



*St. Jude's Church
Stony Hill*

Our Hope and Expectation

Celebrating Advent

Happy New Year, fellow Sojourners!

I greet you in the name of the God of Hope.

Yes! It's **Advent**, the start of a new Church year. I am honoured and blessed to welcome you to another Advent journey with the St. Jude's Writers. As we embark on this season of preparedness and spiritual reflection, through the enriching contributions of this long serving publication, it is my prayer that each of us will experience the anticipatory Hope for renewal that Advent brings.

From the Latin word, *adventus* meaning "coming or arriving", Advent is a period of spiritual preparation in which we make ourselves ready for the second coming of, and, the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Celebrating Advent typically involves a season of prayer, fasting and repentance, followed by joyous anticipation and hope.

As a people of Hope, we trust in a God who is **Emmanuel – God with us**. He is present in and through those of us who are praying for our nation and our leaders, those who are working for the good of others, like our Health-Care Workers;

those who are feeding and providing for the poor, the homeless and the indigent. He is present in those we seek to help – the grieving widow/mother/father, our sick, shut-in and lonely neighbours, the broken father who has been laid off, the youngster who does not see a clear future for him/herself. Yes! Even in the Pandemic, in sickness and in health, there is Hope because He is present, and He is coming again!

As we digest the offerings of the St. Jude's Writers, may we echo the words of the Psalmist, **“I will listen to what the LORD God is saying, for he is speaking peace to his faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to him.”** (Psalm 85:8) May the Advent messages of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love which this publication seeks to engage us in, be clear to us and to all persons we would encounter. **Even so come Lord Jesus!**

Michael E+

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28 November 2021