



**SEASON OF ADVENT
WEEK ONE
29 NOVEMBER 2020**

***“...God works for those who wait.”
Isaiah 64:4b***

How long, O Lord will you forget?
How long ‘til you let
your face shine on us, O Love?

I have heard you crying out.
I have come to rescue you
my child, O Love.

Unfailing love, my heart rejoices!
Light to my eyes, heaven’s sweet graces to us, O Love!

Words and music: Malcolm Gordon

Opening Sentences

“it’s waiting”

by Noel Davis

What we earnestly seek with all our hearts
reveals itself to us
when we are ready to see.

Opening Prayer

Though this day marks for us the official beginning
of a season of waiting and anticipation,
for months we have known a profound experience
of what it is to yearn,
to have well-laid plans come undone,
to be consoled by simple delights and whispers of hope.
So, we pray, most loving God:

***Awaken us to our deep longings.
Give us eyes ready to see
and hearts ready to receive
your unfailing love poured out every day.
Come, Lord Jesus,
into our weary world.
Amen.***

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 64:1–4

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 you.

Prayer with Psalm 80:3

Restore us, O God,
let your face shine that we might be saved.

Reading from the Gospel According to Mark 13:24–37

"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 it 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."



May your word live in us,
and bear much fruit to your glory.

Advent Hymn

“Come, O long-expected Jesus”

1. Come, O long-expected Jesus,
Born to set your people free!
From our fears and sins release us,
Christ in whom our rest shall be.

2. You are strength and consolation,
Born salvation to impart;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

3. Born your people to deliver,
Born a child, and yet a King;
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now your gracious kingdom bring.

4. By your own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By your all-sufficient merit
Raise us to your glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley, Tune: STUTTGART

Reflection on the Word and Silence

We know something of the difference [Jesus] has made to our lives as individuals, to the life of the Christian community, the Church, to the whole world. And yet there's more. We're still waiting to see what might happen if Jesus was allowed into our lives that bit more fully; that bit more radically.

So again for Christians, Advent is a time when we do a bit of self-examination. Have I allowed Jesus in yet? Has the good news really made the full impact it might make, or is my life still locked into old patterns, into darkness, into slavery, into being not at home with myself or God or with other people? It's a time of self-examination, of repentance indeed, facing myself honestly and saying sorry for the things that don't easily face the light. And it's a time of expectation and a time of hope. A time, therefore, also of quiet.

—Rowan Williams

“We lift our eyes to you (Psalm 123)”

We lift our eyes to you
Help us move on
We lift our eyes to you
Help us move on

We've had our fill of hatred
We look to you for mercy

We've had enough of terror
We look to you for healing

We've got a world of sorrow
We look to you for promise

Words and music:
Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Prayers of Intercession

In stillness we wait for you.

May our waiting not be in vain, O God.

Creator of summer light and purple jacaranda, thunderstorms and fire, thank you for meeting us where we are, for making your presence known in countless ways. Keep us from growing disheartened at life's uncertainties and changes. Help us stay awake and watchful. Enable us to see green shoots of opportunity in which to give and receive your love.

We yearn for an end to poverty's harsh oppression, for the neglect and indifference that too often reign in our hearts and in our world, for the self-diminishment and addictions that have their hold on us. Snuff out our meanness and self-interest. Heal us and kindle in us a fearless vision and will for compassion, justice and shalom.

(You are invited to offer your prayer(s), simply and in your own words.

This will be followed by the lighting of candles.)

The Disciple'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.***

***Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

Blessing

The outward work will never be puny if the inward work is great.
And the outward work can never be great or even good if the inward one is puny.
...Such a work receives and draws all its being from nowhere else
except from and in the heart of God. (Meister Eckhart)