



From the Rector

As December begins the Church starts a New Year as we enter the season of Advent. Advent is the time of preparation as we get ready to celebrate the great feast of Christmas. In Church we begin Advent with the lighting of the first of five candles as we build up to 25th December and in the evening of 1st December we have our Advent Carol Service at 6pm. It is a rich musical treat – not with the traditional Christmas Carols, but hymns and carols of expectation and hope – looking forward to the great festival that we all know. But why do we need Christmas? What is the significance of celebrating a birth that happened over two thousand years ago?

The story is told of a farmer who didn't believe in Jesus. One snowy Christmas Eve, his wife was taking their children to a service at their local church. He refused to come saying: *'Why would God lower Himself to come to Earth as a man? That's ridiculous!'* So, they left him at home.

During the evening the winds grew stronger, and the snow turned to a blizzard. He heard a series of loud thumps on the window. In the field near his house he saw a flock of wild geese. They had been migrating south when they got caught in the snowstorm. They were lost and stranded on his farm, with no food or shelter.

The man wanted to help the geese and so he opened the doors of the barn, hoping they would go inside for shelter. But the geese didn't do anything, despite the man's efforts to move them. He made a breadcrumb trail leading to the barn and tried to shoo them toward the barn, but they only got more scared and scattered.

Nothing he did could get them to go into the barn: *'Why don't they follow me?!'* Then he realised: *'If only I were a goose and become one of them, then I could save them.'* Finally, he understood the heart of the Christmas message. God has become one of us in Jesus. The eternal creator God has entered time and space as a baby, to show us who God is and how we can know Him.

This Christmas let's celebrate again this amazing truth that we have a God who knows and can meet our needs in Jesus. Everyone is welcome to any of the Advent and Christmas Services. Come along to find out more about the events of that first Christmas when God became human for us to show us his true nature, so that we could understand his desire and purpose for all of our lives.

'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel, which means 'God with us''. Matthew 1:23.

With many blessings

Fr David