

Hello everyone,

This week is the first Sunday in Advent, and we pray that this time will open up for us afresh the wonders of Christ's coming to us on earth to share our joys and sorrows and to bring His peace and hope. We pray that everyone might know that same peace and joy at this time.



Services this week:

This Sunday (1st) at 10.00am we have services of Holy Communion at Measham and Snarestone, Morning Prayer at Donisthorpe, and a Tree Service at Normanton. At 4.00pm, Packington have a Christingle Service with Ashby Youth for Christ, and Swepstone have Carols with the Big Light Switch on starting at 4.30pm.

Looking ahead:

On Wednesday there will be midweek Communion at Appleby at 10.00am.

Activeage meet at 11.00am in Measham Church Hall also on Wednesday.

Kids Kingdom Baby & Toddler group meet on Thursday morning from 9.00am to 11.00am in Appleby Church Hall.

Packington's 'Come and See' for school years 7-9, is later on Thursday at 3.45 to 5.00pm.

Little Fishes meet again in Measham Church Hall at 10.00am on Friday.

There is a Christmas Tree Festival being held in Swepstone Church both this weekend and next (Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th December) from 10.30am until 4.30pm. Admission is free and light refreshments will be served.

Donisthorpe is also holding a Christmas Tree Festival in conjunction with the community group from Friday 6th December to Sunday 8th December. The church will be open daily from 3.00pm to 7.00pm and there will be refreshments and tombola for children and adults.

Next Sunday (8th December) we have Toy/Nativity services at Packington and Appleby, and a Toy Service in Breakfast Church at Measham all at 10.00am, and later on at 6.00pm Donisthorpe have 'Carols and Christmas Trees'.

Woodfield Team prayer

God our Father, you long to draw all people into your love.

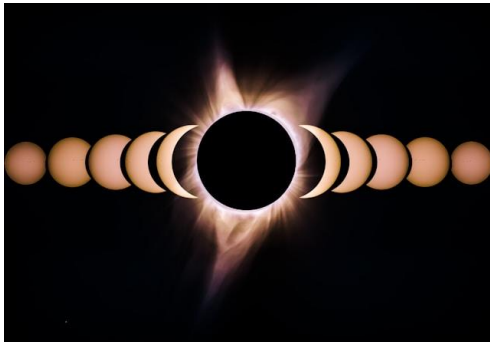
Increase in number your church throughout the Woodfield Team; deepen us as followers and learners of Christ; and give us courage to share the good news of your kingdom.

*We pray this in the power of your Spirit, to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Collect for Sunday 1st December - the First Sunday of Advent

Almighty God,
as your kingdom dawns,
turn us from the darkness of sin
to the light of holiness,
that we may be ready to meet you
in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen

Reading for 1st December - Luke 21.25-36 New International Version (UK)



²⁵ ‘There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.’

²⁹ He told them this parable: ‘Look at the fig-tree and all the trees. ³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. ³¹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

³² ‘Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴ ‘Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.’

Prayers for today:

We pray:

Everlasting God, as we come before you at the start of the Season of Advent we ask you to prepare us for the coming of your son Jesus Christ, to hear us when we pray in faith for the needs of the Church and the world and to thank you for your goodness.

- Almighty God, we pray for your church today, gathering worldwide in churches, chapels, and cathedrals, to praise you and to hear your holy word. Give us a sense of expectation as we come and inspiration as we go. We pray for your blessing on all those who lead, preach and teach as they seek to guide us on our spiritual journey through Advent, until the day when we celebrate together the birth of your Son on Christmas Day.
- Creator God, establish your just and gentle rule throughout the world especially where there is conflict; where peace seems so far away and so many have lost everything, even the faint hope of a peaceful future. We pray for peace, reconciliation, and healing in places of war, hatred, and terrorism. We hold before you the peoples of Ukraine and Russia, and Gaza and Israel. Keep them safe in the midst of trouble.
- Father God, we pray for those amongst our families, friends and neighbours who will only see in Advent a hectic and worrying run-up to the excesses of a secular Christmas. Help us as we try to share a true spirit of preparation for that incredibly precious gift of the Christ-child. May they see in our Services, our Carols and Christingles, the true meaning of Christmas and experience your love for them through the giving of your Son, Jesus Christ.
- Merciful God, we pray for those for whom this day will be long and painful, for those in hospital or ill at home, those struggling with despair or depression, and for all who care for them. Comfort and heal all who suffer, give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.
- Loving God, we pray for those who have recently died and for those for whom this day will be their last. Be near to all who mourn and comfort them; lead them gently through this time of darkness into the light and peace of your enduring love.
- Advent Lord, as we move into a new liturgical year, draw near to us, strengthen our faith, deepen our love for you and for our neighbours. Open our eyes to the wonder of your creation so that when our Saviour comes, he may find our hearts ready to receive him.

Amen.