

## The New Walk

The monthly magazine of St Stephen's  
United Reformed Church (formerly Presbyterian)

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### **From Rev. Philp Tiplady:**

November is the time in our cycle of church seasons that we think about the end of times, about how the long arc of history from the moment of creation will come to an end and what the final state is to be.

In good times these matters are hardly considered, but when times are difficult people become more focused on them, seeking the hope that at some point there will be a moment of release, when struggles can be ended, when sadness can turn to joy, when we can rest in the glory of God.

November is the time when the weather turns properly cold, when the days are noticeably shorter and darkness starts to dominate. We can no longer find the joy of resting in the sun, of being able to easily go out at the end of the day. We feel the long days to come through the winter, before spring is with us.

November starts with the remembrance of difficult days in the past, days that were real to some of us, forming part of the world that others were born into, ancient history that is worth remembering to the youngest. We remember how people lived with the hope that there would be a worthwhile end to the struggle.

Later in the month we will reflect on times when people struggled with the threat of violence for standing up for the faith that they held. We remember how they held onto their faith that God was with them in their struggle as they followed the path of Jesus.

We know that we live in difficult times. We see in so many parts of the world people suffering, dying, being driven from their homes because of who they are, the beliefs and ideas they hold to, their identification with their home against those to whom they are an inconvenience to be removed by any means necessary.

We hear people in our own land speaking of threats to our supposed way of life, of those within our land and from outside who will destroy us. They try to divide us, to make us despise those who are different so that we will have a target to take out our frustrations with the hard times.

For us December will come, the new cycle begins, light starts to come out of darkness, the apocalyptic tone decreases and we come to the time of the birth of the child in Bethlehem, the child born in humble circumstances, amidst a people who seemed to have little hope who would bring down the mighty.

We are here to have an impact on the world, not by thinking about the glory that is to come, but by looking for the humble child, the virtually invisible that will bring about real change.

Philip

## **Services for Nov. and Dec.**

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| <b>Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup></b>  | <b>11am Communion Service led by Rev. David Howlett; also on Zoom</b>               |
| <b>Nov. 9<sup>th</sup></b>  | <b><u>10.45am</u> Remembrance Service led by Rev. Philp Tiplady; also on Zoom</b>   |
| <b>Nov. 16<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>11am Service, led by Rev. Stephen Blyth; also on Zoom</b>                        |
| <b>Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup></b> | <b>11am Service led by Mr. Gary Wood; also on Zoom</b>                              |
| <b>Nov. 30<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>11am St. Andrew's and Advent Service, led by Rev. Paul Ellis</b>                 |
| <b>Dec. 7<sup>th</sup></b>  | <b>11am Service, led by Rev. Mike Playdon; also on Zoom (Hanging of the Greens)</b> |
| <b>Dec. 14<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>11am Service led by Rev. Mike Playdon; also on Zoom</b>                          |
| <b>Dec. 21<sup>st</sup></b> | <b>11am Lessons and Carols Service led Rev. David Howlett; also on Zoom</b>         |
| <b>Dec. 28<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>11am Service led by Mr. David Coxhead; also on Zoom</b>                          |