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ADVENT SUNDAY A

30th November 2025

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

This Sunday of waiting, this Sunday of beginnings
I come to you, ready to join in with the waiting, O Lord,
Beginning again my journey with you.

I am seeking, Lord,
Seeking after you, wanting to know more of you.

Come and make yourself known to me at this fresh beginning,
By your Spirit I pray

Amen.

You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Reading: Matthew 24:36-44 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

Advent Sunday is the first day of a new year – not a calendar year nor even an organisational year, but rather what is called the 'liturgical year', which has more to do with how we read and think about the Bible over the coming twelve months.

So it seems appropriate that the season of Advent opens with an invitation... an invitation to the mountain or house of the Lord and to a time of peace. Isn't that just what the world needs to hear, at the end of 2025?

In today's gospel reading from Matthew, Jesus speaks of things to come, of a time when the "Son of Man" will return, a moment unknown even to himself. "No one knows the day or the hour," he says, "not the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

These words have often stirred anxiety in the Christian imagination. They've been interpreted through apocalyptic lenses, prompting fear or a frantic desire to "be ready" for some future divine interruption.

But what if Jesus isn't calling us to be afraid of the unknown, what if he's calling us to wake up to the present?

Jesus compares the coming of the Son of Man to the days of Noah, when people were eating, drinking, marrying, living their lives, and unaware of what was just ahead. His warning isn't about what will happen, but about how easily we can become numb to what is happening.

For open-hearted disciples today, this passage invites us not to obsess over end-times timetables, but to pay attention: to our lives, our neighbours, our choices, and to the presence of God in this very moment.

"Keep awake," Jesus says. Be ready. Be alert. Not with fear, but with faithful attentiveness.

It's easy to sleepwalk through life, lulled by routine, distracted by noise, focused on what's urgent instead of what's important. But discipleship is about staying spiritually awake. It

means noticing the suffering around us. Noticing beauty. Noticing injustice. Noticing when love needs to be spoken, or forgiveness offered, or courage chosen.

Jesus' words challenge us to ask: What kind of life am I living while I wait? Am I showing up fully? Am I helping to build the kind of world Jesus spoke of, where love is the law, peace reigns and justice rolls like a river?

Can we hear that invitation here at the start of Advent?

The return of Christ, whether we understand that literally, spiritually, or metaphorically, isn't just about the future. It's about how we live now.

So today, reflect on this:

- What parts of your life have grown sleepy or distracted?
- Where is God calling you to pay closer attention?
- How can you live with a readiness rooted not in fear, but in compassion and courage?

May you stay awake not out of anxiety, but out of love; ready to respond, ready to act, and ready to welcome Christ wherever he shows up.

Responding in music

Listen to (and sing along with) one or more of these Advent hymns, to help you prepare for the season ahead. You might like to come back to them throughout Advent, to help you settle into this season of intentional waiting.

706 STF – Longing for light, we wait in darkness – [YouTube](#)

176 STF – Like a candle flame, flickering small in our darkness – [YouTube](#)

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

Blessing

Advent, patient God,
As I rise from this place,
Draw me to your light, draw me to yourself,
Draw me to the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
And may that same Spirit be known in the places that I visit this week,
In the people that I meet,
In the whole community that I call home.

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers For This Week

Monday 1st December

- On this day of opening little doors and lighting numbered candles, at the beginning of this time of preparation and waiting,
Come Lord Jesus.
May your presence be known in the ready-ing and busy-ing and present-wrapping.
Help me to focus on you, and your love for me, and for the whole world,
And your heart, beating for justice. Amen.

Tuesday 2nd December

- God my father and God my mother,
God my big sister and God my little brother,
God my best friend and God my Creator,
I open myself up to encounter you again this weekend.
- Move in my life, open my eyes and heart,
That I may see your love,
And know your invitation to be a part of your Kingdom.
Amen.

Wednesday 3rd December

- Today is the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities – may you use this as a prayer prompt, for people you know or those near to you who are impacted by disability.
- And continue to pray for changes in society, here in the UK and around the world, that enables people to mobilise for dignity and rights for all.

Thursday 4th December

- O Come, O Come Immanuel.
Pray this prayer today. As you go about your day, try to find as many opportunities as possible to mutter, say out loud, write down, breath, or just think this simple five-word prayer: O come, o come, Immanuel.
- Notice how that prayer for a God who is with us, present to us, amongst us, changes, shapes and inspires your day.

Friday 5th December

- December 5th is World Soil Day, which exists to raise awareness worldwide of the importance of soils for food security, agriculture, as well as in mitigation of climate change, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development.
- Today, pray for all of us and our interaction with the soil. Help us to stay grounded, and to care for your environment.

Saturday 6th December

- Be still, for the presence of the Lord is here in this place.
Be still, and know that I am God.
Be still.
Be still.
- Perhaps you find stillness easily, perhaps you find it really hard. Today, mark out some time for stillness. Perhaps you could light a candle, and just hold a few minutes of quiet. Listen for the still, small voice...