

# Traditional Home service

## Sunday 29th November Advent 1

### OPENING PRAYER

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.

### PRAYER OF PENITENCE

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

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

*cf Psalm 51*

### PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.  
Open our lips, Lord:  
**and we shall praise your name.**

HYMN 1 (*Hills of the North*)

READINGS - Is 64:1-9

1 Cor 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-end

### TALK

### CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation, our community and our families.*

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

HYMN 2 (*O Come, O Come*)

### CONCLUSION

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

## HYMNS TO USE

**Hills of the north, rejoice;**  
river and mountain spring,  
hark to the advent voice;  
valley and lowland, sing;  
though absent long, your Lord is nigh;  
he judgment brings and victory.

Isles of the southern seas,  
deep in your coral caves  
pent be each warring breeze,  
lulled be your restless waves:  
he comes to reign with boundless  
sway,  
and makes your wastes his great  
highway.

Lands of the East, awake,  
soon shall your sons be free;  
the sleep of ages break,  
and rise to liberty.  
On your far hills, long cold and gray,  
has dawned the everlasting day.

Shores of the utmost West,  
ye that have waited long,  
unvisited, unblessed,  
break forth to swelling song;  
high raise the note, that Jesus died,  
yet lives and reigns, the Crucified.

Shout, while ye journey home;  
songs be in every mouth;  
lo, from the North we come,  
from East, and West, and South.  
city of God, the bond are free,  
we come to live and reign in thee!

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,**  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them victory o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Dayspring, from on  
high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Adonai, Lord of might,  
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height,  
In ancient times didst give the law  
In cloud and majesty and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Peterborough Cathedral Choir  
Recorded live at Peterborough  
Cathedral, Autumn 2020

Director of Music: Tansy Castledine  
Organist: Christopher Strange  
Recording technicians: Chris Pallister  
of Service-AV, and Eugene Chan

[www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk](http://www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk)

Sermon for 29th November 2020  
Dawn Airey

## Advent 1: 'Get ready'

Good morning on this first week of advent, that time of year when we wait in anticipation for Christmas Day, when we wait to celebrate the first coming of Jesus. This passage in Mark however looks to the second coming of Jesus.

In the last couple of weeks Lou and Adrian have spoken to passages that also cause us to look at the end times, to the time when Jesus will come again and finally set up God's kingdom here on the earth in all its fullness - no more destruction, no more chaos, no more sadness, illness, pain, poor mental health. It's a hopeful message isn't that we need right now! And I agree with Louise when she said that while there are many who try to interpret the times we are in, there's a bigger thing at stake. It's perhaps interesting and tempting to try to interpret the times we are in, many for example voted for President Trump, we understand, in part, on the basis of his stance on Israel and saw it as the beginning of the fulfilment of end time prophecy.

The context of this passage in Mark is that the disciples are asking when will the temple be destroyed? And Jesus is kind of zooming out from this one event as an opportunity to talk about where the whole of history is heading, never mind the next few days, weeks, months or years. They too will be wondering 'ah is the destruction of the temple a sign of the end times?' Will those two events happen together? Of course most of us will be asking when will COVID-19 be dealt with? Is it a sign of the end times. And Jesus tells them in v 30 'this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place'. 'These things' is not talking about the end time, Jesus is

talking about the destruction of the temple and the fall of Jerusalem, and indeed He was right, 40 years later that's what happened. But as for the end times, in v 32 Jesus says that not even He knows when that time will come, only the Father knows.....it's not that end time prophecy isn't important, it absolutely is, 700 years ahead of Jesus's first coming there were more than 300 prophecies.....but the reality is that since Jesus went to heaven we have been living in the end times, and many of us may be longing for Jesus to return quickly given the year we've had, but there's a bigger question at stake.

And it's this, when Jesus does return, are we ready to meet Him? There are numerous references in this passage to being alert, awake and watchfulness and at the end the picture of the doorkeeper watching for the house owner returning. Of course this isn't talking about literally staying awake, it's talking about spiritual alertness and the dangers of the opposite which is spiritual sleeping. Spiritual sleeping is about getting satisfied with the way things are rather than longing for more of God, for more of His kingdom to break through in our world and ultimately the longing for Him to return. Are we ready? What does our faithfulness to Jesus (Adrian used the word 'allegiance' last week), what does our faithfulness to Jesus look like in the here and now? Are we taking our place in God's kingdom? One of the things I love in this passage is that the believers wanted an 'It', a sign of the end times but Jesus wants a 'Thou' - the Father only, relationship, presence. Jesus has relinquished his divine nature and so can honestly say He doesn't know when the end will come, He's relinquished to the Father all right to know, His only mission is to live in the love of and obedience to the Father. And in doing so it's just more evidence that Jesus has bound himself to humanity, to you and I, himself an example for us to follow.

Are we ready....of course, that's the invitation of advent, to be ready.

So how are we doing with being ready? How are we doing living in the love of God, knowing we are sons and daughters of the king of Kings? How are we doing in the area of obedience to our Father? Or, are there parts of us that are spiritually asleep, we've got used to some things just the way they are - thoughts, attitudes, relationships, the way we're going about some relationships, snatching time spent in His presence, morality, decisions we've made?

Just as I am speaking you may notice your heart has jumped, or a knot or something in your stomach has appeared as the Holy Spirit starts to gently cause us to look at something with Him. It may be for you, for all of us perhaps, that something needs to come back into line with living in the love of and obedience to the Father. In v22 it talks of false messiah's and prophets, 'voices' if you like, that will take the elect, that's you and I, the church, voices that will take us away. Don't ignore that nudging now but take the opportunity to ask the Lord, what is it you're showing me and what do I need to do?

I want to pray for us but first I'd like us to think about two practical things:

-Firstly, think of one thing, one 'voice', that could cause you to turn your attention away from being alert, awake, watchful, ready (whichever word works for you)?

-And secondly, v 31 says 'But one thing is certain, my words will never pass away.' Everything Jesus says remains true. So now I want you to think of one promise in scripture that counteracts the voice that might distract/lead us into spiritual sleep.

So here's an example: I think the Lord may be calling me to do x but it's too scary so I'll just keep doing what I'm doing. Scripture would say 'The LORD himself goes before

you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged' (Deut 31:8)

Or, I did something I shouldn't have done but it's too hard to sort it out now...and kind of affects my relationship with God but I'm used to it. Scripture would say 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9).

You get the idea!! Maybe pause the video for a moment, talk to whoever is with you. And then we'll pray together. So one 'voice' that could take us away and one promise in scripture that counteracts it.

Pray:

Father, In this season of advent, I turn away from that lie, that person, that distraction, that voice, and choose now to trust your promises, that one promise you have brought to my mind just now, I know you will fulfil all of your promises. But Father would you deeply embed that particular promise into my heart and mind right now by your Spirit, and this week Lord I give you permission to cause the embedding of that promise to transform me. Amen.