

I am writing this just over a week after my inauguration and it has been the most amazing week. It is wonderful to have prayed and shared in Communion with hundreds of you – I find it hard to believe so much work has gone into welcoming one more Christian coming to live among you but I know what has been a superb welcome is the result of months of planning and preparation and I am grateful to all involved.

As Advent approaches the streets are already buzzing with preparations for Christmas. Meanwhile we in the Christian church take time to focus on the coming of the Kingdom of God and the expectations of that which is already fulfilled in the cross and resurrection and that which is to come in Jesus' return.

Our preparations mean we take on the awesome responsibility of being church by god's grace we are making sure people in our generation hear the name of Jesus, those in need are cared for in the name of Jesus and our lives together reflect the love and compassion of Jesus.

As a church living as Jesus intends I would expect to see three aspects of church which might broadly be described as worship, making disciples and prophetic witness. This has the character of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and expresses the kingdom, conversion and compassion.

In the Diocese of Birmingham I have already seen much of all these things and I am thrilled by the joy and love seen in our part of God's church.

May you have an expectant Advent and a joyful Christmas as we work together to serve the mission of God.

Bishop David, Bishop of Birmingham