

CONTACT

Advent 2016

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Waiting for Christmas

Christmas. It starts with the cheap wrapping paper in January, ramps up in the autumn with the shops' first displays, then perches near the end of December waiting to arrive as you cross the days off your advent calendar. Even if you don't bother with Christmas yourself, it's hard to escape its growing presence each year.

But waiting in life is not unique to Christmas. We find ourselves waiting for many things. Waiting for the work day to end. Waiting for a friend to arrive. Waiting for the appointment to come round. Waiting for a baby to be born. Waiting for news. Right now, somewhere in your life, you're probably waiting for something.

How are you using the time? Getting ready for whatever it is that's on the calendar? Or just getting on with life, so the event doesn't play on your mind? We do that, don't we? Distract ourselves with tasks or pleasures so that we don't think too much about what's coming up. Maybe you're doing that right now.

Many do so with the biggest thing we're all waiting for. Which is? The end. Of? You. Me. Ultimately, all of us are in life's waiting room for the "big event" - death. We might worry about it or simply ignore it. But whatever we do, it doesn't change the fact that the days are ticking off, the end is coming.

Is it a bit morbid to talk about death at Christmas? Yes. But it doesn't have to be. Death actually has a very positive and lovely place in the story at the heart of Christmas: Jesus' birth. Eight days after he was born, an elderly man called Simeon met Jesus with his family. He held the baby and said this:

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation."

Simeon was near death but he felt peace. Why? Because God had long promised to save from the mess we've brought onto ourselves through self-centred, rotten, God-ignoring behaviour. And God's rescue plan includes defeating death with its power to trap us in miserable, unending darkness. Simeon knew Jesus was that plan.

In his terminal condition, Simeon found peace. He was ready to meet God and pass through death into a finer, eternal life. How did he get ready? By trusting in Jesus Christ, God's Saviour. You can do the same. Don't waste your time in the waiting room of life distracting yourself from what lies ahead for us all. Be like Simeon. This Christmas, find hope for your future in Jesus Christ.

David Last
Pastor at Forest Baptist Church

Discover *the true story*

Discover the true story of Jesus' birth in the Bible this Christmas. If you don't have a Bible then we can send you one or visit <https://goo.gl/czcl8R> to read the Bible on your device (and not just in English!). The **items in yellow** are the references you need to look up. If you're not sure how to do that, why not ask a Christian friend for help?

Isaiah 9:1-7 : *Christmas is for the children, so it's said. After all, at the heart of the original story is a baby called Jesus who receives gifts. But that's not really where we should begin.*

Luke 1:26-56 : *God was at work in the events of Christmas. Really? Maybe you doubt that. Well, some of Jesus' closest family found that hard to believe too. But God surprised them!*

Luke 2:1-10 : *God did the impossible at the first Christmas. There's a thought! And if he did the impossible in the past, what might he do now? Maybe he can even change your life?*

Matthew 1:18-25 : *Joseph, Jesus' step-father, tried to live the right way and others saw him as good. But he knew that we sinful human beings need so much more: we need a saviour.*

Matthew 2:1-18 : *Jesus' early life shows what a brutal world this is. But he escaped death as an infant and overcame it as a man. He can save us from whatever trouble we face.*

Luke 1:26-35 : *We all have fears. But wouldn't you like to put yours to rest? Jesus can do that. The baby once cuddled in Mary's arms is God come to us. He can calm all fears.*

John 1:1-18 : *Jesus is God: the creator of all things. He has brought a new type of life into the world. All who trust him gain it and become the everlasting children of God.*

Visit our website for more about these readings.



Come to our Christmas Services

Sun 18th Christmas Carols - 11.00am

Wed 23rd Lunchtime Carols - 1.15-1.45pm

Sun 25th Christmas Day - 10.30am

Free refreshments follow the services on the 18th and 23rd.



Forest Baptist Church

Welsh Chapel Hall, 881 High Road,
Leytonstone, E11 1HR

☎ 020 0222 6801

📱 07986 115735 (text/whatsapp only)

✉ contact@forestbaptist.org.uk

🌐 forestbaptist.org.uk

To contact our pastor, David Last, just use the details above.



Sunday Services

Morning : 10.30am
Evening : 5.00pm



Friday Club

* 3.30-5.00pm * Term Time *
* For ages 5-11 * FREE *
Contact Gill on
07957 566 338

Justtalk

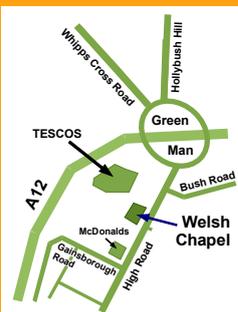
An informal group which gets together in Leytonstone every fortnight. Come and meet others, discuss an issue, seek advice or, even, simply practise your English. To find out more, visit:

forestbaptist.org.uk/justtalk

FREE ENGLISH CLASSES



Contact Ferris on 07727 082 449
or ferrislindsay@gmail.com



Forest Baptist uses the Welsh Chapel on the High Road in Leytonstone, halfway between McDonald's and the Green Man Roundabout. Buses 66, 145, 257, W13, W14 and W19 all stop outside. The Tube station is just over half a kilometre away. A few car parking spaces are available on the site. Some of our activities occur in other locations. Please get in touch to find out times and places.