

Dear Friends,

Once again we have moved into the season of Advent when we prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ. This involves our preparations for this year's festival of Christmas but for Christians everywhere, Advent is the season of preparing for the time when Jesus returns once more. How and when nobody knows of course but just like the season of Lent, Advent provides a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our lives to examine what changes or adjustments we feel we might need to make.

For many, the build up to celebrating Christmas each year is always a busy time. Gifts are bought and wrapped, greetings cards written and sent and Christmas lunch planned and prepared. In the midst of it all however, lying in the manger and resting in our hearts is Jesus Christ. The Christ child, 'God with us' is at the heart of all we do and this year's festivities and worship are no different.

You will see from the vicar's notices and service schedule that there is so much for us to become involved in. I like to think there is something for everyone. Candlelit carol services, 'Carols at the Manger', midnight communion and of course Christmas day worship all feature once more in our Christmas festivities.

This being said, I am always aware that there are those for whom the Christmas season is a challenge for a host of reasons. If you would like a friendly visit or happen to be aware of someone who might like a visit during this season of Advent as we journey ever closer to Christmas, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

As we celebrate Christmas and journey on into 2018, this comes with every blessing for a peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Craig

### Vicar's Diary Dates and Notices

<b>7<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Formation course How to prepare and act of worship	7 to 9pm	St. Peter's St. Mary Bourn
<b>8<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Friday Reflections	7pm	The School House, Hurstbourne Priors
<b>21<sup>st</sup> December</b>	Carols at the Manger	5pm	Hurstbourne Priors, Cricket Pavilion
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> December</b>	Carols at the Manger	5pm	St. Mary Bourne, Vicarage Lawn
<b>5<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Friday Reflections	7pm	The School House, Hurstbourne Priors
<b>6<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Messy Church	4 to 6pm	St. Mary Bourne Village Centre
<b>30<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Bible Study	11am	The Vicarage

**Benefice Website 'The Bright Waters Benefice' -  
[www.brightwatersbenefice.com](http://www.brightwatersbenefice.com)**