



Follow The Star: The Great Invitation

## Resources for Advent and Christmas 2022

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Following a series of difficult Christmases, churches across the Church of England are hoping that 2022 offers a chance to welcome people back to services and events that haven't been possible recently.

Discover resources to invite your community back to church this Christmas. The services and events will be specific to your community, but here you will find signposts to the national branding, reflections and more that will help you to invite people into your church – both online and onsite.

**Looking to sign up for this year's reflections emails or download our app?**

[Yes, I'm interested](#)

# A Church Near You

List your onsite and online Advent and Christmas services on AChurchNearYou.com, using an Advent or Christmas tag. From the start of Advent, they will then appear on a special Christmas landing page, that we will be driving the public to via advertising and publications.

Last year, [AChurchNearYou.com](https://www.achurchnearyou.com) received 77 million page views, and 80 per cent of visitors were on the site for the first time.

By the start of Advent, the site also will carry a range of 'Great Invitation' features to help everyone invite family and friends:

- Improved 'Share with a friend' buttons on all events.
- If you share a Christmas event link from AChurchNearYou.com, the link preview will carry a "You're invited" link preview graphic.
- Improved 'Add to calendar' functionality to make it easier for visitors to plan their services.
- Larger, clearer text options in the custom video generator and social media graphic generator, to help you invite people on social media (download on the AChurchNearYou.com Resource Hub)
- 'Great Invitation' PowerPoint slides to download for your own invitation messages (download on the AChurchNearYou.com Resource Hub).

Downloadable hymns will also be available on the Resource Hub, for all Church of England churches to use for free. We will be sharing music from across the traditions, available thanks to the partnership with St Martin-in-the-Fields and Royal School of Church Music (RSCM).

- By the end of September, we will publish a track list of all the Christmas music that we will be providing on the Resource Hub
- All tracks available to download by end of October.

## Resource Hub: A Church Near You

- [\*\*Add your church's services and events\*\*](#) to A Church Near You
- [\*\*Free resources for your church\*\*](#) including music, social media graphics, videos and more.
- Create your own [\*\*customised Christmas videos\*\*](#) using our video-generator tool.

# Our theme for 2022

In line with feedback from dioceses and parishes, we are returning to the very popular [Follow The Star](#) branding used in two previous years to encourage people to attend their local church at Christmas and to take the next step on their journey of faith.

We will be developing new resources for 2022 which will work alongside material from previous years, with a focus on **The Great Invitation** - encouraging everyone to share the joy of gathering together to celebrate the birth of Jesus with their family, friends and neighbours - especially after two years where this has been impossible for many.

## What are the key elements of the campaign?

As in previous years, the national Church has been working with dioceses and churches to make a range of digital and print content available, branded with the *Follow the Star* theme:

### Reflections

*Follow The Star: The Great Invitation* consists of 12 reflections from a range of contributors including the Archbishops who share personal stories exploring themes of invitation.

Starting on Christmas Eve and continuing daily (Monday to Saturday) until the Epiphany (6 January), these reflections will help you make space this Christmas. On each of the 12 days, a different contributor will share something that speaks of a Christmas invitation for them, bringing the theme to life through a mixture of personal story, Bible reading, reflection and challenge.

These reflections will also be made available freely via:

- Email
- Audio
- App with accompanying resources for children and families
- The Church House Publishing [reflections booklet](#), along with [other shareable print resources](#).

A free reflections poster will be made available on this page (and via the [AChurchNearYou.com](#) Resource Hub) carrying information about all the ways the reflections can be accessed, and a QR code to download the app to listed to the reflections.

### The Great Invitation short liturgy: commissioning people to invite others to church

[Revd Barry Hill explains](#) how you can use our short liturgy to commission your congregation to invite others to church this Christmas.

It can be used as part of a Service of the Word or Eucharist on either 20 or 27 November.

[The liturgy](#), which is specially prepared for this year's 'Follow The Star: The Great Invitation' theme for use in the Church of England, is designed to include the giving out of invitations to or details of special services during Advent and Christmas to which we may invite those close to us.

The resource is also available through the [A Church Near You Resource Hub](#), where there is also a Christmas card template.

### Printed materials

The following brand-new resources are available now to help you welcome visitors to your church and to help them take the next step on their Follow the Star journey:



The Reflections booklet (available individually, in packs of 10 and 50, and also in Large Print)

- A Prayer Bookmark, which includes a QR code to help individuals access more digital resources
- A Family Prayer Card, which offers a prayer in a star shape with space to decorate, cut out and display it at home or in church.
- An Invitation Card, for churches to give to congregation members to send or give out to friends, family and neighbours, inviting them to festive church services and events.

All these materials are available to order now via [the Church House Publishing website](#).

### Christmas in a Box

We want to encourage all our churches and all our churchgoers to invite their neighbours and their communities to an in person gathering this Christmastime where they can hear the Christmas story and be welcomed into the love of Jesus.

But what kind of gathering, and what about churches who feel they don't have capacity to come up with something suitable? That's where Christmas in a Box comes in. We're providing a small number of model services that you can take and make your own.

Christmas in a Box resources are [available to download now](#).

### National online services for Advent and Christmas

In collaboration with a range of Christian charities and organisations, we will produce online services for the Sundays of Advent and Christmas, including an online service for each Sunday of Advent. The weekly online services have been very well received on social media and continue to attract a diverse audience including regular churchgoers and people exploring faith across a wide age range. They will all be broadcast on the Church's [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#).

## You are not alone this Christmas

Christmas can be difficult for many people. Whether facing bereavement, loneliness or another struggle, space to reflect during December can be useful in the busyness of the season. The Church of England has a range of resources for those finding Christmas hard.

- The Archbishop of York will be leading a Blue Christmas service on the third Sunday of Advent, 11 December at 9am. You can watch on our [website](#), [YouTube](#) or [Facebook](#) channel.
- Those remembering someone who has died are invited to [light a virtual candle](#) on our website.
- On Christmas Day, gather with us at 4pm on our [YouTube channel](#) as we countdown your top 10 Christmas carols and chat together in the comments.
- A range of prayers for those struggling at this time of year will be shared. Follow us on [Instagram](#) to see those.

## Webinar: Support your church this Advent and Christmas

Learn more and explore this year's Advent and Christmas resources in our webinar recording below or [view slides from the webinar](#).

# Other resources

## Print resources

Reflection booklets (also in large print) are available now for churches to purchase. You can preview [sample pages from the booklet](#) online.

A range of new *Follow the Star* Prayer Bookmarks, Family Prayer Cards and Invitation Cards are also available.

Order these and other print resources today from the [Church House Publishing website](#).

## How-to blogs

So you have a bunch of resources and assets, but you haven't quite figured out how to use them. Well, the Digital Labs team have been publishing a number of blog posts over the past few weeks to give you ideas and tips about how to exploit the assets you have at your disposal.

Whether it's about trying to leverage the growth in appetite for audio content or using social media to amplify your message, our how-to blogs will help you to share your church's experience and inspire others.

[Check out the Digital Labs blog](#) and find resources and advice on design, photography, social media strategy and more.

And if audio is more your style, [try our Christmas podcast instead](#) - just the same content in a different format.

## Generous Christmas

For ideas about encouraging generosity and making it easy for people to donate to your church at Christmas, visit the [Generous Christmas](#) page. There you can also find out how to add 'Follow the Star' branding to Give a Little contactless giving devices, if you use these.

## Design elements and assets

### Logo

Our campaign logo pack for print and digital is [available to download](#).

### Colour palette

#### Fuel Yellow

RGB: 231, 170, 34

HEX: #E7AA22

CMYK: 10, 36, 93, 1

Pantone: 7409 C

#### Dark Cerulean

RGB: 0, 72, 116

HEX: #004874

CMYK: 99, 70, 30, 16

Pantone: 7693 C

### Fonts

[Abolition Soft](#) can be accessed through the Adobe Font package with a Creative Cloud license. [Fira Sans Extra Light](#) is available for free from Google Fonts.

Alternatively, for a free similar font [Teko](#) can be used.

