



# Link Up!

**‘He who testifies to these things says,  
‘Yes I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come,  
Lord Jesus.’ Revelation 22: 20**

## Still to come in December

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December we will hold our All-Age Carol Service.

On Christmas Day we will have our usual Christmas Day Family Service which will start at 10.30am.

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December, in a slight change to our previous notices, we will be joining Parkstone Baptist Church for their ‘Looking Back, Moving Forward’ service. When we did this last year, we were asked to think about some of the highlights of the year just ending and what our hopes and aspirations are for the year to come. You might want to give some thought to that in preparation for the service if you are joining us



I was in the queue in the bank on 2<sup>nd</sup> December where they were playing some Christmas music, like many businesses especially shops. It’s probably meant to make you feel better about a) spending money and b) queuing to do it! Personally, I’m not fooled. When I got to the counter the cashier said ‘I’m fed up with this already’ gesturing to the music. I could sympathise with her and anyone else who has to work somewhere at this time of year without being able to escape. She went on to say that she goes from work by car where the radio plays constant Christmas classics and then home where her husband loves to play them too. I commiserated with her and wished her a Happy Christmas.

Now I quite like many of the Christmas classics and hum along if I hear them playing. I’ve even been known to have a bit of a bop at home to them. We’ve got a CD with tracks like ‘Santa Claus is coming to town’ and ‘I’m dreaming of a white Christmas’ and Wizzard’s 1973 classic ‘I wish it could be Christmas every day’ on it. However, I’m glad we don’t have to hear them every day of the year that would definitely be too much.

**Bible Study Groups:** Our Monday Bible Study group and our Wednesday Night In group on Zoom are both taking a break over the Christmas period. They will start back on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January and Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January.

**A reminder:** Ken has asked us to remind you that Friday is his regular quiet/study day and Saturday is his day off. Please respect both of those days and don't contact him with routine business on them.

**Looking forward to 2025**

We are starting a new series for Sunday morning services on parables

**On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January** we will be starting the year looking at 1 Corinthians ch 13 'Faith, Hope, Love.'

**On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January** we will be looking at Luke 16: 19-31 with the title 'Beg'

**Then on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January** we will be looking at Matthew 18: 21 – 35 with the title 'Borrow'.

**And on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January** we will be looking at John 10: 1 – 21 with the title 'Steal'.

In my daily devotions during December the writers have been focusing on the Aramaic word 'Maranatha' which means 'Come O Lord' or 'The Lord is coming'. It's the same meaning as the Latin word Adventus from which we get Advent. The word Maranatha was a common greeting used by the early church when they were under persecution as we've seen in our studies in Acts. It was a word to encourage each other with because it looked forward to the return of Jesus at the end of time. Of course, they expected that to come during their lifetimes but we're still waiting for that second coming 2000 years later.

Bernard of Clairvaux the founder of the Cistercian order of monks in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, said that at Advent we remember Jesus' three comings. The first coming was in flesh and weakness, when he was born in Bethlehem, became a man and died for us. The final coming, when he returns to earth to restore it and reunite us with him, will be in glory and majesty. In the middle, is the hidden coming, when those who have accepted him into their lives know him every day within themselves through the Holy Spirit and follow where He leads. Jesus himself promised that 'If anyone who loves me will keep my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them' (John 14:23)

I think I would add that it is the fact that Jesus is living within his followers daily through his Spirit that helps us to witness to people who don't yet know Him and bring them to know Him too. So, in that sense it really can be 'Christmas every day'.

So, lets live our lives in that daily reality as we move into 2025.

*Janet Matterface*

