



## Advent Circuit Letter

If you could choose just one symbol to summarise Advent what would it be?

I would choose LIGHT. We see it in the Advent Candles, in Christmas Tree lights, we have the Christmas Light switch-on in towns and cities, and Christmas bursts into the dark winter and offers up a festival of light.

Prophets long ago, John the Baptist, Shepherds, Wise Men all point to this source of light; Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God, the Light of the world who stepped down into darkness, opened our eyes and set us free.

Advent is the beginning of a new Church year. The lectionary changes over and we patiently work our way through the seasons; Advent; Christmas; Epiphany; Lent; Easter; Pentecost; Harvest. We may have lost some of this rhythm in this Covid era, but we are in Advent now, and thanks to Rev Bethany Willers, we journey together as a Circuit through daily devotions etched in scripture, image, music and words. May God bless each of us as faith is illuminated through these days ahead.

We begin this Advent in sadness; the passing on into the Lord's hands of Rev Joe Rooney has been swiftly followed by his daughter Bridget. Our prayers are very much with the whole family, and for each and every one of us in our loss, and we can certainly, in this Advent period, reflect on the light that both Joe and Bridget have brought into our lives, and into this world.

We begin Advent with uncertainty, again. Omicron is the latest in a wave of variants that keep us in darkness wondering what comes next. We do, however, plan in *expectation* that Advent will be journeyed through in our churches and in our lives and that Christmas will be a time of celebration, hopefully, with family and loved ones at our side.

We see events planned for Advent and Christmas in each Chapel; thank you to Paula for sending out these reminders; and we have a Circuit event planned for Tuesday December 21<sup>st</sup> – a Longest Night Service on Zoom that Rev Bethany will lead us through. I commend this to you.

We also look ahead to new beginnings. The Rev Sue Keegan von Allmen will replace me as Superintendent of the Circuit in September next year. Sue and I have accepted an invitation to go to the Chorley and Leyland Circuit in Lancashire. We are hopeful of appointing a Presbyter into Chepstow Methodist Church, offering pastoral oversight and new energy and vision as they use the gifts God has graced them with. We are hopeful of finding the right person for Caldicot and Rogiet early in the new year. God is good.



We look ahead for God to continue to be at work in our Circuit, villages, towns and city. From the 'Resource Centre' in Ty Sign, to 'Across the Board' in Monmouth, from 'Pilgrims' in Chepstow to the Family Worker in Newport East, the Holy Spirit is equipping and enabling God's kingdom to come to this beautiful part of the world.

So, let us plough on, praying ceaselessly knowing that the Light of God is guiding us. We are passing through these troubling times, and, yes, there is still a way to go, but, as we listen and wait this Advent time, let our hearts and minds be ready for the new that Christ will bring when he comes this Christmas time, bursting into the world as the Light of God.

May the Light of Christ,  
dawn afresh in our hearts,  
illumine our minds,  
fill our souls  
and shine from our lives.

*Gordon*

