St Francis Weekly News for CHRIST THE KING 22nd November 2020

This bulletin may have come to you by email or through your letterbox, if you received it on paper but are happy to receive an email in future please email <u>deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com</u> If you know anybody else who would like this delivered or emailed please contact Deborah or Revd Janet: <u>revdjanetwyer@outlook.com</u>

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

A BRAND NEW LOOK!

Following on from the Zoom PCC Meeting held on Thursday 19th November and discussions with the Diocese, we are delighted that we are able to announce the new name chosen for the building that was formerly called 'The Hive'

In line with the exciting new plans for that building that will include St Francis' Heartsease Community Money Advice Centre and a Diocesan Project based there, this fresh new start has a fresh new name:



We are very much hoping that in the not too distant future Next Door @ St Francis will be open once more and alive with many opportunities for folk to come together for companionship, learning and support and assistance of all kinds.

We look forward to meeting you there!

LIVE BROADCAST OF SUNDAY SERVICES

We now have a permanent link to our St Francis YouTube channel.

https://tinyurl.com/y46jkyjj

This live link will consistently take you to where you need to be – and if a live broadcast is underway will automatically allow you to view from your device.

If you are early for a live broadcast – or too late, you will either be able to see the countdown to the service beginning or be permitted to view the recording of the live event up to twelve hours afterwards. After that time the recording will be deleted and in most instances replaced with an edited version incorporating the sermon and some other parts of the service.

In due course we are hoping that we will be able to embed the link to the YouTube channel into our website and that will mean that access can be gained with ease whilst also offering the opportunity to open up the weekly newsletter to view the relevant Bible readings etc.

As with all new ventures there may perhaps be a hiccup or two – but please bear with us, we are very excited about the endless possibilities this new development will bring to our mission and ministry amid the Heartsease Community.

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The Church of St Francis Heartsease YouTube Page

THE REAL ADVENT CALENDAR

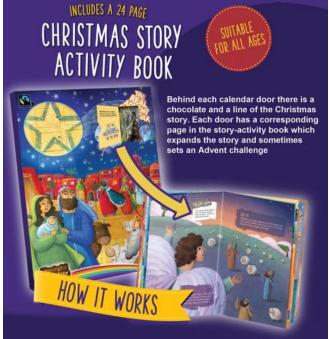
With the beginning of Advent just around the corner we are planning to offer a Nativity themed advent calendar to children who might otherwise not get to have one.

Each calendar costs in the region of £3.99 and although we have ear marked part of the collection

from the funeral of Freda Brooks, we are opening up the possibility for others to donate to the fund.

We are sure that Freda would have been delighted to know that her gift was being used to put the Christmas story into the hands of local children – and I suspect that there are others who would be similarly pleased to help as well.

Please do get in touch if you would like to know more or if there is a little person you would like to nominate to receive a calendar.



The Real Advent Calendar 2020 edition.

STIR UP SUNDAY!

This Sunday is the Feast of Christ the King – the culmination of Kingdom Season and the end of the Church Year!

As we turn our eyes to the Kingdom and worship Jesus our Servant King we take the time to look back at the year past and look forward with anticipation to the year ahead.

Traditionally the Sunday before Advent has always been called 'Stir Up' Sunday because of the prayer that has been prayed on this day for hundreds of years:

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

This prayer has also long been associated with the making of the family Christmas pudding – the four Sunday gap between this Sunday and Christmas Day is the perfect amount of time to allow the pudding to mature, and gave every member of the family the opportunity to say this incredibly powerful prayer whilst having a 'blessed' stir of the pudding mix.

Not too many people make their own puddings these days – but it looks as though Revd Winnie and Brother Eeyore are having a go!



Revd Winnie & Brother Eeyore enjoying 'Stir Up Sunday'

A BIG THANK YOU!

As time passes and we settle into routines of one kind or another, it is all too easy to take certain things and sometimes people for granted.

This newsletter is edition number thirty five – and for all of those thirty five weeks a small number of people have pitched in week in week out to make it happen.

So I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who helps out in any way: especially Deborah Lechmere for pulling the whole thing together and sending it out electronically, Diana Cooper who staples the pages together every week, Eleanor Laming who sorts the newsletters into delivery rounds – and then also takes a huge pile to deliver; and Sue and Jim Green, Ashley Williams, Martin & Margaret Moore, Adam and Diana who each deliver a big pile of newsletters around the estate.

A magnificent team effort folks – thank so much for your loving and committed service – it couldn't happen without you!



SALVATION ARMY



St Francis will be once again supporting the Salvation Army Christmas Toys and Tins appeal that was launched this week.

Because of the difficulties posed around the Covid situation drop off points in the city have been severely limited and the only other collection point open at the present time in Norwich is the one situated at the St Giles Street Citadel.

We feel very blessed that we are able to offer this service and extend our thanks to Eleanor Laming who has made it possible by agreeing to transport the Heartsease gifts to the Salvation Army when the deadline for giving is reached.

If you would like to drop off a donation of any nonperishable Festive Foods for the hampers or a new gift for a child or young person, the church building is open every weekday morning between the hours of 10am and 12pm.

The suggested gift list is as follows:

Board Games and puzzles Craft and modelling kits Action figures Dolls and teddy bears Educational toys Pens and Pencils Baby toys Toiletries for teens Hats and gloves Books

There is an 'Amazon Wish List' if you would like to have a look - the link is: https://amzn.to/2Gqiucd

Please ensure that you donations reach us before 7th December to allow Eleanor plenty of time to get them where they need to be.

OPEN FOR PRAYER

For the foreseeable future St Francis Church building will be accessible for quiet individual prayer [or for people in a household bubble to pray together] throughout the social lockdown and in the weeks thereafter leading up to Christmas.

The church space will open every weekday morning 10am – 11.30pm. There will also be resources available and you will be able to light a prayer candle if that is something you would like to do. If you would like to arrange to come at a particular time, or would like to talk to us about guided prayer or asking for prayer support please feel free to call Revd Janet [07368 832294] or Fr Tracy [07834 845623]



NOVEMBER SOCIAL LOCKDOWN

This is a little reminder that although we may not be able to help in every circumstance, St Francis Church remains a place where all are welcome to come to, to spend some quiet time in prayer, to enquire about assistance with food parcels – and to find a listening ear.

Please feel free to call at the church building any weekday morning 10am – 12pm; or call the 24/7 answerphone [01603 431259]

ST FRANCIS ZOOM ROOM HOUSEGROUP

Do you fancy an online get together to catch up with each other, share a Bible passage and pray?

Our new home zoom group meets fortnightly on Mondays, the next get together is on Monday 30th November.

The group starts at 7pm and finishes around 8pm.

All are welcome – please contact Jim Green via email: <u>jimpiecrust@gmail.com</u> or simply zoom in:

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83340751619?pwd=dnN MV015R2I2RIE2T1R3VVhUbIRzQT09

Meeting ID: 833 4075 1619 Passcode: 460998

PASTORAL CARE MATTERS

The November social lockdown is still with us and may well be presenting many people with all sorts of difficulties - so never has it been more necessary for us all to treat one another with kindness.

And never before has it been so vital for us to look and listen out for folk who might be struggling.

Please, if you would like the opportunity to have a chat, or if you need some assistance of any kind please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

We are also able to offer help if you or someone you know needs support with basic food provision.

Please do not feel that you are alone - help and support is always available, whatever may be troubling you.

Revd Janet [07368 832294]

Father Tracy [07704 328319]

Eleanor [07840 206716]

Also, there is always someone available in the church building weekdays 10.00am – 12.00pm; please feel free to knock at the door, it will open to you.



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

Norfolk Assistance Scheme: 01603 223392

THE CURATE'S CORNER

As you will have read earlier this Sunday is 'stir-up' Sunday – the last Sunday before the season of Advent. This year, Advent begins on 29th November. This season also marks the beginning of a new 'church year'. Since the church year and its festivals are a microcosm of the story of the world and of our own lives, Advent is the time that we 'wait' for the coming into the world of the child Christ at Christmas. Advent means 'arrival', and it should really be a time of solemn contemplation.

I've seen Advent calendars for sale in the supermarkets this year, and as always I am amazed at the way the traders of this earthly world have managed to so de-Christianise our society. I'm willing to believe that there are many who have no idea that an Advent calendar is meant to be a countdown to a Christmas which celebrates the birth of Jesus, about 2020 years ago.

There is an old story that the devil realised what a thorn in the flesh Christmas is, as it is a time that can make people yearn for a taste of heaven. He then invented Christmas fever, and ever since people have spent far too much time shopping and rushing about so that by the time Christmas is here, everybody is worn out with it all. I suspect that this year, Covid may make things even worse if we let it. Pressure and stress are the two things that can deaden all the feelings we should have at this time of year about reconnecting with the infinite, about remembering our forgotten heavenly origins. In fact, in the natural world, autumn is a time of wonderful stillness and great beauty - my favourite time of year. There is nothing like a bright day with a low sun and long shadows across the rusty carpet of leaves and frost, especially as we find such days here in Norfolk.



The Father of all holds back his world at this time, ready to burst back into glory. We too should allow Him to hold us back, to rest in spiritual growth and to be fed with new courage, energy and hope. In the evenings, if we listen, we may just be able to hear the quiet murmurings of a prophecy pointing ever onwards.

As the sun hangs low, so do the stars at night, hovering as they wonder at our empty fields and leafless trees. They speak to us of the heavenly world we do not yet know that sits so gently on our busy roads. Do we not know our road to heaven? They ask. Have we not heard of He who is the way to the great heights above, the truth that is as old as the starry sky and the eternal life that even the sun itself cannot give?

The ancient story is one that includes us. It is a story told within us. When we allow ourselves to become a part of that story, then we can come to experience the true joy of Christmas, to rediscover our love for others, to really grasp the reality of who we are meant to be.

So my longing this week is that, this time, at a time of great trial and tribulation, of uncertainty and worry, we simply stop, listen and wonder. Stop, listen and wonder at the beauty of the still world we suddenly find ourselves in. Stop, listen and wonder about who we may become if we follow Jesus and allow His riches to pour in to the poverty of our spirit. Surely that is the very best way to prepare ourselves for Christmas, particularly after a year that many will prefer to forget.

Every blessing

Fr Tracy

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

I can hardly believe that we have reached the end of yet another church year!

Where has this year gone?

Someone once said to me that the older you get, the quicker time passes – and I can only agree.

No sooner have I finished planning for one Sunday morning service – it seems I am planning the next.

Our next Sunday service is a very special one given that it is Advent One; the beginning of a brand new church year – and we begin to explore the story of Jesus and God's love for us through the teaching of St Mark the Evangelist.

Over the next few weeks we will be taking a closer look at Mark and his gospel - the way he tells us his account of Jesus' life is perfect for those who like a fast paced and exciting read.

If you haven't yet read his gospel – perhaps this next week is the time to do it. It is quite a short read, but a worthy one. I commend it to you!

God bless you and yours

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: Scott, Alison, & Millie S; Stephen C; Barry S; Margaret T; David & Cynthia S; Darren L; Maegan; Tom; Riley & his mum and family; Jeanette, David & Grace; Paula; Pete; Lauren; Fr Brian; Hazel; Ben; Frazer.

We continue to pray for all those in our Church, friends and family who are managing long term health issues including Doreen; Rosemary; Sheila; John; Joy; Shirley.

We remember with love Betty Brittain; Kathleen Kelley; Beryl Farrell and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends.

PRAYER FOR THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

> The Church of St Francis Heartsease

Heavenly Father We ask your blessing upon us. Hold the Heartsease Community, and all the world, in your arms of love. Be with us. Give us your strength, peace, and healing grace. Watch over us, protect us from harm; and keep in safety all those who care for the sick and attend to our needs, in Jesus name we pray. Amen

Revd Janet

PRAYERS FOR CHRIST THE KING

Eternal Father,

whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

God the Father, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. Amen

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

READINGS FOR CHRIST THE KING

EZEKIEL 34:11-16, 20-24

For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep.

I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land.



I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and

they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy.

I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd.

And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

PSALM 95: 1 - 7



O come, let us sing to the Lord; ◆ let us heartily rejoice in the rock of our salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving \blacklozenge and be glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God ♦ and a great king above all gods.

In his hand are the depths of the earth \blacklozenge and the heights of the mountains are his also.

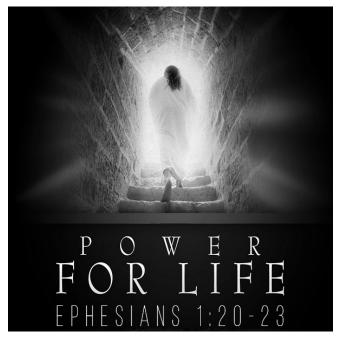
The sea is his, for he made it, ♦ and his hands have moulded the dry land.

Come, let us worship and bow **down** ◆ and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God; +

we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

EPHESIANS 1:15 - END



I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.

And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

MATTHEW 25: 31 - END

Jesus said:

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and

he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand,

"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?"

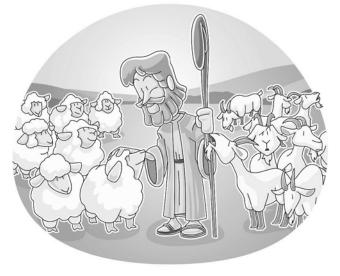
And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me."

Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?"

Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me."

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'



REFLECTION FOR CHRIST THE KING

Today is the feast of Christ the King. It was therefore a bit of a surprise to find that the readings set for today have more to say about sheep than they do about kings.

In Ezekiel the verses before our selected reading are a condemnation of the false shepherds who have been exploiting the flock for their own gain. The flocks have been left scattered and unprotected. This is followed by a promise that God will search for the scattered sheep and gather them together. He will find them good pasture, will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, however the verses also contain a warning for any sheep who have been selfish or acted as bullies. The promise also specifies a new shepherd who will be another David. David of course was the legendary king of Israel who united the disparate tribes into a nation.

The role of a shepherd was to guide, nurture and protect the flock. It was a hands-on role which meant getting dirty, sleeping with the sheep, carrying them to safety, binding up their wounds and making sure they had good pasture. When Jesus said I am the Good Shepherd this would have been one of the passages he had in mind. Psalm 95 invites us to make a joyful noise to the Lord. It celebrates the power of God and reminds us that he is the creator of everything. It invites us to bow down in worship and suggests that our relationship with God is like that of a flock of sheep to its shepherd.

The Gospel reading continues this theme of sheep, but also adds goats into the mix. In these final chapters Matthew gives us a series of stories or pictures all of which speak about things that will happen in the future and our need to be ready for them.

He tells us of the need to be awake and watchful. He speaks of the need to be living a holy life, obeying the commands we have been given and living as our Lord commands.

In the story of the bridesmaids we are warned of the dangers of not being ready and prepared for what is going to happen.

Last week we heard the parable of the talents which emphasized the need to be faithful in the use of the gifts and skills which we have been given, and today we have the story of the sheep and goats. I think the main lesson that we need take from this is that as Christians we need to be willing to demonstrate sacrificial love for others, in particular the poor and needy.

When Paul writes to the Ephesians he doesn't make any mention of sheep. Paul prays that the Ephesian Christians will have the Spirit of wisdom and revelation as they come to know Jesus as Lord and that "the eyes of their heart will be opened" so that they can know the hope to which they have been called, the riches of their glorious inheritance and the incomparably great power available to those who believe.

In that age the heart was seen as the seat of all reason as well as all emotion, so Paul is praying that they will understand with their brains as well as knowing deep in their hearts all the wonders that have come to them as a result of Jesus being Christos Kyrios, Christ the King.

Paul speaks of the hope to which they have been called. All of us have been called to follow Jesus. The call can come in all sorts of different ways and at any age. It's a call to acknowledge him as King in our lives and to put him first in everything. It's a call, among other things, to live according to those stories in Matthew, to be watchful in observing the times, to live holy lives, looking out for our master's interests and the needs of others, to be ever watchful and ready, looking for opportunities to serve, to make good use of the gifts and talents that we have been given, and to dedicate ourselves to loving service of our fellow human beings, particularly those in real need.

Paul speaks of the riches of the glorious inheritance. Part of our inheritance is with us now in the form of the Holy Spirit, but the best is yet to come. The Apostle Peter calls it an "inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade" which is kept in heaven for us. It's the promise of eternal life with God. The life secured for us by Jesus' death and guaranteed by his resurrection, the eternal life which is ours because he now reigns in heaven.

Paul moves on finally to talk about the incomparably great power available to us who believe. This is the power, he says, which raised Jesus from the dead and exalted him to God's right hand, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion. It's the power which is available to all Jesus followers, including us, on a daily basis. It's the power that comes through the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes I don't think we take this power seriously enough. It may be that we think there are limits to it; it may be we don't think we are important enough or worthy enough for God to want to work through us. It may be we don't think something is sufficiently important for us to call on God's power to help us.

I do believe we are seeing that power in action at the moment. I believe we have seen it in the provision we have been able to make to supply food to those in need in our community. I believe we are seeing it in the progress we have been able to make in setting up the Money Advice Centre, in getting the charity authorised, in securing regulatory approval and in securing much of the funding we need.

This is what it means to have Christ as King, that we respond to his royal summons, that we have the promise of eternal life, and that we have the power to do the things he calls us to as we respond to his love with willing service of our fellow human beings.



Jesus said, 'When the Son of Man comes in glory, the whole world will be gathered before him and he will separate people as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. He will say to those on his right, "Come, you are blessed by my Father; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

'The sheep will answer, "When did we see you hungry and give you food, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we meet you as a stranger and welcome you, or see you naked and give you clothing? When did we see you sick, or in prison, and visit you?"

'The king will say, "Whatever you did to the least important members of my family, you did it to me."

'Then he will say to those on his left, "Get out, worthless goats! You are good for nothing. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, I was naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." The goats will answer, "When did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?"

'He will answer, "Because you did not do it to the people in need, you did not do it to me. And the goats will be sent to eternal punishment and the sheep to eternal life."



ROOTS children's Sheet 22-28 November 2020	Imagine you are one of the people who did kind things. What might you be thinking when you discover you have been serving Jesus? What sort of things did you do? Did you realise when you did them that you were doing what Jesus would want? Write your thoughts in the bubble.								
	Draw the face of someone who was invited into the kingdom in the story. How would they have felt?	د المعلم الم	m d g	k n r r o o t e e h hungry c h i a i s o f g e food	izthrowspressing the second se	zmhavosnrd _{sick}	y t u h p g l v t f ^{prison}	h u n g r V q c s V	k z g r k n i r d d
Nane	Jesus tells a story about a shepherd sorting out sheep and goats to show how God separates the kind from the unkind.		Family time	Talk How does God want us to treat people?	Do Practise being kind by writing a list of 10 kind things that you as a family can do this week to belo each other and	others.	Pray We pray for everyone who is	hungry, thirsty, cold, sick or alone. Help	us not to just think about ourselves but to see how we can help those around us.

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to see how we can help those around us.

Amen.

Name

ROOTS Colouring Sheet 22-28 November 2020

Colouring time

Jesus helps us think about our behaviour by describing people as sheep and goats.

