



The Church at Carrs Lane

Advent Sunday

29th November 2020

Worship led by Neil Johnson & Jason McMahon

Music by Tim Batty



'Waiting'

Opening Music

Welcome & Notices:

Online Advent Bible Study with Student Deacon Sarah and Student Presbyterian Jason will take place at 11am on Fridays on Zoom. The first took place on Friday 27th November. The next three are on Friday 4th, 11th and 18th December. All are welcome.

The theme is **Now - and then: Reflecting on 2020 through the Christmas Story**, a fascinating way to explore the challenges that have been 2020 and find hope in the future in Jesus' name.

Listening Together with Cristina Cipriani and Julie Grove: Monday 30 November at 11am on Zoom. Join them for a Christmas story on Monday 21 December. You don't need a book...just a quiet hour and your listening ears!



Please check your Thursday email update for the Zoom links and phone numbers to join in.

Introduction

Welcome to worship on this Advent Sunday. Advent is the season of hope when we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Each Sunday during Advent and Christmas we have chosen a certain theme to give a focus to our worship. On this Advent Sunday the theme is 'Waiting'.

Lighting of Advent Candle

Collect

Lord God, we come as your people, many still feeling that we are waiting in darkness, but believing in the hope of your wonderful light. We this Advent look for your light in Jesus, we pray for those who recently celebrated light in Diwali, and those soon celebrating Hanukkah. We pray especially for people in MHA care homes and their staff, remembering on this first Sunday of Advent that they, and we, though in different places, are all your people. We thank you for staff and residents - for care, resilience and commitment. We come together today as your people - wherever we are - in community, living alone, in care homes, in families. May we all know the sure hope of your promise. Amen

From the Red Mission & Ministry Team, Birmingham Methodist Circuit

Hymn 180 ('Singing the Faith') "O come, O come, Immanuel"

1 O come, O come, Immanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear :

2 O come, O come, O Lord of might
who to your tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe :

*Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

3 O come, O Rod of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny ;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave :

4 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home ;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery :

5 O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here ;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight :

*Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

Latin, 18th century, based on the ancient *Advent Antiphons*, translated by John Mason Neale (1811–1866).
Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words Edition, number 180

Prayers of praise & confession

God, your name is Love, and in your great love
You have called us into community with each other.
With you and in you and because of you,
We are nurtured in love.
Yours is the name that lasts for ever.
Your love reaches into all corners,
Confirming those who wait for you –
That they wait in the name of Great Love.
Amen.

As we wait for you, we recognise that we have turned our face from you, O God,
Your face is always turned towards us.
We have forsaken what we know is just.
We have ignored what we understand is true.
We have refused to believe what should be believed.
We have deceived ourselves in word and deed.
For this, we humbly repent,
And we turn our face towards you –
Who waits for us, and makes us ever new.
Make us ever new now, O restoring God.
We pray for your loving forgiveness to wash over us,
In the name of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ the Messiah.
Amen.

Prayers adapted from ©Roots 29 November 2020 resources

Bible Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10

Address

Advent is a time of anticipation, hope and waiting. Samuel Beckett's famous play 'Waiting for Godot' was once described as a drama in which nothing happens twice! This is the story of two men, Vladimir, and Estragon, and throughout the whole play they are waiting. But waiting for what? There has been much speculation about this, some say it was for a friend, or death, or a Messiah to arrive. At one point these words are uttered, "What are we doing here, that is the question. And . . . in this immense confusion, one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come."

Through much of the Old Testament one gets a sense of anticipation, hope and waiting. The God of the Old Testament is the God of promises, so the People of God wait for these promises to be fulfilled. After the glory days of King David's reign, there were hopes and dreams of a Son of David, a new Messiah, an Anointed One. These hopes were heightened at the time of exile

in Babylon around 600 BC, for this was when the great prophet Isaiah had his vision of the new age to come:

*The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.*

(Isaiah 11:6)

This vision of a new age of peace, justice and equality sustained the People of Israel as they waited for hundreds of years, waiting for the Anointed One, the Son of David, their Messiah to come among them.

The composer of Matthew's Gospel retells an incident when one day the followers of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for someone else?" (Matthew 11:3). Jesus replies by encouraging them to return to John, to tell him what they had heard and what they had seen: the blind see; the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed; the deaf hear; the dead are raised, and the poor receive Good News. In other words, Isaiah's vision of a world re-ordered has been realised, which means that at long last the waiting has come to an end.

During my childhood, the world waited for Nuclear Armageddon, now that has been replaced by ecological extinction, compounded by the impact of the current global pandemic. For generations, the world's waiting has been based on fear, not hope. Although the fear has led to worldwide campaigns, such as CND and the Green movement, too little thought has been given to alternative ways of life. There is little vision of a new age of peace, justice, and equality. There is little time for living in hope. This is the great challenge to us as Christians at this time of Advent. We pray, "Your Kingdom come", which should mean living on earth as if in heaven, being a model of hopeful people, offering new vision for the world.

At this time of Advent, the season of anticipation, hope and waiting, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the long-expected Jesus, when the world still lives in fear, my question is, 'what are we waiting for?'

Video

171 ('Singing the Faith') "Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes"

Sung by Chris Grove, accompanied by Tim Batty

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|---|---|
| 1 Hark the glad sound ! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long ;
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song. | 3 He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor. |
| 2 He comes the prisoners to release,
in Satan's bondage held ;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield. | 4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name. |

Philip Doddridge (1702–1751)

Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words Edition, number 171

Prayers of Intercession

We are waiting, Jesus;

Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting because we know who you are:

The Creator of the world,

The God who took on human form,
The son of Mary, a girl just like any other girl.
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting because we have faith in you.
We know that we can trust you.
We remember that you are good to us,
And we thank you for all the good things that you give to us every day.
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting here,
Here in Birmingham, here in our homes wherever we are watching this service,
Waiting for you to come into our houses, our streets, our places of work and education,
To fill them with your light and peace.
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon.

Jesus, we are waiting for you to come and change things:
To bring health to our sick ones,
To make our asylum seekers welcome,
To comfort those who have lost loved ones;
And to turn us around
So that we can be your hands and feet,
Your ears and eyes,
In this world that needs you so much.
We are waiting, Jesus;
Come and live with us soon. Amen.

Prayers adapted from "Candles & Conifers" by Ruth Burgess, 2012
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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

178 ('Singing the Faith') "Long ago, prophets knew"

1 Long ago, prophets knew
Christ would come, born a Jew,
come to make all things new ;
bear his people's burden,
freely love and pardon :

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring !
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing !
When he comes,
when he comes,
who will make him welcome ?*

2 God in time, God in man,
this is God's timeless plan :
he will come, as a man,
born himself of woman,
God divinely human :

3 Mary, hail ! Though afraid,
she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb, God is laid ;
till the time expected,
nurtured and protected :

4 Journey ends ! Where afar
Bethlem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar.
Unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry !

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring !
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing !
Jesus comes !
Jesus comes !
We will make him welcome !

Fred Pratt Green (1903–2000)

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Prayer of Blessing

May the hope of Advent be known to us all as we wait upon God, our Creator, Companion, and Cherished One, this season and always. Amen.

Closing Music

