



## **Advent 2025 – In The Parish of Stanford in the Vale with Goosey & Hatford**

### **The Purpose and Meaning of the Advent Season**

**“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.” – Isaiah 9:2**

Advent marks the beginning of the Christian year and is a season filled with hope, anticipation, and preparation. The word *Advent* comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning ‘coming’ or ‘arrival’. For Christians around the world, it’s a sacred time to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ - both in celebration of His birth at Christmas and in expectation of His return in glory.

### **A Season of Waiting and Hope**

Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and invites us into a period of spiritual reflection. It reminds us that waiting can be holy. As the world rushes through the holiday season, Advent calls us to slow down, to be still, and to remember that God’s promises are fulfilled in His time. Each candle lit on the Advent Wreath symbolizes a growing light in the darkness - **hope, peace, joy, and love** - reflecting the light of Christ coming into the world.

### **Preparing the Heart**

Advent is not only about waiting for Christ’s birth but also about preparing our lives for His presence here and now. Through prayer, Scripture reading, acts of kindness, and worship, we are invited to make room for Jesus in our daily lives. The season encourages us to let go of distractions and to embrace a posture of gratitude, repentance, and renewal.

### **Looking Forward and Back**

During Advent, we look backward to the humble manger in Bethlehem and forward to the promise of Christ’s return. This dual focus gives depth to our celebration - it is both a remembrance and a hope. We rejoice that God came to dwell among us and trust that He will come again to make all things new.

### **Living Advent Daily**

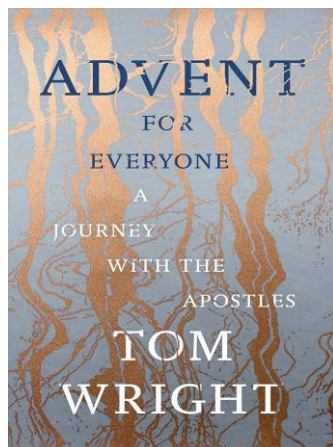
Advent challenges us to live as people of light in a world that often feels dark. Each act of compassion, forgiveness, and love becomes a way of sharing the hope that Christ brings. As we journey through this season, may our hearts be renewed, our faith deepened, and our joy made complete in the One who is to come.

**“Come, Lord Jesus.” – Revelation 22:20**

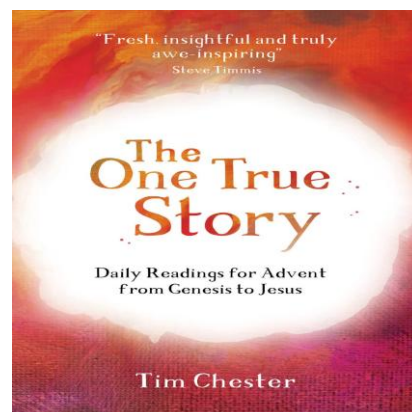
## Resources For Advent

This Advent there are TWO main resources for anyone who worships in our three churches across the Parish. These are two excellent **Advent Daily Reflection books**, and a simplified **Morning / Noon / Evening Prayer** Liturgy with **set readings** for each day of Advent.

An **Advent 'Life Group'** will meet from 730-9pm on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November, and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December to reflect on the Advent Sunday sermons and daily readings and reflections in Tom Wright's **Advent For Everyone** book. Please use the 'sign up' sheet to **register your interest in joining that group asap** and I will email you the venue!



Join Tom Wright on a journey with the Apostles, exploring the New Testament themes of thankfulness, patience, humility and joy. Within each of these themes, Wright offers a week of daily readings and meditations, beginning with the Sunday reading and ending with stimulating questions for personal reflection or group discussion. Book costs around £6 from local Christian bookshops/online - we can order for you if you can't yourself.



Everyone loves the Christmas story. But the story of the baby in the manger is the culmination of a thousand other stories. It is the focus of the story of the Bible and the story of human history. The book has 24 short meditative readings working through Bible stories from Genesis to Jesus. Each day ideas for reflection, prayer and application, designed to excite you about the Gospel message in the run up to Christmas Day. As you prepare for Christmas, get a fresh insight into the full script of the nativity, the story of our world, and the plotline for the rest of your life. Book costs around £5.

NB. If, by any chance you'd already used both of these in recent years, then I recommend **The Missing Peace** by Chris Whittington – Advent Meditation as a spiritual path to peace, community and oneness. Book costs about £10.

## Morning / Noon / Evening Prayer Liturgy

If you are using the Tom Wright **Advent For Everyone** Book then after the daily Bible reading you can read his reflection, meditate and ponder the question(s) for the day then, or later in the day – making perhaps a note to share in your home group, the Life Group, or with others over coffee in church on Sundays.

If you are not using the book, still use these daily Bible readings so that the whole church family is reading the same readings throughout Advent, regardless of whether that is first thing in the morning (Morning Prayer), at Lunchtime (Noon Prayer) or later in the evening (Evening Prayer). Do whatever is a natural time for you and you are more likely to be able to keep it up. If you are rushed for time, just read the Bible reading and pray. But Advent is a time of waiting, and if you can set aside just 15 minutes each day throughout Advent, this Christmas will be very different. Your relationship with God will grow closer and you'll start the a **new Christian Year** (Advent Sunday is the Church's New Year's Day) in a new way!

### **Sunday 30 Nov – 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9**

Mon 1 Dec – 2 Corinthians 1: 8-11

Tues 2 Dec – 2 Corinthians 9: 6-15

Wed 3 Dec – Colossians 1: 9-14

Thur 4 Dec – 1 Timothy 4: 1-5

Fri 5 Dec – Hebrews 12: 25-29

Sat 6 Dec – Revelations 4: 6b-11

### **Sun 7 Dec – 2 Peter 3: 8-15a**

Mon 8 Dec – 2 Timothy 4: 1-5

Tues 9 Dec – Hebrews 6: 9-12

Wed 10 Dec – Hebrews 12: 1-3

Thur 11 Dec – James 1: 1-8

Fri 12 Dec – James 5: 7-11

Sat 13 Dec – James 5: 13-20

### **Sun 14 Dec – John 1: 6-8, 19-28**

Mon 15 Dec – 1 Corinthians 1: 26-31

Tues 16 Dec – Galatians 6: 1-5

Wed 17 Dec – Philippians 2: 5-11

Thur 18 Dec – James 4: 1-10

Fri 19 Dec – James 4: 11-17

Sat 20 Dec – 1 Peter 5: 1-7

### **Sun 21 Dec – Romans 16: 25-27**

Mon 22 Dec – 2 Corinthians 7: 2-10

Tues 23 Dec – Philippians 2: 25-30

Wed 24 Dec – Philippians 4: 2-8

Thur 25 Dec – 1 Thessalonians 2: 17-20

Fri 26 Dec – Revelation 7: 9-17

Sat 27 Dec – Revelation 21: 1-5

If you prefer to listen to the Bible and other people saying liturgy and praying, you may find using the **Lectio 365 App** helpful. Just look for the **App shown below** on your phone, or laptop. [www.24-7prayergb.com/resource/lectio-365/](http://www.24-7prayergb.com/resource/lectio-365/)



## A Simple Order for Morning / Noon / Evening Prayer

### 1. Opening

Father, as I open your Word today, please speak to me through your Holy Spirit. Help me to be willing, day by day, to be transformed more and more into the likeness of your Son. Amen.

**2. Bible Reading for the Day** – from your own Daily Notes, or the Advent reading.

### 3. Reflection

Be silent for a few minutes. Ask God to speak to you through His Word even before you read the reflection in the *Advent for Everyone* book. Each day, note down any thoughts that come to mind, questions, things you wish to ponder later, or to ask/share at your Home Group or the Life Group.

### 4. Prayers

Turn what God has revealed to you through His Word today into a prayer of thanks, to understand clearer, or to ask for His help to put it into practice. Then, maybe choose a few of the prayer prompts below ...

- Pray for a situation in the **World** that God has placed on your heart
- Pray for a **National** need / issue / those in Government/leadership
- Pray for our **Villages**, those in need, who are ill/bereaved/lonely
- Pray for those you love, for **family and friends**
- Pray for members of our **church family**

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.*

### 5. Closing Prayer

Father, I thank you for bringing me safely to this new day / to the end of this day. Keep me from falling into sin or danger, and guide me to do what is right in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Christmas Services in the Parish

### Carols By Candlelight Services

*Sat 13th Dec, 4pm, All Saints, Goosey*

*Sun 14th Dec, 6pm, St George, Hatford*

*Sun 21 Dec, 6pm, St Denys, Stanford*

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve

4pm Crib Service.      10pm Holy Communion – St Denys

### Thursday 25 December – Christmas Day

1015am Parish Holy Communion

**Sunday 28 December – 1015am Morning Worship – St Denys**

*A very Blessed Advent and Christmas to you all.*

**Revd Paul Eddy, Vicar – Advent 2025**

**[www.stdenys.org](http://www.stdenys.org)**