

The Methodist Church

Bishopston, Easter Compton, Horfield, Shirehampton Methodist Churches and St Peter's Pilning.

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We are part of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit (www.bsgc.org.uk) a family of churches serving communities across the local area.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.

27 November 2022 – Advent Sunday



No one really knows when
However, in the late
Tours wrote in the
that St. Perpetuus

fast from the time of the feast of St. Martin until Christmas. We are not sure whether this was a new custom being instigated or an existing observance being enforced. In 567 at the second Council of Tours, monks began to practise fasting on the first of December through Christmas Day.

While many Greek Orthodox and Eastern Catholics still observe a 40 day fast that begins November 15th, Western Christianity, specifically the Roman Catholic Church, began to observe the season of Advent from the fourth Sunday before Christmas through Christmas Eve. Today, many Protestant sects of Christianity have begun to incorporate Advent traditions into their Sunday services. Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and other denominations have begun to observe the traditional Advent customs.

The four Sundays of Advent each have a specific theme or focus. The purpose of each theme is to spend time reflecting on the true meaning of the season – the life of Jesus Christ. The goal should be to come before God with a sincere heart and to worship Jesus Christ.

Rooted in a tradition that spans centuries of church history, the modern version of the Advent calendar has been around since the nineteenth century. Emerging from a Protestant Christian context, Advent calendars carry an underlying spiritual message of anticipation and hope. By helping us remember and reflect on the coming of Jesus Christ, Advent calendars can be a valuable aid for Christian families. More than just a countdown, marking the days of Advent it serves as a time of spiritual reflection and preparation.

The Advent wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. A Lutheran minister working at a mission for children created a wreath out of the wheel of a cart. He placed twenty small red candles and four large white candles inside the ring. The red candles were lit on weekdays and the four white candles were lit on Sundays.

Eventually, the Advent wreath was created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death as the evergreen is continuously green. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible.

Advent first began.
400s, St. Gregory of
History of the Franks
decreed a three-week

Advent candles are often nestled in the evergreen wreath. Additional decorations, like holly and berries, are sometimes added. Their red colour points ahead to Jesus' sacrifice and death on the cross, shedding his blood for our sins. (Information from Crosswalk.com)

Almighty God, fulfil our desire and kindle our hearts by your Spirit, that being filled with the oil of your grace, we may shine as bright lights at the coming of your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

WORSHIP DETAILS FOR SUNDAY 27 November and the week

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by A. Biddlestone.

Horfield. Christian Believers Fellowship at 12.30. Led by William Carey.

Bishopston at 10.30 conducted by Rev. P. Stonehewer with Holy Communion.

Shirehampton at 11.00. Coffee and conversation.

St Peter's, Pilning and Easter Compton at 10.00 conducted by C. Jones.

Easter Compton. Wednesday 30 November at 3.00. Reflective Space led by the Ark Team.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS for 27 November and the week

Sunday Worship. Radio 4 at 8.10. The First Sunday of Advent with John Bell of the Iona Community live from Glasgow University.

Songs of Praise. BBC 1 at 11.35. Young Chorister of the Year- Boys' Semi-Final.

Daily Service at 9.45. BBC Radio 4, Long Wave.

You will also find an online service of Morning Prayer to cover each day of the week, available from first thing each Monday at <https://westburyparkchurch.org.uk/worship-service>

St. Peter's Pilning Open Café Church 28 November, 10.00-12.00 for coffee, tea, cake and chat

WORSHIP DETAILS FOR SUNDAY 4 December and the week

Horfield at 10.00 conducted by Rev. P. Stonehewer with Holy Communion

Horfield. Christian Believers Fellowship at 12.30. Led by William Carey.

Bishopston at 10.30. Local Arrangement.

St Peter's, Pilning and Easter Compton at 10.00 conducted by Rev. Paul Van Rossum with Holy Communion

Easter Compton. Wednesday 7 December at 3.00. Reflective Space led by the Ark Team.

GENERAL NOTICES. Please send items to Eurfron by Tuesday, eurfron@blueyonder.co.uk or 0117 969 1908

Announcement for all Churches. I am pleased to announce that Rev Martin Slocombe, a presbyter in the Bath and North East Somerset Circuit, has provisionally agreed to join us from September 2023 and will have responsibility for Horfield and Bishopston, Shirehampton and St Peter's Pilning. Rev Patrick Stonehewer will be remaining in the Circuit but taking on new responsibilities for Bethesda (in Redfield), Parkway and Victoria Methodist Churches. These moves are subject to the agreement of the Methodist Conference next summer.

Pete Jones, Circuit Steward

Bishopston. June Threlfall would like to say "thank you" to everyone who has sent their blessings, prayers and sympathy at the sad loss of her daughter Margaret.

Horfield. The funeral of Jean White will take place at Horfield at 11.00 on Monday 28 November. The family and friends will then depart to Canford but will return to meet with everyone over refreshments later.

Horfield and Bishopston. An important part of our discipleship is to pray for our community and one another. This week you are asked to pray for the following and their families: Dan and Rachel Smith, Stewards, Andy Stevenson, Jasmin Stonehewer, June Threlfall.

Christmas Trees. The 62nd Scout group again this year will be selling Christmas trees to the local community. They will be on sale on 3 and 10 December, outside Horfield Parish Church. Please support them.

Horfield. The next film club will be on the 24th November at 7:00pm: An historical film based in the UK. The best part of the recent film is when Hollywood comes. The aristocratic family agrees to rent their manor home as a film set to raise cash to fix their leaky roof. - All welcome

Our information about warm spaces, see link below.

<https://www.lockleazehub.org.uk/blog/2022/11/2/warm-and-welcoming-community>

Horfield Parish Holy Trinity. Candle light service on November 27 at 6.00pm. All welcome.

'What's On at Ebenezer Church' (November/December) poster/flyer - lots of weekly activities and one-off events - more details - www.ebe.org.uk/welcomingspace

Christmas Services at Ebenezer Church posters/flyer - full details also here -

www.ebe.org.uk/christmas **Christmas Day Dinner.** Details and sign up here -

www.ebe.org.uk/christmasdaydinner Also, we want to invite you and your teams to our Speedquiz Night on Friday 2 December at 7.30pm. It's a great laugh - bring your own drinks and snacks. Sign up teams here. www.ebe.org.uk/speedquiznight

Could you be part of Homes for Ukraine? As winter approaches and the war in Ukraine continues, a further wave of refugees are preparing to join the many already waiting for sponsors to come to the UK. The need for hosts to come forward remains high, but the supply is running low. The Methodist Church and the Baptist Union are both offering matching schemes. They will match you with a suitable guest and support you along the way to make sure hosting is safe and successful for everyone involved. Please contact Eurfron if you want further details.

Christingle at Cotswold Community Centre, Dursley Road, Shirehampton on Sunday 11 December at 5.00pm. Followed by refreshments.

Please note these dates; Thursday 26 January at 7.30pm. Horfield Stewards Plus.

Reflection on the Lectionary Sunday 27 November (Advent 1)

Psalm 122; Isaiah 2: 1 - 5; Romans 13 : 11 - 14; Matthew 24 : 36 - 44

The reflection is provided by Local Preacher, Christine Jones (Longwell Green)

There is Room for You and Me

At this time of year many of us are preparing for Nativity Plays at church or at school; looking out the costumes and props, choosing who will play which part. We've all heard the probably not apocryphal story of the small child playing the part of the inn-keeper who, when Mary and Joseph come knocking at the door, can't bear to say the line 'There's no room in the inn, but you can go to the stable', and instead welcomes them in, to the embarrassment of the adult producing the Nativity Play and the amusement of the audience.

The Methodist Church has taken up this natural childhood desire to be hospitable and produced material this Advent on the theme 'There is Room,' focussing on a different character from the Nativity story each week, though the Innkeeper isn't mentioned. For this first week in Advent the focus is on 'You and Me,' us. Do we sometimes feel that there isn't room for us in the Christmas story; that it's just for children? Do we sometimes feel that there isn't room for us in the Church; that it's just for the able-bodied and articulate who are good at doing things? Or only for old people, or only for women?

Today's readings remind us that Jesus came, and comes, for everyone, including You and Me. Isaiah wrote [chapter 2, verse 3] '*Many people shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord ... that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."*' Matthew [chapter 24, verse 44] records Jesus saying, "*You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.*" There IS room for YOU and ME, but we must respond. Paul points out [Romans chapter 13, verse 11] '*You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers.*'

As the old hymn said:

*Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown when thou camest to earth for me;
but in Bethlehem's home was there found no room for thy holy nativity:
O come to my heart Lord Jesus; there is room in my heart for thee.
When heaven's arches ring and her choirs shall sing, at thy coming to victory,
let thy voice call me home, saying:
Yet there is room, there is room at my side for thee!
and my heart shall rejoice,
Lord Jesus, when thou comest and callest for me.*

Our thanks to Christine for this reflection