

Sermon Notes - Advent Sunday 1st December 'The Return of the King'

What most inspired you about the Baptism Service on Sunday.

- How do you feel about being 'the light of the world' and going about doing good (Acts 10:38)? Who could you do some good to this week?

In Advent we looking forward to celebrating the first coming of the Messiah and prepare ourselves to be ready for his second coming.

- Light a candle in the middle of your group, dim the lights and think about Jesus, the light of the world, sing or listen to a piece of reflective music.
- How would you feel about a visitor turning up unexpectedly? Recall a time when this happened. Did it throw you into a panic?

Read Matthew 24:26-44

- How will Jesus return? Describe what you learn from this passage.
- When will Jesus return?
- What will Jesus return for?

The Nicene Creed includes these words: 'And He shall come again with glory, to judge the quick (living) and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end'. It has always been central to Christian belief that Jesus will return (Acts 1:11).

- In the light of his return how should we then live and show that we are ready if he comes tonight?
- Being ready means we continue to be faithful to all that he has called us to do. Read his final words of command to his disciples Acts 1:7,8.
- How might we show ourselves to be faithful by our witness to God's love in Jesus at this season of Advent?

We witness by extending God's invitation to others to come into a relationship with him. Christmas provides us with an easy opportunity.

- Discuss together as a group how you are going to distribute the church invitation leaflet to friends and family, colleagues and neighbours (perhaps draw up some names on a 'post it' note).

Pray for courage and excitement as we reclaim Christmas for Christ **through prayer and action**. Pray for those on your prayer list that they will respond to your invitation and a spiritual spark ignited. Pray for our preparations with the Christmas services and schools concerts in church, Outlook services in the residential care homes and the hospital, carol singing in the community etc.

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