



Borders Mission Circuit



The **Methodist** Church 

Ministers message, Sunday 25th October 2020.

Dear Friends in BMC

WAITING? A Poster Pete ADVENT Advertising Announcement!

*“Those who **wait** for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:31. (NRSV)*

In the next few weeks, there are some notable days in the Christian calendar. This Sunday (25th) some churches mark as ‘Bible Sunday.’ A day to be thankful for The Bible and our easy access (in the West) to it, which is not always the case for many people in the world. There are plenty of good resources from the Bible Society www.biblesociety.org.uk Sunday 1st November is ‘All Saints Day’ when we recall those famous or not so famous women and men, how they acted and followed Jesus’ example – that makes them saints. A day too when people remember their loved ones no longer with them. Sunday 8th November is ‘Remembrance Day’ and on 11th November it will be ‘Armistice Day.’ Five weeks from now we arrive on Sunday 29th November at ADVENT.

So in October, Don’t *wait* for Christmas, start and shop (spend!) now! That was the *mission statement* I was used to in my retailing career. Have you noticed selection boxes in shops and even a few houses have lights up already! Therefore, I am starting early too with my **Advent-advertising Announcement!** The announcement is about **WAITING**. *“Waiting (says John Sentamu) is a counter-cultural pursuit. We are encouraged to take the waiting out of wanting, cut to the chase and get what we want right away as though there is nothing worth waiting for.”* Whether we are in what Sue Pickering (spiritual director & author) calls *“the waiting place of God at this time or whether we are keeping someone else company during their waiting time”*, we know there are periods of waiting that are harder than others. Compared to times when we don’t find it hard to wait, for something hopeful or exciting. There are waiting times that are difficult- redundancy, medical tests for example. And of course, the waiting for a vaccine for Coronavirus goes on. Yet Advent is a gift for us to all ponder on waiting-with hope.

I think that we in the Church often forget Advent. Why? Because we are so busy with Carol Services, Nativity, Fayres, Christingles, Christmas lunches, etc. I am not saying these activities are bad, what I am saying is that we should not forget the season of **Advent-waiting with expectation for the Christ child**. The Scriptures remind us that people **waited on God**. For example: Abraham and Sarah; The prophets; John the Baptist; Mary, the mother of Jesus. She waited (and journeyed) to give birth to the Christ child. She waited in Egypt, like a refugee and waited to find a young Jesus in the temple. Later Mary waited at the foot of the cross, then the waiting to see his resurrected form appearing to her after Easter morning.

So (drum roll or catchy festive emoji please) better than the *John Lewis* or Kevin the *Aldi* carrot adverts, on to the **BORDERS MISSION CIRCUIT ADVENT ADVERTISEMENT from 'Poster Pete' & 'Adverts-R-US Ann!!'** Rev Ann and I will be facilitating a **Circuit Advent course**. This is due to start on Wednesday 25th November, daytime, face to face (we hope*) at a *Church location and evening, virtual face to face on Circuit Zoom. This will run over 4 weeks. The course will be called **'Waiting?'** and some of the material will come from the Celtic tradition and some from Paula Gooder's Advent book *'The Meaning is in the Waiting.'* All are welcome. Paper resources will be made available for anyone without technology. Contact your local minister for more details in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, a question to consider: **Where are the gifts in waiting?**

We have the promise of scripture that God does not leave us as comfortless, that they who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength and that God is faithful. You may want to find your favourite 'waiting place' (physically, spiritually) and use this prayer:

Help us Lord to be mindful of things that we need to relinquish so that you can bring new life to birth in us. Help us to trust you so that we can welcome the waiting as a time of preparation and quiet, creative rest. You teach us Lord that we need to wait in order to learn from you; you remind us that your timing is not necessarily the same as ours. Help us Lord to know that you are in the midst of our waiting, whatever the circumstances. May we be aware of the gifts which lie ready to be discovered within the waiting place of God. Amen.

Rev. Pete, on behalf of Rev Robert, Rev Ann, Rev Nicola, Deacon Sam and Rev Peter.