



*Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth Peace.*

Luke 2:14

December 2017

2017 has been an incredibly packed year at St Margaret's-St Giles and, as we steam towards Christmas, it feels like it will not be slowing down for a while. We have grown exponentially and on so many different levels as a community following our amalgamation and it is getting hard to keep track, but it is exciting being part of a church that recognizes its growing capacity for ministry as we plan for the future.

But it has also been a tough year. We have had more than our fair share of funerals and I know that for a number of us this has been a year of difficult transitions and significant loss.

Advent is a transitional season in the church calendar because it acknowledges our present reality, yet calls us into a new place where we know afresh the hope, peace, joy and compassion of Christ. While we dress this season in tinsel in lights, it is a season that grapples with the grubbiness and ambiguity of life and offers us a new perspective in the midst of that reality.

My hope and prayer as your priest and pastor is that as you journey through this season of Advent and into the season of Christmas, you may know the full hope, peace, joy and love that Christ calls each of us to. Remember that there are many opportunities at St Margaret's-St Giles for us to share this season together as a community. Take the opportunity to find some space for yourself, family and friends to join us as we journey together.

I hope you have a blessed Christmas.

Yours in Christ

**The Reverend Simon Bell
Incumbent**