

***Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021***

*Please use this material with the order of Virtual Service for the Linton Team of Churches
for Advent*



Collect

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to 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 on the last day,
when he shall come again 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 for ever.
Amen.

Readings

1 Thessalonians 3:9-end

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Luke 21:25-36

The Coming of the Son of Man

‘There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in a cloud” with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.’

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

Then he told them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.’

Exhortation to Watch

‘Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.’

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

Talk TWG (Together with God) Advent



Big box C (Christmas, tinsel, lights, stars, chocolates etc)

Nicola to get excited about and show some of the contents.

Cathy - But wait...Nicola, it's not Christmas yet. I know you are excited but today is the beginning of Advent, not Christmas, a really important time to prepare our hearts over the next 4 weeks.

Box 1 (candle)

In our collect today, we prayed the words,

'Put on the armour of light'

'Give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light'

This is our meditation.

In the midst of the business of our lives, our thoughts, our worries and concerns, we can take a moment to just to pause. A moment to be. A place and a time which can become our holy ground. Where might your holy ground be? Special times or places can be significant to us, it can be in the most simplest things we experience in our daily lives. Those times can be very special and over this time of advent let us find a place

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

and time every day to focus on the light. The light which Jesus brings to calm and heal and purify.

Candles are a big feature as we prepare for Christmas, perhaps when you see candles as you go about your business, you might want to stop and let them serve as a reminder of that experience of being on holy ground, even if it is just for a minute. Remember the words Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world'.

When you leave after the service this morning, we would like to give you a tea light to take home with you. Each one has one of three quotes we have taken from the readings for this Sunday. Please use it to find your little moment every day over advent, to give space to God to strengthen and ignite your hearts with love for him.



Box 2 (Calendar of kindness)

In the Psalm reading for this Sunday it says,

'Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are my God of salvation'

At this time of year, we sometimes get caught up in all the things we should be doing, buying the right gifts, providing a lovely meal, putting the decorations up, making arrangements to see people, all the lovely stuff! But sometimes these can become the things which take over, we think we are doing the right things, striving to build almost a fairytale experience, which can very quickly all become totally meaningless. Life

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

isn't a fairytale! Our Christian lives are more profound than that, we can experience the reality of Joy fully, a joy which can change the world we live in by thinking beyond ourselves.

I'm in no way suggesting that you should pack up your decs or deny yourself a chocolate or two but simply to bring our focus on God's truth.

'Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation'

Let us allow God to teach us the right path this advent time. God can lead us in all sorts of ways and God's truth is all about love and compassion and giving. So, instead of getting wrapped up in what we do by our own strength we can be guided to do what God might be leading us to do.

(Chocolate advent calendar and kindness calendar)

So perhaps instead of engaging in something meaningless, let's engage in something meaningful and do an act of kindness every day through Advent.

We have something else to give to you today - a kindness calendar on your way out this morning.



Box 3 (Books)

The Thessalonians reading for today includes the line, May the Lord ...'strengthen your hearts in holiness'.

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

How can we keep ourselves spiritually nourished? Reading the bible and reflections and prayers are all things which can help us to keep growing as a Christian in faith and strength.

There are some wonderful resources available which are specifically centered around advent time. Everyday reflections for each of the 25 days of December...

And we have handpicked some of our favourites.

(Short reviews)



Box 4 (picture)

In our Gospel reading, Luke writes,

‘They will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with the power and great glory’

For me Advent is a special time of the year, of course there is the excitement of Christmas, but the slowing down and the period of preparation is important, yet goes against what the word demands of us. But there is also this reminder of Jesus not only coming as a baby in Bethlehem but the second coming, when he will come again. And we will see him coming in a cloud with power and great glory. We are told to keep spiritually fit during the next 4 weeks, so let’s take time out to read and pray. So, we can look forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ’s kingdom when he returns for his people. Which is why we can sing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” as it perfectly represents the church’s cry during the Advent season: come as a baby,

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

as saviour of the world and come as the long-expected king, in power and great glory.

Box C (baby Jesus)



Cathy Watts

Reflection

‘Be alert at all times’ (Luke 21:36)

Today is Advent Sunday when we become super conscious about the place of time in our existence. Most of my thoughts about time are usually fairly mundane and uninteresting: will I have time to finish writing my sermon for Sunday; when is the best time to visit my parents; what have I done today, the time has slipped by and I haven't achieved half of what I meant to do, and so on. But even these mundane experiences remind me that my time on earth is finite and I need to use it wisely and productively.

But Advent adds another dimension to time, our place in cosmic time. As a child, and even now, the notion of cosmic time filled me with terror as it is simply unimaginably difficult to picture. Cosmic time refers to our brief part in this world, our even more insignificant place in the universe, and our relationship to the eternal God – who is both beyond time and yet works within time. Advent draws our attention to this aspect of cosmic time. It is perhaps the most difficult aspect of the New Testament to understand and every writer from Paul to the

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

Gospel writers and the author of the Book of Revelation struggles to make sense of what it means for our everyday lives, now.

Jesus' teaching on time might be put like this: the final 'day' or end-time is near, but it is not yet, no one knows (except God) when this will be, so be alert! Hence, Jesus says to his disciples in today's Gospel passage:

For it [the end-time] will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all time... (Luke 21:35-36)

So, there is a double time aspect to Advent. Advent is both looking forward to the birth of Christ, but it is also about preparation for his coming again at the end of time. Traditionally, therefore, the four Sundays of Advent are about end time of: death, judgement, heaven and hell. It's certainly a time to take stock of our lives through study and reflection and to be as Jesus says, 'on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness' (Luke 21:34) - not so easy, I agree, during the Christmas season! Advent is in effect a mini-Lent, hence why the liturgical colour is purple, the sign of repentance and preparation.

There have been and indeed are many Christians who consider that given the general dissipation and moral decline of the world that the end-time is very close indeed. In the 19th century some of the great Christian social reformers such as Lord Shaftesbury were influenced by millenarianism. Millenarianism is the belief that when Jesus returns, he will rule the world for a thousand years before the last judgement. Millenarianists believe that as this moment is imminent then society needs to go through radical and rapid social change in readiness so that, in the words of St Paul, 'you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus' (1 Thessalonians 3:13). This idea of the end-time seems to have provided Lord Shaftesbury with the drive to transform the lives of countless poor street children, the plight

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

of the mentally ill locked away in asylums and the brutal factory working conditions, especially for children and women.

But we don't need to take Jesus' idea of the end time quite so literally in order to respond to the call for Advent alertness. It is sufficient to see that what Jesus was getting at through the imagery of many of his parables such as the Knock at Midnight, The Wise and Foolish Girls and the Parable of the Fig Tree is that we have a Christian duty to read and respond to the particular signs of our times.

In the 1960s Martin Luther King used the parable of the knock at midnight (Luke 11:5-6), for instance, in one of his sermons as his wake-up call for the American people to address the iniquities of racism and nuclear armaments, the two great social evils of his day.

It is midnight in the parable; it is also midnight in our world and darkness is so deep that that we can hardly see which way to turn. It is midnight within the social order... (*A Knock at Midnight* p.65)

King understood better than Shaftesbury, that though we might feel we are living in the midnight time, hope is the real motivator for social and personal change, not fear of the end time. For Advent gives way to Christmas hope in the incarnation, the time when God reveals his love for us in the life of his Son in the world now.

King ends his sermon:

The dawn will come. Disappointment, sorrow, and despair are born at midnight, but morning follows. 'Weeping may endure for a night,' says the Psalmist, 'but joy cometh in the morning.' This faith adjourns the assemblies of hopelessness and brings new light into the dark chambers of pessimism. (*A Knock at Midnight* p.78)

So, let us use this Advent tide as a means of personal preparation to become more conscious of our mortal time on earth and how we might

***Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021***

use it well not just for ourselves but for the good of our village, our country and the world.

Michael Wilcockson

Come Now Is The Time To Worship

Chorus

*Come now is the time to worship
Come now is the time to give your heart
Come just as you are to worship
Come just as you are before your God
Come*

1 One day every tongue
Will confess You are God
One day every knee will bow
Still the greatest treasure remains
For those who gladly choose You now

Chorus

2 Willingly we choose to surrender our lives
Willingly our knees will bow
With all our heart soul mind and strength
We gladly choose You now

Ending

Come come just as you are come come

***Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021***

O Come O Come Emmanuel (Veni Emmanuel)

1 O come O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

Chorus

*Rejoice rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel*

2 O come Thou Dayspring come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight

Chorus

3 O come Thou Wisdom from on high
And order all things far and nigh
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go

Chorus

4 O come Desire of nations bind
All peoples in one heart and mind
Bid envy strife and quarrels cease
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace

Chorus

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

Be Still

1 Be still for the presence of the Lord
The Holy One is here
Come bow before Him now
With reverence and fear
In Him no sin is found
We stand on holy ground
Be still for the presence of the Lord
The Holy One is here

2 Be still for the glory of the Lord
Is shining all around
He burns with holy fire
With splendor He is crowned
How awesome is the sight
Our radiant King of light
Be still for the glory of the Lord
Is shining all around

3 Be still for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place
He comes to cleanse and heal
To minister His grace
No work too hard for Him
In faith receive from Him
Be still for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

Days Of Elijah

1 These are the days of Elijah
Declaring the Word of the Lord
And these are the days
Of Your servant Moses
Righteousness being restored
And though these are days
Of great trials
Of famine and darkness and sword
Still we are the voice
In the desert crying
Prepare ye the way of the Lord

Chorus

*Behold He comes
Riding on the clouds
Shining like the sun
At the trumpet call
So lift your voice
It's the year of Jubilee
And out of Zion's hill
Salvation comes*

2 And these are the days of Ezekiel
The dry bones becoming as flesh
And these are the days
Of Your servant David
Rebuilding a temple of praise
And these are the days of the harvest
The fields are as white in the world
And we are the labourers
In Your vineyard
Declaring the Word of the Lord

Materials for Virtual Worship
Advent Sunday, 28 November 2021

Chorus

Bridge

There is no god like Jehovah
There is no god like Jehovah
There is no god like Jehovah
There is no god like Jehovah (hey)

Words of hymns reproduced under CCLI Licence No. 268920

Closing Prayer

O Lord our God,
make us watchful and keep us faithful
as we await the coming of your Son our Lord;
that, when he shall appear,
he may not find us sleeping in sin
but active in his service
and joyful in his praise;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

