of lonely and isolated older members of our community.

[Click here to listen to a sung version of this week's Word of the Week.](#)



Click the image to find out more about what it is like to be an older person on their own at Christmas time.

Youtube: Age UK: Lonely in a Crowd

During Advent we prepare for the coming of the Lord. If we prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus' birth we will appreciate Christmas time all the more. Advent is a time of preparation. Next week we begin this special journey and we want to be ready so that Jesus will find a welcome reception in our hearts and our world.

TALK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU.

What can we do to prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming? What type of person would Jesus want to meet when he comes into the world? How can you be that person?

What can we do to prepare our world for Jesus' coming? What would you like the world to look like if you knew Jesus was on his way? What could you do to make this happen?



CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL

In this week's assembly you will find out all you need to know about our Advent Appeal 2020 but here is a bit of a spoiler or a recap depending on whether or not you've seen the assembly yet!

We would like you all to make or bring in a Christmas card and envelope so that we can write lots of Christmas cards for elderly people who are isolated and potentially feeling pretty lonely at this time of year, especially while we are in the midst of the covid 19 pandemic.

Your task is to write a lovely Christmas message to an older person, who probably hasn't been able to have visitors much at all this year.

As part of your message you might want to let them know that we are thinking of them and tell them that you hope this letter helps them to smile. Tell them something about yourself and maybe ask them a question or two about them, you never know they might reply. Finally wish them a very happy Christmas. You might also like to include a picture of yourself, take a photo and print it off and put it inside your card.

Get your form tutor to double check your card and message, put it in an envelope and wait for our Christmas posties to come and collect them from your forms.

WE HAVE A CHANCE, THIS ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS, TO BRING SOME LIGHT, HOPE AND JOY INTO THE LIVES OF OLDER PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY!



UK'S ELDERLY STRUGGLE WITH COVID-19 ISOLATION
([CLICK HERE](#)).

POSTCARDS OF KINDNESS: AGE UK
([CLICK HERE](#)).

ROY'S STORY BY JAMES BOLAM: AGE UK
([CLICK HERE](#)).

An Advent Poem by John Bell

Light looked down and saw
the darkness

"I will go there" said light.

Peace looked down and saw war.

"I will go there said peace".

Love looked down and saw hatred.

"I will go there", said love.

So he, The Lord of Light,

The Prince of Peace,

The King of love,

Came down and crept in beside us.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Jesus, help us to begin our Advent journey of faith, and preparation. Open our hearts to receive you and prepare a world we would be proud for you to enter.

Centre our preparations for Christmas on growing closer to you and helping others, not ourselves and material things. Be with all those people we will write to this Christmas. Remind them of your love for them and that they are not alone. Help us to do all we can to bring some Christmas cheer and love into their lives through our cards and messages. We also pray for all of the care staff who work in care homes locally and around the country. At this challenging time bless them for the work that they do and the care they give. Help us to do all we can to thank them for the love and care that they give every day to the residents they work with.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord
Amen.