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ADVENT 1A

27th November 2022

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening prayers

This Sunday of waiting, this Sunday of beginnings
I am waiting Lord,
Beginning again my journey with you.
I am seeking you Lord,
Wanting to know more of you.
Come here, today, by your Spirit

Pause.

The advent call is to wait, not rush.
To be prepared for what is coming rather than forget what all the celebrations are for.
Today, then, as you prepare for worship: pause.

Pause in the silence and let it settle on you.
Pause for longer than you think feels usual.
Pause with focus and ask God to reveal God-self in what you are to be a part of.

Pause.

Loving God, I pray that I will meet you this day and everyday.

Amen.¹

You may like to pray The Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are most comfortable.

Hymn:

169 STF – Come, thou long-expected Jesus - [YouTube](#)

Readings: Isaiah 2:1-5 – [Click for reading](#)
Matthew 24:36-44 – [Click for reading](#)

Response on the reading

So here we are in Advent. Again.

In the darkness longing for light. Again.

The world can seem like a dark place can't it?

Perhaps there have been dark times in our own lives or in the lives of our loved ones?

Both of the readings for today remind us that there is hope. Not the hope that buys a lottery ticket and crosses its fingers but that deep Hebrew hope that holds onto and

¹ Opening prayers written by Jane Bingham

lives in line with what it believes will one day be – even if surrounded by so many signs to the contrary. That is the hope that comes at Advent, isn't it?

The Christmas story reminds us that we are not alone when we experience darkness. Jesus suffered. Jesus understands our suffering and the suffering of a world that is often dark and still longing for light. That is what it means for God to be 'with us'. Immanuel.

Where do you see hope at work in today's readings?

Our hope is bigger than a sort of vague thinking that 'everything will work out', it is more a practice. Not the kind of hope that buys a lottery ticket and crosses its fingers but that deep Hebrew-hope that holds onto and lives in line with what we believe will one day be – even if surrounded by many signs to the contrary.

Are you feeling hopeful this Advent? Are you able to commit to hope again?

A time of prayer and stillness: you might like to light a candle, and/or play something like 'Run' by Snow Patrol or 'Within Our Darkest Night' from Taizé may be appropriate pieces of music to play while you sit and reflect.²

Blessing

God of Advent, in this waiting season,
Whatever comes to me this week,
May it draw me to your love, draw me to your light, draw me to yourself;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among
me, and remain with me always.

Amen.³

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

Monday 28th November

- Here at the start of Advent, you might want to practice preparing, prayerfully.
- Perhaps you could tidy the house, or do some gardening, or redecorate one of the rooms in your house. And, as you do that, you could pray for yourself. For the parts of your life that you want to 'tidy up', or 'tend', or 'redecorate'.
- Come and show me how to welcome you into my life again this day, Advent God.

² Reflection written by Tim Baker

³ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Tuesday 29th November

- Go outdoors and find something natural: a stone, leaf, flower, or something else. Consider the ways God has made this thing and then reflect on how you too are wonderfully made by God.
- What does this mean to you?
- Pray about the answers to this question.

Wednesday 30th November

- As I come to you in prayer, I know that the world is grieving and in pain, It is a world longing to know you more, A world full of stories that seek to give meaning, but which are little more than adverts for the next product or holiday or cause. In that context, I turn to you, and to the gospel of Jesus Christ, Who brings hope to us all.
- Amongst all the piousness of human institutions, The limitations of rules, the selfishness of structures, the greedy priorities of the world we have built, I pray for your grace, your peace, your love to reach the nations. Amen.

Thursday 1st December

- Why not spend some time in silent meditation today, on the first day of the last month of 2022?
- You could set an alarm – perhaps for 10-15 minutes, and then finding somewhere comfortable, where you can sit and empty your mind.

If it helps, you could use the Headspace app or website, or a similar service, to help you focus on the meditation and get used to the idea of sitting in silence for a length of time.
- Is this a practice you could include in your daily spiritual life?

Friday 2nd December

- Think about the fruits of the spirit. Pick one of them that you don't feel you are very good at, or that needs some intentional work.
- Spend some time praying about this, and then practice it for a whole day in all you do.
- How can this help and shape your preparations for this Advent season.

Saturday 3rd December

- Open your Bible at the Psalms and read one as a prayer to God. What resonates with you? Consider in what ways these old words feel new to you and offer them to God.