Dear Friends,

There was a time where we only really saw wreaths at funerals, Remembrance and on doors approaching Christmas. It seems there has now been a shift with less seen perhaps at funerals and more seen on front doors all year round. The wreaths found on people's doors tend to be seasonal and so, at the moment, there are a lot of vibrant autumn colours around. These will change over the next month or so to incorporate more evergreen foliage, red, silver and gold colours.

As we move into November, there will be the traditional service at the Cenotaph in London on Remembrance Sunday and many other services around the country as well. The wreaths honour those who have given so much to, and for, others. Wreaths have a range of purposes, including decorative, symbolic, and commemorative. Wreaths are used symbolically at different points in life and, in their own way, represent the circle of life and eternity.

As we come to the end of one liturgical year and begin a new one with Advent Sunday, we are recognising the circle of life and the eternal kingdom as we look ahead to Jesus' coming again to earth. With Jesus we can have eternal life which is a life of fullness, completeness and wholeness. It is a life which we are offered and for which we don't need to strive, and it encircles everything we do and all that we are.

To live with Jesus for eternity is something we should embrace. It is not only for the future, but for this present moment as well. This is something in which we should rejoice! When we sing songs such as 'there is a higher throne' we notice the rich imagery of precious stones, thrones, and the heavenly hosts who are singing around the throne of God. Eternity is a place of richness and goes beyond words. This is the kingdom of God which is there now and forevermore.

The wreaths we see may have many different meanings for specific points in ours, and others, lives. Together, they make up the circle of life. We know that Jesus' presence is assured now and always and we can truly depend on that. To know that we can rely on Jesus wherever we are in our lives at this time is so important. A wreath is a continuous circle. It has no beginning and no end. It symbolises God's eternal nature and the everlasting life which is promised through Jesus Christ.

As we look at wreaths at Remembrance, Advent or to mark the seasons or as a welcome to someone's home, let us remember that Jesus offers us everlasting life. We should rejoice in that for today, for ourselves, those we love and with those whom we come into contact for any reason.

God bless,
Chris