

ADVENT PREFACE

Earlier this year, with the help of Jeremy Duff, we studied and prayed our way through the Book of Acts in preparation for our diocesan conference, but Acts, as many of you will know, has a prequel... the story didn't all begin when Jesus ascended to glory. Before there was 'glory' there was a 'cradle' and a 'grave'. So beginning on Advent Sunday we're going to study and pray our way through this amazing, yet true, story looking at the 'cradle' in preparation for Christmas before picking up the story in Lent which leads to the 'grave' and thankfully out the other side. In other words we're going to be reading Luke's Gospel. Luke's is a Gospel written for people like us. It's a story written for those who are taught to be sceptical, who are taught to ask for facts and figures before making a decision. Luke's is a Gospel written to those who have no Jewish background and often need a little explanation as to the Jewish way of doing things. Luke's Gospel, therefore, is perfect for twenty-first century people just like us. So this Advent we're going to dive in at Luke 1 verse 1 as we prepare for Jesus' return... that is, after all, what Advent is all about, helping us to get a bit more ready for when Jesus, Luke's main character, returns to judge the living and the dead. What better way to get ready for His second coming than by learning more about His first coming?

However, whilst Luke gives us three action packed chapters before we get to the beginning of Jesus' ministry (something we'll study in Lent) there is still time in Advent for a little bit more preparation, a little bit more getting ready, and so we're going to take a look at the 'O Antiphons'. 'The what?' I hear you cry!... well each antiphon uses a title of Christ, one of His attributes mentioned in Scripture, and each title has been put to music and is sung in the days leading up to Christmas beginning on 17th December. If you've sung 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel' you have sung these titles without knowing it: 'O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free... O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high... O come, Thou Key of David, come' etcetera, and if you're humming the tune now, you're welcome. And if you'd like a little more music in your life you can scan the QR code on each of the days we're studying an 'O Antiphon' and listen to Blackburn Cathedral Choir singing it just for us! For each of these Old Testament titles for Jesus we'll study the Scriptural text where the title is mentioned and hopefully by the end we'll know a little more about Him, and we'll be a little more prepared to meet Him when He comes. I hope you're excited, I am!

The Revd Mike Print, Editor of the Diocesan Devotionals.

Advent '26

Date	Theme	Reading	Author
Preface	Intro	N/A	Mike Print
Sunday, 29 Nov.	Luke	1:1-4	Matt Gaze
Monday, 30 Nov.	Luke	1:5-25	Craig Abbott
Tuesday, 1	Luke	1:26-38	Cindy Rigney
Wed., 2	Luke	1:39-45	Jon Price
Thursday, 3	Luke	1:46-56	Lisa Fenton
Friday, 4	Luke	1:57-66	Iain Parks
Saturday, 5	Luke	1:67-80	Lucie Lunn
Sunday, 6	Luke	2:1-7	Sam Lee
Monday, 7	Luke	2:8-14	Sarah Marston
Tuesday, 8	Luke	2:15-20	Anne Beverley
Wed., 9	Luke	2:21	Tom Woolford
Thursday, 10	Luke	2:22-35	TBC
Friday, 11	Luke	2:36-40	Toby Webber
Saturday, 12	Luke	2:41-52	Sarah O'Donoghue
Sunday, 13	Luke	3:1-14	David Whitehouse
Monday, 14	Luke	3:15-20	Gregor Stewart
Tuesday, 15	Luke	3:21-22	David D'Silva
Wed., 16	Luke	3:23-38	Hllary Murphy
Thursday, 17	O Sapientia (O Wisdom)	Isaiah 40:14	Andy Meeson
Friday, 18	O Adonai (O Lord and Ruler)	Isaiah 11:4-5	Neil Kelley
Saturday, 19	O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse)	Isaiah 11:1	James Lawrence
Sunday, 20	O Clavis David (O Key of David)	Isaiah 22:22	Carol Backhouse
Monday, 21	O Oriens (O Dayspring/Rising Dawn)	Malachi 4:2	Archdeacon Jane
Tuesday, 22	O Rex Gentium (O King of Nations)	Jeremiah 10:7	Archdeacon David
Wed., 23	O Emmanuel (O God with Us) -	Isaiah 7:14	Bishop Joe
Thursday, 24	Christmas Eve	2 Samuel 7:1-16	Bishop Jill
Friday, 25	Christmas Day	Isaiah 9:2-7	Blshop Philip