

## Rector's Letter - Rev'd Jeremy Trew - December 2023

Dear All

Christmas arrives at the end of this month – you didn't need me to tell you that! If you have children then it has probably been arriving since late September, and even if you don't, you couldn't escape the presence of cards and decorations in the shops interestingly juxtaposed with Halloween tat.

Preparing for Christmas can be both harrowing and demanding. There's so much to do, so many lists to check. And then it's Christmas Eve, and half of it not done. A final gargantuan effort!... and then you can flop onto the sofa to watch the last half of the "Sound of Music" and try and work out just how many you've got for lunch the next day.



Christmas requires precisely 10% more preparation than we are able to give to it. But it's worth it, because it is just about the only occasion in the year when we are likely to meet up with so many of our family and friends and take time to spend more than just a few minutes with them. It might seem stressful at times, but normally we conclude it has all been worth it. Preparing well for Christmas is worth it. That's why we have the season of Advent just prior. It is the time when we hear the stories that provide the background to why God bothered to take the not inconsiderable risk of sending his Son into a world that could be brutal and dangerous. Preparation is always an important time, because it allows us to make sense of the celebration that follows.

I once read a psychiatrist's advice on how to survive Christmas, and I pass it on to you as something we have found helpful: Don't overdo the housework – low lighting and candles can hide a multitude of sins (and dust). Get out for some fresh air, even five minutes – it clears your head, reduces tension, and leads to fewer arguments. And remember, if you're the one doing all the entertaining this Christmas, you deserve a break too – get someone else to do the washing-up and relax by spending ten minutes guessing what possessed Auntie Beryl to buy you that ghastly jumper.

Finally, before I close, three ancient laws that are still on the statute books: It is illegal not to go to church at Christmas; It is illegal to drive or ride to church on Christmas Day; It is illegal to have more than three courses for your Christmas dinner. Go on... break the last two, I won't tell! But if you'd like to keep the first you would be most welcome.

Have a very special Christmas.

Jeremy

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