

Anglican Diocese  
of Cyprus  
and the Gulf

[www.cypgulf.org/  
retreats](http://www.cypgulf.org/retreats)

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### KATAFIYIO RETREAT HOUSE

Amazingly, but unusually, we are currently seeing back-to-back comings and goings at Katafiyio. Both individuals and groups are using the house, those from Cyprus and literally the ends of the earth (e.g. New Zealand!).

Earlier in the year the story wasn't the same but people who visit always say they are blessed by spending time at the house.

Again Katafiyio has been used to film material for Christian videos in Arabic.

Sadly we are soon to say farewell to John Friesen, the Caretaker, who has given generously of his time and abilities over the past two and a half years. John's welcome to those coming on retreat, and very practical skills, have been much appreciated. We will miss him.



THANK YOU John.

We are following up conversations with others interested in coming to serve as Caretakers. Meanwhile, Maggie will add welcoming, cleaning, gardening, etc to her list of responsibilities!

An occasional letter 10: 1 December 2016



# News

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## Comings and Goings

Advent, which started last Sunday, is all about "coming". In the Anglican lectionary we are coming to the end of our readings in the book of Revelation which have been about things to come, and things to go.

Now is a season of remembering Christ's first coming (and going), and an anticipation of his second coming. It's all about change.

Advent, God's coming, is what the Retreats ministry is about. It has been wonderful to sit with people on Individually Guided Retreats, and to lead other day retreats, witnessing God's coming to people in different and special ways. Often for the coming to happen, some things need to be let go of.

Rain has finally come to Cyprus this week! Watching the dry riverbed in Nicosia suddenly cascade with water has been a picture to me of transformation - another reminder of what our faith, and what this time of Advent, can bring to everyone.

Following a visit in January by Sue Riddell (a spiritual director from the UK) and Maggie, to St Andrew's and St Thomas's in Abu Dhabi, to run Retreats in Daily Life, Sue was able to return in November to give on-going Spiritual Direction (SD). Others had a 'taster' of how SD could benefit them. We would like to reproduce this model in other places in the Gulf.

Maggie will be going on sabbatical to the UK April to July 2017. It is hoped that those Caretaking at Katafiyio will be looking after any emails and bookings for Katafiyio over that time. Unfortunately there will not be a trained Spiritual Director to lead retreats at Katafiyio over that period.

Do consider when you might be able to plan a day, a weekend, or a week, to retreat for an advent experience, either at Katafiyio or somewhere else, in 2017.

And do please let Maggie know if you would like to book a retreat for yourself, your church, or your group.

## ADVENT PRAYER

It can be helpful to have an advent prayer discipline, as you may do in Lent. Here are some suggestions you may like to consider:

- at the end of the day consider your own comings and goings. Where has God led you to go and what has he led you to be involved with? Where and to what have you come back to? How has your activity left you feeling? Speak with God about this.
- at the end of the day consider the people who have come and gone into your life in person, on the phone, through email or social media. Pray for those friends or strangers.
- try writing a daily prayer on how God has come to you.
- place model figures of Mary, Joseph, Jesus, stable, etc somewhere in your home. Daily move your figures closer to the stable - allow them to 'come' at the right time. Ponder what this gradual movement also means for you.
- sign up for Brian Draper's daily Advent20 emails: [www.briandraper.org](http://www.briandraper.org)
- sign up for Sacred Advent daily emails: [www.ignatianspirituality.com/advent](http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/advent)
- use an Advent wreath [anglicansonline.org/special/advent](http://anglicansonline.org/special/advent)

## Advent Calendar (Rowan Williams)

He will come like last leaf's fall .....  
He will come like frost .....  
He will come like dark .....

He will come, will come,  
will come like crying in the night,  
like blood, like breaking,  
as the earth writhes to toss him free.  
He will come like child.

