

Advent 2024

Happy New Year! Yes, that's right, it's the start of the new Christian Year when we change the lectionary readings to year C largely based on the Gospel of Luke with some readings from John's gospel; particularly at Easter.

Advent is another time when the commercial world has overtaken the Church. Today it is not easy to find an Advent calendar which points to the birth of Christ. There are ones with 24 sachets of organic tea; milk chocolate and Santa; William Morris and bath and beauty. There is even one with 24 fishing bits.

Last year I was given an Advent jigsaw: 24 little boxes with pieces of puzzle in them. Day by day the picture grew until it was a complete Nativity scene. Colourful and a delight! Visitors were interested to see the scene come alive and many felt it better than 24 days of chocolate. It will come out again this year.

Advent. A time to reflect and review the year that has gone; yet looking forward; celebrating Christmas when the Messiah was born; the hope of the nations. Today, it seems to be a festival of food and presents which by the next day have lost their appeal. Some still venture to Church in the morning but they are a minority. Is that it? No.

There will be a time when Christ will return and we need to be ready. This year, Chichester Diocese has designated it "The Year of Faith", and there will be events to help us grow our faith. If we have started our walk with the Lord. Now we need to look ahead to the time when we meet Him.

Tis mercy all, immense and free.

No condemnation now I dread.

Alive in Him my living head

Jennie