

Advent and Christmas 2016

At St Lawrence Church Denton

Advent - The Coming of Jesus Christ

Happy New Year!

Although our calendars tell us it is December the Churches year begins with Advent with the First Sunday of Advent on November 27th, 2016.

Advent — means to come and is a time of waiting and preparation for the "coming of the Lord".

- It is a time for celebrating the past, the birth of Christ, and the future, the second coming of Christ.
- The Advent season is filled with preparation and expectation. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas; however, we can be so busy with the material preparations that we may lose sight of the real reason for our activity.
- In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the season, let us try to keep Advent a season of waiting and longing, of compassion and hope, thinking of the incredible love and humility of our God in sending his son in human form.



In our shopping and baking - let us remember to purchase and prepare something for those who are struggling to feed themselves and their families.



When we clean our homes - let us distribute some of our possessions to those who lack many necessities.



While we are decking the halls of our homes - let us not forget to prepare a peaceful place in our hearts wherein Christ may come to dwell.

We use an **Advent wreath** in Church to mark the New Year lighting a candle on each Sunday as we approach Christmas Day.

It is a circular evergreen wreath with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the centre.

- The **circle of the wreath** reminds us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end.
- The **green of the wreath** speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life.
- **Candles** symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son.
- The **four outer candles** represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent

Advent and Christmas Services 2016

At St Lawrence Church Denton

27th November: Advent Holy Communion: 10:45am

A celebration of Holy Communion to mark the beginning of Advent
Lighting of the first Advent Candle



4th December: Advent Holy Communion: 10:45am

A celebration of Holy Communion to mark Advent
Lighting of the second Advent Candle

11th December: Family and Toy Service: 10:45am

A service for all the family, where we collect gifts of toys for children who are in care as well as food and blankets for the homeless. Please leave gifts unwrapped. Bring your **Reverse Advent Calendar** (See below)

Lighting of the third Advent Candle

18th December: Nativity Service: 10:45am

A family service with a play explaining the Christmas story – a part for every child

Lighting of the fourth Advent Candle



18th December: Carol Service: 6.30pm

A traditional celebration of the story of Christmas in a candle lit Church



24th December: Christingle Service: 4:30 pm

A service for everyone to share in the joy of Christmas with the distribution of Christingle to take home as part of your family's celebrations

24th December: First Communion of Christmas: 9:30 pm

A service of Holy Communion to celebrate the birth of Christ

25th December: Christmas Day Service: 10.15am

A service for all the family to celebrate Christmas Day

Lighting of the centre Christmas Candle



Reverse Advent Calendar

At the start of a New Year we think about diet and exercise.

Sunday 27th November 2016 is the start of the New Church Year and the beginning of



the Advent Season. Instead of having an Advent Calendar where you get to eat chocolate everyday, why not diet,

get some exercise by walking to the shop and give something to someone else instead by making a Reverse Advent calendar



Reverse Advent Calendar
Make a difference to someone new this Christmas.

Starting on November 27th add something to a box or basket every day. Think of what someone might enjoy, find useful or need.

St Lawrence's support the following two local support projects:

The Wellspring Homeless shelters can always use healthy and practical donations but remember it's fun to receive some chocolate or sweet treats along with other staples. Baby-care items, personal-care items and feminine hygiene products are also in high demand.



Denton Looked After Childrens Centre can always use Toys or Gifts suitable for ages 0 to 16

The possibilities are endless. You can gather your gifts to meet the needs of your preferred project.

For your calendar box you could use a wine box covered in Christmas paper or decorated any way you choose – The bottle separators make ideal sections to collect your daily gifts – or just use a small cardboard box.

When your "calendar" is full bring it along to

St Lawrence's Church Sunday Service on December 18th at 10:45

or take it to the place you have chosen to donate to yourself.

No matter what or to whom you gift, your heart will be filled with joy!