

Have you put up your Christmas lights yet, and decorated the tree? Many will recall we never used to put up the Christmas Tree or decorations until Christmas Eve!

Rather reminds me that in the early 1940s my mother always managed to get a little Christmas Tree, which did not come into the house until Christmas Eve. There were six real candles, which were only lit twice for an hour at a time in case the tree caught fire!

I discovered you can now buy a large tree, which is delivered in a box pre decorated with over 100 lights, it comes with a 'gun'. The gun enables you to change the colour of the lights on the tree!

However the reason for lights at Christmas remains the same. Do we always realise that the lights are important as they reflect the birth of Jesus who said 'I am the Light of the world' (Saint John chapter 8 verse 12)? We give presents because Jesus is God's greatest present to the world. The light of hope.

The festival of Diwali has just been celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains across the world. The festival of new beginnings, the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness.

Light is the symbol of hope, we look beyond the darkness of winter. We look with the understanding of new light, Jesus born again at Christmas. New hope in the New Year with the immense skills which we trust will bring us the vaccine.

We continue to remember those who need our support, our part in that support, mindful that those who may need us are most often last to ask! We offer thanks for the NHS and all who care and support our daily lives.

We pray for God's blessing and guidance in the days ahead and a different way of observance of Christmas.