

ST COLUMBA'S FAMILIES NEWSLETTER

SUNDAY 13TH
DECEMBER 2020

Hi Families of St Columba's,

For those who are able to come to Sunday School this Sunday, (13th December) it will be lovely to welcome you back to the building – we have missed you! [Please go into the sanctuary as usual for the start of the service and the children will leave for their session after the children's address. Please can one parent/carer accompany your child(ren) to the Upper Hall, where Roddy and Lesley will be waiting to welcome you. The children can be collected as usual at the end of the service. We can't present a Nativity this year so during the session we hope to take a few photos and/or short video clips to share with the congregation via the website and social media. If you are happy for your child(ren) to be included, you will be asked to complete a permission form. ']

On Sunday we are also looking forward to unveiling our Christmas tree – “the biggest one ever” according to Michael, our caretaker; and also the return of the choir. So, it is shaping up to be a special Advent Sunday.

Last week I talked about the Christian Aid Advent prayer chain. I showed my own first attempt during Sunday service – the dimensions of the strips were all wrong! I am sure you will be smarter. Sure enough there was plenty creativity in the pews last Sunday and I wanted to share the wonderful Advent poem that Beth composed last Sunday morning. Thank you for sharing it.

Advent Prayer Chain

I have an Advent challenge for you. You will need:

- Some A4 pieces of paper
- Ruler and scissors to cut a 1.5cm strip each day
- Pens or pencils
- Glue stick or sticky tape
- Five minutes every day of Advent!

Christian Aid, who are a wonderful charity that supports the world's poorest people, invite us to create a prayer chain/Christmas decoration. They ask us to add one loop each day – there are daily suggestions for how we decorate each loop (either with words or pictures.)

Sunday 29 November – Link 1:

'From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.' Isaiah 64:4. Write out this verse or draw a picture about it on the first link of your prayer chain. We wait for God together this Advent.

Monday 30 November – Link 2:

Pray with all who are waiting for equality and justice, with the millions of people whose lives were already poor who are seeing their lives become even harder as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Write a prayer for equality and justice or draw a picture on your link and connect it to link 1.

Tuesday 1 December – Link 3:

Pray with all who are waiting for the end of the HIV/ AIDS epidemic. Colour your prayer chain link in red today as you pray with the 38 million people across the world who are living with HIV on World AIDS Day, many of whom are also more vulnerable to the effects of a changing climate.

Wednesday 2 December – Link 4:

Pray with all who are waiting for somewhere to call home, with those who are seeking refuge. We remember each Advent and Christmas how Jesus spent the first part of his life as a refugee in Egypt to escape the violence of Herod's reign (Matthew 2:13-18).

Thursday 3 December – Link 5:

Pray with all who are waiting for the relentlessness to stop, with those living in refugee camps who have also faced the challenges of climate change as well as the coronavirus pandemic. For example, as the first cases of the coronavirus were discovered in Cox's Bazaar refugee camp, Bangladesh was also facing incoming Cyclone Amphan.

Friday 4 December – Link 6:

Pray with all who are waiting for respite, for all who have had to dig down deep to cope with challenge after challenge this year here in the United Kingdom. That may include praying for yourself. Peace to you, if so.

Saturday 5 December - Link 7:

Pray with those who are waiting for rain, for all who have had to dig down deep to find water. 'We pray for rain, but when there's no rain, we have to dig,' Mekonnen, a pastoralist farmer in Ethiopia explains. Digging for water can be difficult and dangerous work. Visit caid.org.uk/hope to see how we are supporting those facing drought in Ethiopia.

Sunday 6 December - Link 8:

'Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.' Isaiah 40:1. Write out or draw something to represent this verse on your prayer chain link. Pray with all who wait for comfort in their grief or longing this Advent and Christmas.

The daily ideas started last Sunday – so it might need a bit of catch-up. I'm going to try and complete the first week's loops and show it on Sunday. Let me know if you are doing the same. For more details see: https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-10/J197384%20Christmas%202020%20Prayer%20sheet_online_eng_0.pdf

Christian Aid hope that by the end of Advent we will have created a Christmas decoration linking together all our hopes and prayers for God's world and cultivated a sense of waiting with hope as we journey towards Emmanuel, God with us!

Activities for this Sunday

Thanks to Fiona for providing some additional activities for this weekend. Enjoy.

See you soon Angus & the Families Team

Stephanie Dewar Christmas
Card Competition

