

Church at Home

Advent Sunday



Before the Service

Welcome as we gather from across the Diocese of Oxford to worship God during Church at Home on this Advent Sunday.

Presiding today is the Venerable Guy Elsmore, Archdeacon of Buckingham. The address is given by the Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham. Our thanks to everyone who has contributed ideas, prayers and action to the service this week including people and clergy from Oxford, Great Missenden, Reading, Abingdon, Banbury, Gerrards Cross, and Marlow.

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. Today the first Advent candle is lit and we recognise the Advent of Christ, the light of the world.

As we prepare for Christmas in our hearts and in our lives, in the very particular context of COVID-19, prayer is likely to be our focus. There are resources we can draw on, as Bishop Steven writes:

“If you are looking for fresh and helpful ways of praying in the Advent season, I recommend looking at the new resource for Advent from *Discovering Prayer*, based in the Diocese. There are short, daily ways into prayer each day around the theme of humility, hope, patience and joy. This new resource is a great way of going deeper into God in this next part of the journey.”

There will be a short film from Michelle Ayres about *Discovering Prayer* at the end of this service.

Opening Video

*We listen to 'Longing for light', sung by The Revd Philippa White,
Precentor, accompanied by Benjamin Sheen, Sub Organist, Christ Church
Cathedral, Oxford*

Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

The Gathering

The Greeting

President In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

President The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

The Archdeacon of Buckingham welcomes the congregation and introduces our service on Advent Sunday.

Hymn

We join with the choir of St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden to sing an Advent Carol:

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 Advent 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, O come, thou 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.

Prayers of Penitence

President 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.

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

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

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

President Almighty God,
who in Jesus Christ has give us

a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
forgives us our sins,
open our eyes to God's truth,
strengthen us to do God's will
and give us the joy of his kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Lighting of the first Advent candle

Led by John Harris, S-Giles-in-Reading

We pray together:

**Lord Jesus,
Light of the world,
Born in David's city of Bethlehem,
Born like him to be a King;
Be born in our hearts at Christmas,
Be King of our lives today. Amen.**

The Collect

President 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.
All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

Isaiah 64:1-9

Read by Trinity Odipo, S-Giles-in-Reading

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Psalm 80:1-8,18-20

*Sung by Lucy Wilson, St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden, accompanied
by Bishop Alan*

1 HEAR, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep; *
show thyself also, thou that sittest upon the Cherubims.

2 Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, * stir up thy strength, and
come and help us.

3 Turn us again, O God; * show the light of thy countenance, and we shall be
whole.

4 O LORD God of hosts, * how long wilt thou be angry with thy people that
prayeth?

5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, * and givest them
plenteousness of tears to drink.

6 Thou hast made us a very strife unto our neighbours, * and our enemies
laugh us to scorn.

7 Turn us again, thou God of hosts; * show the light of thy countenance, and
we shall be whole.

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; * thou hast cast out the heathen,
and planted it.

18 And so we shall not we go back from thee: * O let us live, and we shall
call upon thy Name.

19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts; * show the light of thy countenance,
and we shall be whole.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be * world without end.

Worship Song

We join with Chris Ellaby from Christ Church, Abingdon as we sing:

God I look to You, I won't be overwhelmed
Give me vision to see things like You do
God I look to You, You're where my help comes from
Give me wisdom; You know just what to do

I will love You Lord my strength
I will love You Lord my shield
I will love You Lord my rock forever
All my days I will love You God

Hallelujah our God reigns
Hallelujah our God reigns
Hallelujah our God reigns
Forever all my days Hallelujah

Gospel Reading

Mark13:24-end

Read by The Revd Julie Mintern, Vicar, Lambourn Valley Benefice

Reader Alleluia, alleluia.
Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

All **Alleluia.**

Reader Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark
All **Glory be to you O Lord.**

“But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at

midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Address

The Rt Revd Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham

The Creed

President Together in courage and hope let us profess the faith that sustains us in the words of the Creed:

All **I believe in God, the Father Almighty
Maker 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

President Let us pray for the Church and for the world and let us thank God for his goodness.

The prayers are led by Steven Hearn, St Mary, Banbury.

President Merciful Father
All **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

President Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Preparation of the Table

Music

We listen to an Advent Carol, written and sung by the Sisters of the Community of the Church, Gerrards Cross

Comfort, O comfort my people
Comfort and weep no more
For I, your God, I am coming soon
To make my home with you

O come God, O come, Emmanuel
O come God, O come, Emmanuel
O God come

Sing and rejoice O daughter Zion
Sing and rejoice and be glad
For I, your God, I am in your midst
To renew you in my love

O come God, O come, Emmanuel
O come God, O come, Emmanuel
O God come

I am the answer to your longings
The one whom the prophets foretold
Bringing you peace, making all things new
I am the bright morning star

O come God, O come, Emmanuel
O come God, O come, Emmanuel
O God come

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord is here.

All **His Spirit is with us.**

President Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For when he humbled himself to come among us in human flesh, he fulfilled the plan you formed before the foundation of the world to open for us the way of salvation. Confident that your promise will be fulfilled, we now watch for the day when Christ our Lord will come again in glory. And so we join our voices with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven to proclaim your glory for ever praising you and saying:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

President Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks, and said:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

All Christ is the bread of life:
**When we eat this bread and drink this cup
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.**

President Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,

and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

President Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us
All **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

President We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Agnus Dei

All **Jesus, Lamb of God,
have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.**

Invitation to Communion

President God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

All **Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

We are invited to make spiritual Communion with God, who comes to meet us wherever we are.

The Priest receives the Bread & Wine on behalf of the community as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we also desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith. There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use one of the following prayers, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

Worship Song

We sing with Rachel Avery and Jonathan Court from All Saints, Marlow:

Lord, we long for you to move in power
there's a hunger deep within our hearts
to see healing in our nation
send your Spirit to revive us

Heal our nation
heal our nation
heal our nation
pour out your Spirit on this land

Lord we hear your Spirit, coming closer
a mighty wave to break upon our land
bringing justice, and forgiveness
God we cry to you, 'revive us'

Prayer after Communion

President 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.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal

President 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.

All **Amen.**

President Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Closing Video

At this Advent time of preparation, Michelle Eyre, Chief Prayer Officer,
Discovering Prayer, introduces us to resources about prayer.

Thanks to all those who made this service possible

The Venerable Guy Elsmore, Archdeacon of Buckingham; The Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham; The Revd Philippa White, Precentor and Benjamin Sheen, Sub Organist, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford; Wendy Harris, Organist, and The Choir of St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden; John Harris, S-Giles-in-Reading; Trinity Odipo, S-Giles-in-Reading; Lucy Wilson, St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden, accompanied by Bishop Alan; Chris Ellaby, Christ Church, Abingdon; The Revd Julie Mintern, Vicar, Lambourn Valley; Steven Hearn, St Mary, Banbury; Community of the Sisters of the Church, Gerrards Cross; Rachel Avery and Jonathan Court, All Saints, Marlow; Michelle Eyre, Discovering Prayer.

This service was produced by the Revd Dr Elizabeth Lowson; our chief liturgist was Matthew Salisbury, National Liturgy and Worship Adviser of the Church of England. Church at Home is produced each week by Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker, Associate Chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford; and Steven Buckley, Director of Communications; with the help of Emma Thompson, Digital Communications Officer, and Mark Robinson of Digital Creative.

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