

Welcome to a short time of prayer and reflection for Advent Sunday. Let us be still and recognise we are in the presence of God: Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen

The Lord be with you

Advent Sunday is the beginning of the Church Year. Beginnings are often full of hope and expectation, but are also times of uncertainty and hesitation. This year, in these times of prayer and reflection I am going to focus on the journey of the people of God which we follow through the lighting of the candles of the Advent wreath as a way of exploring how their experience connects with the hopes and expectations, the uncertainty and hesitation that many of us are experiencing now. You may like to light your own candle or candles as you travel through this Advent at home, as a reminder that wherever we are, we seek the light of Christ, we can receive the light of Christ and we can bear the light of Christ for others.

When the Lord comes he will bring to light things now hidden in darkness and disclose the purposes of the heart. Therefore in the light of Christ we confess our sins:

Heavenly Father, you have created a universe of light: forgive us when we return to darkness. Lord have mercy

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world: cleanse and heal our blinded sight. Christ have mercy

Holy Spirit, you give us light in our hearts: renew us in faith and love. Lord have mercy

May Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you your sins and bring you to everlasting life Amen

Let us pray:

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors: to you be praise and glory forever. You called the patriarchs and matriarchs to live by the light of faith and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment. May we be obedient to your call and ready

and watchful to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility, that when he shall come in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

We listen to a reading from the Gospel of Mark 13:24-end

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you O Christ

Sermon : see additional attachment

In joyful expectation of his coming to our aid, we pray to Jesus

Come to your Church as Lord and Judge. Help us to live in the light of your coming and give us a longing for your Kingdom.

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus

Come to your world as King of the Nations, Before you rures will stand in silence

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus

Come to the suffering as Saviour and Comforter. Break into our lives where we struggle with sickness and distress and set us free.

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus

Come to us as shepherd and guardian of our souls. Give us with all the faith departed a share in your victory over evil and death

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus

Come from heaven Lord Jesus, with power and great glory. Lift us up to meet with you that with all your angels and saints we may live and reign with you in your new creation.

Maranatha Come Lord Jesus

Come Lord and do not delay; give new courage to your people who trust in your love. By your coming raise us to share in the joy of your Kingdom on earth as in heaven, where you live and reign with the Father and the Son, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

And we pray for God's blessing on each other and all who we love and pray for:

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory and the blessing of God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.