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The Vicarage
8 Cofton Church Lane
Birmingham B45 8PT
Thursday 10th Dec, 2020

Dear Everyone,

So the programme of Advent and Christmas events is underway! Many thanks to everyone who has worked hard to make them possible. You'll find full details on the Christmas invitations or on the website at www.standrewscofe.org.uk/christmas.

First there's an **Advent Calendar** on the handrail up to St Andrew's with pictures by children of St Andrew's School. Do have a look at them as new ones appear each day.

Next come the **Advent Light Trails**: window displays on words from the Christmas story around both villages from December 12 - 20. Maps, stickers, and trail cards with questions to discuss will be distributed via school and are attached to this e-mail. You can also down-load them from the website or get a paper copy from the Parish Office. A lot of effort and imagination has gone into it, so please encourage others to join in.

From December 20 - 28 there will be a **life-sized nativity** each evening in St Michael's porch - another way of encouraging our community to engage with the Christmas story and to make sure St Michael's is included in Christmas celebrations.

The Church of England has produced a series of prayers and readings for Christmas based on 9 Lessons & Carols. Contributors include the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others you may have heard of like Kate Bottley, Sally Philips, and Bob Chilcott. To get them sent to your inbox or print them out, Google "Church of England Comfort and Joy". We have purchased 50 paper copies for those who don't use the internet and are happy to drop one off to you. Please contact Rob if you'd like one.

If you were asked to record a reading from '**It begins in Bethlehem**' for the Zoom nativity on December 27, please get it to James at st.andrews.nativity@gmail.com this weekend. It would help if you send readings for the on-line **Carol Service** to Alex Taramasco at alex@taramasco.co.uk. Some people found the files too big to e-mail. You can send them via WhatsApp to James on 07751 956841 or Alex on 07716 348508. Both services are coming together well so please plan to join them.

We hope you'll all join in singing **carols on the doorstep** at 6pm on Christmas Eve. The words we'll use for Silent Night and Away in a Manger are on the website, and will be attached to next week's newsletter. Feel free to print them out for neighbours.

More people than usual will be on their own this Christmas. It's not worth cooking a turkey for one, yet many will have food to spare. So if you would appreciate someone bringing **Christmas lunch** round or if you are happy to cook extra for someone else please contact Philippa Fieldson on 445 1269 who will make arrangements.

Birmingham City Mission thank us for the gifts of toys and money, and ask us to

pray for their distribution to needy families. They are currently short of warm clothing for men and of bed linen, both of which can be donated via Julia Powell (445 2803).

The **B45 Food Bank** is short of many items including: instant coffee, Smash, small packs of teabags, long life fruit juice, cereal, tinned meat/fruit/rice pudding/custard/tomatoes/spaghetti/macaroni cheese, rice, pasta sauce, shampoo, toilet rolls, shower gel, soap, tooth brushes (not multi-packs), tooth paste, disposable razors. Drop them to Geoff Hall at 15A Blackwell Rd or in the donation box at Sainsbury's Longbridge.

Eco Group have prepared some **Christmas eco-tips** (attached and on the website).

Forthcoming Sunday Communion services in **St Andrew's** are 8.00am on December 13, and 11.00am on December 20. No need to book for these, but booking is essential for Christmas Eve **Midnight Communion** in the Parish Centre and the **Christmas Day** Communion in St Andrew's. Call Nicola on 0121 4477097 to reserve a place.

Log-in details for forthcoming Zoom services are as follows:

9.30am is our main Sunday Worship: meeting ID is **295 293 9790** and password **standrews**. To listen to the service by phone ring 0203 481 5237. When asked enter meeting ID **295 293 9790**. If asked for participant ID press #. Password is **894070**. You should then hear it. On December 20 this is a **Christingle Service** to which all are welcome. We've delivered Christingle bags to children in St Andrew's School and church groups, but if we've missed anyone please contact Caroline on 07935 245244.

The same log-in details apply for our 9.30am Zoom service on **Christmas Day**. Rob will be celebrating Holy Communion at the Vicarage. If you would like to join in at home, please have bread and wine (or something similar) ready.

The weekly **Thursday Morning Fellowship** begins with a simple act of worship and reflection at 10.00am and on-line coffee and chat follows at 10.30am. Meeting ID is **815 6897 6189** and password **coffeebean**.

The December on-line Prayer Meeting will be a week earlier because of Christmas so is at 9 - 9.30am on Saturday 19th December: ID: **824 7307 6926**, password: **letuspray**. It is important to pray for the work of the church and for our parish especially at Christmas time so please join us, even if you've not been to anything like this before. And if you can't make the meeting, do pray at home for God to speak through all that is being done in by us and the other local churches to share his love and hope at the end of a difficult year.

Yours in Christ,

Rob

Rev Canon R S Fieldson