

ADVENT

A TIME FOR DECORATING BOTH OUR MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL CHRISTMAS TREES

The word "Advent" (which means coming) reflects how Christians view the four-week period preceding the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a time of preparation for an ever more intimate coming of the Lord to you, the reader, and to all of mankind.

By preparing spiritually, time and again, for the Lord's coming at Christmas, Christians prepare for his final coming; a coming which will be decisive for you, for me, and for all human beings. Now, we watch for the day, hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours when Christ our Lord and Redeemer will come again in his glory. Our spiritual preparation can be compared to the story below.

Although it was six weeks before Christmas, a little girl, called Betty, had asked her mother to take out the Christmas decorations and look at them. Her mother agreed. "Oh" and "Ah", exclaimed Betty, as she picked the bright baubles and silver trinkets from their tissue wrappings. Now and then, she would show one to her mother and exclaim, "Mother, isn't it beautiful? They will make our Christmas tree beautiful too." Her mother saw a chance to teach Betty a timely Advent lesson. Betty's mother said to her, "Betty, do you know that your soul is something like a Christmas tree?"

At first, Betty smiled, thinking her mother was telling a little joke. But from the serious expression on her mother's face, Betty saw that her mother meant something important. Betty's mother continued, "Yes, Betty, your soul is like a Christmas tree, and the virtues you practise, especially during Advent, are the decorations of your soul. Second to loving God and your neighbor, obedience to God and to your parents, when they ask you to do what is right in God's eyes, is one of the brightest and prettiest spiritual decorations. Every time you love and obey, you are putting another pretty decoration on your soul. These decorations, Love and Obedience, and many other virtues, will surely make Jesus happy on Christmas day."

In view of this story, I suggest that in addition to our Christmas trees that we are going to decorate, or have already decorated in our homes, may we decorate our souls, the best Christmas trees that God ever planted within us when he made us in our mother's womb, with Christian virtues like *Faith, Hope, Love, Obedience, Joy, Charity, Kindness, Compassion, Forgiveness*, you name it. Lest we forget, the decorations we put on our souls, our spiritual Christmas Tree, are the ones that really count in the eyes of God.

May this year's Advent season serve as a constant reminder for you and me that we need to be spiritually prepared for the second coming of Our Lord, a coming of which no one knows the time nor the day. Have a blessed and a fruitful Advent, and may God bless you and your loved ones! Amen!



The Rev. Anthony Kwaw
Rector, St. Timothys Anglican Church

St. Timothy's Anglican Church

Wishing you

a Joyous Advent,

a Merry Christmas, and

a Happy New Year.

Join us and share the HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE of the season.

December 3 *Advent 1*
8:30 am BCP Holy Communion
10:00 am BAS Holy Eucharist

December 10 *Advent 2*
8:30 am BCP Holy Communion
10:00 am Family Service Holy Eucharist

December 17 *Advent 3*
8:30 am BCP Holy Communion
10:00 am Lessons & Carols

December 24 *Advent 4*
8:30 am BCP Holy Communion
10:00 am BAS Holy Eucharist

December 24th *Christmas Eve Services*
5:00 pm Family service with Nativity Play (BAS)
9:00 pm Holy Eucharist, followed by a Candlelight service.

December 25th *Christmas Day*
10:00 am BCP Holy Eucharist Holy Communion (in Chapel)

December 31st *New Year's Eve Services*
8:30 am BCP Holy Communion in our Chapel
10:00 am BAS Holy Eucharist

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