

Blandford Methodist Church: Sunday 7th December

Second Sunday in Advent

Good morning and welcome to our Morning Worship which is being led by Mr Barrie Knight. The stewards today are Christine Lydford and Rona Downes. Thank you to Angela for playing for us and also for the flowers. After the service, please join us in the hall for refreshments.

Dates for your diary:

Sunday 14 th December	3.00 pm	Carols at Christmas followed by refreshments (note: there will be no morning service)
Sunday 21 st December	10.45 am	Carol Service led by Reverend Dr Mark Kimber
Thursday 25 th December	10.00 am	Christmas Morning Worship led by Mrs Joyce Wild
Sunday 28 th December	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Joyce Wild
Sunday 4 th January 2026	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mr Colin Besant
Sunday 11 th January	10.45 am	Covenant Service with Holy Communion led by Reverend Dr Mark Kimber
Sunday 18 th January	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Diana Middleditch
Sunday 25 th January	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Miss Liz Ward

Today's readings: Isaiah Chapter 11 verses 1 to 10 **(page 697)**
 Matthew Chapter 3 verses 1 to 12 **(page 977)**

John the Baptist: These are the thoughts from the Methodist website for 2nd week in Advent, based on readings from Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 3 verses 1 to 12.

John the Baptist comes preaching repentance – literally calling people to change the way they think. So what needs to change? Verse 8 gives us the heart of his message: "Bear fruit worthy of repentance." Matthew twice later uses the metaphor of a good tree that bears good fruit. The image of fruit might remind us of Proverbs 11:30: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and the wise capture souls. Fruit grows out of a fundamental disposition of the heart, rather than being something that is just done." (3)

Our lives can become life-giving for others – a source of blessing, nourishment, and hope. We become, in ourselves, a gift to the world.

If we're wondering what this fruit might look like, then we are given a clue in Paul's letter to the Galatians, Chapter 5 verses 22 to 23. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." This is the kind of fruit everyone longs to receive. Like the orange at the bottom of a

traditional Christmas stocking, these are gifts that are familiar, but are nevertheless fresh and joyful.

As part of our Christian witness, try delivering Christmas cards to your neighbours, telling them what you appreciate about them. This is an opportunity to name the fruit growing in each other, to recognise each other as holy gifts.

The food imagery continues with John's warning about winnowing. Just as an orange must be peeled before it can be enjoyed, grain must be threshed and winnowed before it becomes useful. In the ancient world, this meant beating the wheat and tossing it into the air so the wind could carry away the chaff – leaving behind only what nourishes and sustains.(4)

This Advent, we're invited to take that image seriously. What in us needs to be cleared away? What coverings, distractions or attitudes need to be stripped back? Can we let the wind of the Spirit move freely through us, removing all that is fruitless and leaving only what brings life?

Source: Methodist website. <https://www.methodist.org.uk>. Then search for "Advent 2".

DON'T FORGET: Next Sunday afternoon at 3.00 pm we will be holding our Christmas Carol Service when we are inviting the local community to come and join us. Following the service, refreshments will be served in the hall. Please come and bring family, friends and neighbours. It should be a happy afternoon of well-known carols, readings and poems. **Please remember: there will be no morning service.**

Colehill Methodist: Every Monday, 11.00 am to 12.00 noon(ish), Bible Study, coffee, prayers and plenty of chat. All welcome.

Circuit prayers: First Saturday of every month at 8.30 am at Holtwood Methodist Church.

Bible in a year: 7th – 13th December: Daniel 5 – Hosea 14 and 2 John – Revelation 4

Meet Reverend Dr Mark Kimber: Most Fridays Mark will be available in the Okeford Room from 10.00 am to 11.00 am for anyone who wishes to have a chat with him. However, on the third Friday of each month there will be a session entitled '**Meeting with Mark**' to which you are cordially invited.

Decorating the Church for Christmas: On Saturday 13th December we shall be decorating the church for Christmas. If you would like to come and help that would be great. I shall be at church from 9.30 am in the church.

Joyce Wild

Church Christmas Card: As from Sunday 7th December in the Narthex there will be a large Christmas card for church people to sign rather than sending individual cards. The money you would have spent on cards to be donated to our two chosen charities via the box provided.

Joyce Wild

A Methodist Way of Life: Last week I tidied up the notice board in the hall that was used for "A Methodist Way Of Life". (AMWoL). The following notes had been pinned up.

Worship is

"The freedom we have to come together whosoever we are, at all times."

"Knowing He has each and every one of us in His hands".

"Knowing God is there 24/7 holding us up."

"Knowing God personally and helping people".

"Honour, love and support".

"The whole of life".

To Serve is

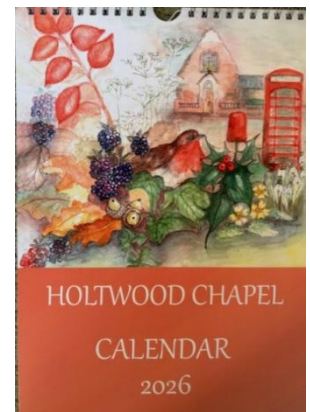
"Helping others selflessly".

These are interesting notes and included now as a reminder that the "AMWoL" is an ongoing journey for us all.

Submitted by John Cornish

Woodlands Methodist: Worship for You. Carols by Candlelight Service with Verwood Concert Brass, Sunday 14th December 6.00 pm. Further details on the poster in the hall.

Holtwood Calendar for 2026: The Holtwood 2026 calendar is now available. We are excited to announce the sale of the calendar as part of our fundraising for repairs to the premises. The cost is £8.50 per calendar, with various payment methods and we can post the calendar to you if you are not able to visit. Email calendar@holtwood.org.uk for more details or to order your calendar(s).



Blandford Foodbank is urgently in need of (updated 1.12.25) – Cereal, Coffee, Tinned fish, Tinned fruit, Tinned meat, Tea bags (40s). Other donations of food or household goods are also welcomed. For those able to support the Foodbank with items, a box has been placed in the Narthex as a collection point.

John Cornish

Prayer: Please can we remember to uphold in prayer those members of our congregation we know are ill or suffering in some way.

If you know of anyone who would like prayer and be mentioned by name in The Link, please let me know (having obtained their permission first to mention them by name).

Minister: Reverend Dr Mark Kimber

Enquiries via Lead Steward, John Cornish, on 07799 516 735

Pastoral Support: Joyce Wild: Tel: 01258 454091