

# Sunday Morning Resources

Sunday 30 November 2025 - Advent Sunday

**Lectionary Readings** (depending on the kind of service you are leading, you may use one or more of the following readings – however, you **must** use the gospel reading, as this is what the homily is based on)

Isaiah 2.1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13.11-14; Matthew 24.36-44

## Homily

**Today's homily has been written by the Revd Valerie Kilner, Permission To Officiate (Retired) Somersham**

So, Advent 2025 begins. But what is an advent? The dictionary tells us that it is time of waiting for someone or something to come.

In an age where we want everything instantly the British, we are told, are very good at waiting. We form orderly queues at bus stops and at supermarket checkouts. But how good are we at waiting? What do we do while we wait? How do we feel about having to wait? And which person and event are we waiting for in this church season of Advent?

We are waiting to celebrate God in the person of Jesus coming to live as one of us, his being born in Bethlehem. We know precisely how long we will have to wait for that – just four weeks. So, we feel a certain amount of control as we wait.

We know that for some of us those weeks will become increasingly busy with all the preparations that need to be made for that celebration. The anticipation can lead to excitement and joy while for others it will emphasise their loneliness or isolation. Jesus was given the name Emmanuel - God with us. As an adult he enjoyed parties but also suffered the isolation of broken relationships, betrayal and death. We know that God is with us when we go through these times and that is to be celebrated.

During this Advent time we also take hold of the promise of an event. Jesus will come again in glory and the kingdom of God will come on earth as in heaven. How good will that be! As we look at our world, we are only too aware of wars, poverty, climate change and other threats to its and our own well-being. We long for heaven to come on earth. But we have no idea how long we will have to wait for that; we are not in control. That affects how we wait. Longingly? Hopefully? Doubtfully even?

Jesus' disciples expected him to return even when he was still with them. They had yet to face his crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We heard in the Gospel reading that, as they were leaving the temple area, those disciples basically said to Jesus 'Aren't these buildings fantastic?' Jesus told them that one day they would be gone. Which set their minds racing. How long would they have to wait for that?

The temple going would mean what they were longing for had come. A time of universal peace, justice and spiritual awakening would be beginning. A new age would be initiated by a Messiah – and Jesus was the Messiah! So, the questioning began. When would Jesus come to bring in this time of peace on earth? And the answer? Even Jesus himself did not know.

And today neither do we know when he will come in glory. But he told his disciples to be ready, to be prepared for him to come at any time. In Advent we take hold again of God's promise that Jesus will return and ensure that we are prepared for his coming.

St. Paul writing to Christians in Rome only some twenty years after Jesus had left this earth pointed out that their salvation was nearer then than when they first believed. Jesus' return was getting nearer. He urged them to 'put aside the deeds of darkness and clothe themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ'. Some 2000 years later we are still waiting but each day salvation is nearer than when we first believed. How do we put aside the deeds of darkness and clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ?

It is interesting that we associate all that is wrong with darkness. At Christmas we will be reminded of St. John's words about the birth of Jesus - the true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. We know that Jesus said of himself: I am the light of the world. He is the opposite of oppression, selfish ambition, hatred, envy and all we associate with darkness. In Jesus we see what life is like when God really reigns – full of humility, love, mercy, compassion, giving of himself to others – full of light.

Jesus told his followers: you are the light of the world. We are to be like Jesus - full of humility, love, mercy, compassion, giving of ourselves to others – full of his light. This Advent season provides an opportunity for us to examine ourselves and seek the help of the Holy Spirit where we need to change.

As we get nearer to the shortest day of the year, we are grateful for artificial lights. All the extra Christmas lights will help us to feel light-hearted and to celebrate. The world has always been in turmoil with the darkness of wars and injustices globally and problems and challenges nearer to home. We believe and trust that when Jesus returns and God's reign of love, justice mercy and peace begins darkness will be overcome with light. We wait for that time expectantly and hopefully as we pray your kingdom come on earth as in heaven.

While waiting, we can seek more of the light of Jesus in our own lives, to help us cope with the pressures we and others face. We can reflect on what it means that he came not only to live and die as one of us but has also sent his Spirit to us so that he will be with us always. We can discover more of what it means to shine with the light of Jesus - to bring God's kingdom on earth as in heaven - to be lights in the dark world.

Have you ever been by the sea, a river or a lake on a cloudless sunny day and seen the water twinkling with light? Each little sparkle is in fact a reflection of the sun as the little waves act as mirrors. We are to be like those little mirrors, reflecting the light of Jesus to the world around us. We are to bring the kingdom of love, joy, peace and mercy to the places where we find ourselves, even the dark places, and be ready and waiting expectantly for the time when the whole of creation will be filled with the light of Jesus.

So, what are we waiting for? We are waiting to celebrate Jesus coming into the world, shining with his light until he himself comes again. So, what are we waiting for!!

### ***Ways to Engage all Generations***

When different generations are gathered together in worship there is an opportunity to build relationships and to encounter God in our conversations as we build relationships and learn from each other no matter what our ages, stage of life or faith and for all present to feel included. Adding some wondering questions to the service at an appropriate moment can help to do this.

Wondering Questions: Some wondering questions that may help to engage all generations to ponder and explore during the talk, service or during the week may include the following style of question:

- I wonder whether those brought up in the southern hemisphere where days in Advent are becoming longer, approach the season of Advent differently from us in the northern hemisphere who experience more darkness?

### ***Suggested intercessions***

After: your kingdom come, your will be done  
the response is: **on earth as in heaven.**

*We pray for Christians throughout the world*

Lord, we know that your kingdom exists wherever injustice is challenged,  
wherever the oppressed are set free, wherever the hungry are fed,  
wherever the helpless are helped and strangers welcomed.  
Help us to be a part of the challenging, freeing, feeding, helping and welcoming.  
So may your kingdom come, your will be done **on earth as in heaven.**

*We pray for our troubled world*

Into your hands, Lord, we place the victims of the ways of the world:  
the poor and sick of war-torn nations  
and those who struggle to make ends meet even in our own country.  
We pray that we may be more aware of those on the fringes of our own communities.  
Help us not to be self-satisfied or blind to the needs of others  
but full of humility, love, mercy and compassion.  
So may your kingdom come, your will be done **on earth as in heaven.**

*We pray for those whose bodies, minds or spirits cannot function as they once did.*

For those who are chronically sick,  
those who are terminally ill,  
those who are frail,  
those who are depressed  
and those who have other mental illnesses.

*And we pray for those who are suffering because relationships have broken down.*

For those who have lost employment,  
those who have lost family or friends,  
those who have been bereaved.

May they all find comfort and peace in knowing that Jesus experienced suffering too.

May they know his loving living presence with them now.

So may your kingdom come, your will be done **on earth as in heaven.**

*For ourselves we pray an Advent Collect*  
Almighty God, as your kingdom dawns,  
turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness,  
that we may be ready to meet you  
in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### ***Suggested hymns/songs***

O come, o come Emmanuel  
O Lord my God (How great thou art)  
Come thou long-expected Jesus  
Longing for light (Christ be our light)  
People look east  
Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes

### ***Activities to accompany the service***

If you are looking for resources to accompany the service for engaging younger children, then there are lots of online resources. The following free to access/download resources may be useful starting points:

- <https://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/>
- <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/>
- <https://www.faithinkids.org/>
- [reflectionary.org](https://www.reflectionary.org/) – lectionary-based resources
- [engageworship](https://www.engageworship.org/) – in particular 'Area 52' for lectionary-based material
- <https://www.bdeducation.org.uk/product-category/primary-age-5-11/>  
(weekly@ lectionary resource)