

# Advent

Anyone who has expected a child knows there is much work to do. A place must be prepared for the baby.

Furniture must be moved around. The room surely must be painted and you might even add new carpet. Then comes the furniture. The baby bed and tiny sheets and a pillow -- all 600 thread-count, of course. Next, you purchase a funny-looking mobile that you will hang over the crib to make sure the baby is not too bored with the new surroundings. You take a chest from another room, strip it, and paint it white and shining. A neighbor gives you a changing table. You go to the toy store and buy 320 stuffed animals and goodies that the baby surely will need. There is considerable expense and money and time and energy devoted to getting ready for the baby.



Advent offers us another opportunity to get prepared for the coming of this new child, Jesus. Granted, there will be changes and adjustments when he comes. The Christmas carol says: "Let every heart prepare him room." Our text from 1 Thessalonians reminds us that this baby makes many demands on our lives. "May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints" (vv. 12-13).

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The best way to reach out to others is to invite them. I know that Episcopalians have their own special version of growing the church, being a light on a hill that attracts people.

However, the friend you have who does not have a church home, may not be in a place to see that beacon yet. Perhaps they are waiting for someone to invite them to a place that will welcome them.

Why not invite them here?