



St James Muswell Hill

Good morning, friends

*Put your outdoor work in order
and get your fields ready;
after that, build your house. (Proverbs 24:27)*

'Black Friday' has now become a fixture - a day to buy early, buy large, bag a bargain before Christmas.

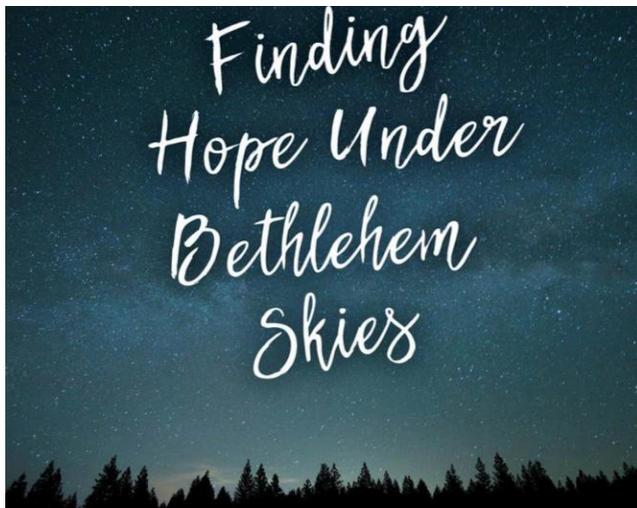
I'm old school - I don't like it. I don't like the pressure to consume, add, replace, upgrade. Especially when we see people staggering under the debt which follows.

This Proverb says that there's a sensible order. Work, providing an income for yourself and your family, has to come first. *After that, build your house.* Remember, this is in a culture where living in a tent was - and is - cheaper and realistic. He's not advocating homelessness. He's saying, get the income stream sorted before you splash out. An income is what makes building (or renting or buying) a house possible.

We can't spend before we earn. We should remember that as we plan our Christmases!

Have a great week, and whether it's online or in person, I look forward to seeing you on Sunday,

Chris



THIS SUNDAY

This Sunday marks the beginning of Advent, which means it's our Christingle service in the morning.

We are going to be looking at the book of Ruth through Advent. To make it as spiritually helpful as possible, to balance all the rush and the present-buying, we're recommending a matching book of daily reflections, called 'Finding Hope Under Bethlehem Skies'. It's available from our bookshop, you can buy it as an e-book [here](#) or if you use the app *PrayerMate*, that daily feed is [here](#).

MONTHLY PRAYER GATHERING

Next Wednesday, Dec 1, will be our monthly prayer gathering at 8:00pm, and this time we're going to be both on Zoom and in person at church. Put it in your diary, and use the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88287943724?pwd=ak9OTjVCM3ZuK0RMQjNHOWZpL3hZdz09>

Meeting ID: 882 8794 3724

Passcode: Pray

CHRISTMAS

We're planning a great Christmas celebration this year. Pick up the publicity card this Sunday and share them with your friends, or go to st-james.org.uk/christmas

YOU'RE INVITED TO

Christmas

AT ST JAMES MUSWELL HILL

CONTEMPORARY CAROLS 12th Dec 7pm In-Person & Online	TRADITIONAL CAROLS 19th Dec 4:30pm & 7pm In-Person & Online (7pm)	
CRIB SERVICE 24th Dec 4:30pm In-Person Only	MIDNIGHT SERVICE 24th Dec 11pm In-Person Only	CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES 25th Dec 8am & 10:30am In-Person & Online (10:30am)

ST-JAMES.ORG.UK/CHRISTMAS

We've taken the decision to offer a Midnight Communion service, but it's not

one we've taken lightly. It's a service which attracts loads of guests, and we need to do it in a safe way. But - lots of our regular stewards and welcome team will be away.

So - could you step up, maybe for the first time, and help welcome the hundreds of people that we expect? If you can, please email jean.airey@st-james.org.uk. We shall need a safe size of team to run it well.

And's not too late to join our Community Choir! Come to rehearsals this Monday, 7.30pm in the Church Centre. No auditions, and loads of fun.

COVID-19 UPDATED GUIDANCE

You'll have seen that the government has slightly upgraded the guidance about lateral flow tests, as we head into a season of busy shopping and parties. They're encouraging us to take tests before heading into crowded spaces.

That includes St James over the Christmas season! So, this is a polite request to take a test before coming to one of our services or events. No-one's going to check or know, but it's all part of loving our neighbours. And a reminder that masks are optional, but we will keep a masked area on the right as you enter, for those who wish to keep slightly more distant. Watch out for the big green banners

WOMEN'S ADVENT EVENING

All women of St James are welcome to come to celebrate Advent, Friday 26 November, 7:30pm in church. Please invite friends, family and neighbours to hear Amy Boucher Pye; a personal testimony; and to join in with Christmas inspired activities. Charcuterie boards, wine and hot and cold drinks will be available throughout the evening. Book tickets [here](#) or contact leona.akass@st-james.org.uk. We look forward to seeing you there.

NORTH LONDON CHORUS

We are delighted to be able to invite you to our next concert on Saturday 27 November, at St James Church, where we'll be performing the same programme twice, with a relaxed matinee at 5:00pm and a more conventional evening concert at 8:00pm.

The main work at these two 70-minute performances will be Benjamin Britten's cantata *St Nicolas* and NLC will be joined by 35 members of Finchley Children's Music Group. To start each concert with a fanfare of celebration, we will be performing Parry's anthem *I was glad* and to provide a more reflective moment in the evening concert we will also sing Mendelssohn's beautiful Lutheran hymn *Verleih uns Frieden (Give us peace)*.

You can book tickets at <https://tickets.northlondonchorus.org> and we have a special concession price of £1 for under-18s at the afternoon performance.

PATHWAY CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISER

Pathway, one of our World Mission partners, is having a Christmas fundraising celebration in Enfield.



THE WAVE CAFÉ EXPERIENCE

Wave Cafe are holding an Open Evening to launch their newly expanded programme on Thursday 2 December, 6:00 to 9:00pm.

Drop into the United Reformed Church any time between 6:00pm and 9:00pm to tour an art exhibition, sample a drink and a snack, hear live music, and experience the café for yourself. Free admission, all welcome: www.wavecafe.org

BESOM CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

We are still looking for people to make up hampers for the Besom team to deliver to vulnerable families in our borough. If you don't feel able to make up a complete hamper then donations of non-perishable, non-pork-based food would be really welcome. Please drop off your hampers and food donations at church or with Cath Mercer (cathandpaul1974@yahoo.co.uk) no later than Sunday 5 December.

WINTER NIGHT SHELTER 2021-22

This year the Winter Night Shelter plans are still being finalised. However, we would welcome volunteers to contact Alex@allpeopleallplaces.org who

would be keen to sign people up to the Women's Shelter and latterly sign-post to the Winter Night Shelter when the plans have come together for this. All People All Places have had staffing changes, and change of advice from the borough, both of which have made finalising their plans and venues challenging. We thank you so much for your commitment to this project and we know that lives are being transformed due to your care, love and support.

VACANCIES – PLEASE PRAY

You'll know we are recruiting for some staff vacancies - do please pray for the process. We need to make sure that everything we do complies with the best practices on recruitment, safeguarding and so on, and it is taking time to get everything together. Above all, please do pray for the right people to apply! Point people to st-james.org.uk/jobs

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

Many Christians battle with addictions in secret - overeating, gambling, pornography, alcohol. We're starting a new support group to encourage each other - watch this short video to hear why it's so important. It's a hard thing to own up to, but if you've been hesitating, do join us this Thursday evening, 7.30 in the Vicarage, 2 St James Lane. Email Chris if you'd like to know more.

GREEN TOP TIP

Don't add to the Christmas Wrapping Paper Mountain! Instead - reuse brown paper that comes as padding for other purchases or deliveries (and maybe decorate it!). Use old newspaper or colourful magazines. Use old Christmas cards to make gift tags or new Christmas cards!

OUR MISSION PARTNER - PATHWAY

We ask you to join us in praying for His continuing blessings on Pathway, on our Team Leader Ashley, and for the success of Ashley's new vision for Pathway. In addition, please pray that, after a slow but encouraging start due in no small part to the impact of the pandemic, we are able to continue the Lord's work with primary school children in North London in person, rather than by video, and that many more schools will be able to welcome us in the run up to Christmas

You can see Pathway's latest newsletter here:

[October 2021 Newsletter.pdf](#)



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