

Letter from the Minister

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Dear friends

And so we begin the advent season once more and I hope that my twelfth Christmas at Cornerstone will prove to be as good as those that have gone before.

James Willett and I recently completed our training as Mental Health First Aiders and the training proved to be challenging and fascinating in many ways. As an aside we were introduced to Gary Chapman's popular book, *The Five Love Languages*. Chapman writes that love can be given and received in five ways: physical touch; words of affirmation; acts of service; quality time; and gifts. Love looks different depending on which 'love language' you speak. The Bible says "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us." (1 John 3:16) and the Advent Hope that God fills our hearts with is that this is no empty philosophy but a reality and truth that is earthed in action. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14) is what sets apart the Gospel.

Perhaps you will find ways to give and receive love in the different five 'languages' but I hope that most of all you will receive and share the love of God with others. In some respects we may be being shaken as a congregation at the moment with a fair few challenges to address and pray through. But what a faithful God we serve as we 'step out of the boat' (as we considered on Sunday 18th November). I am reminded of the words of C.S. Lewis 'Courage dear heart!'

Next year as a church we will follow up this year's series from Acts with a series called 'Holy Habits' and this, based on the practices of the early Christian church found in Acts 2, promises to nurture our Christian discipleship in ten different ways. Finally, no matter how 2018 has been for you, I hope that you will know God's love and blessing this Christmas and New Year.

Yours in Christ

Eddie