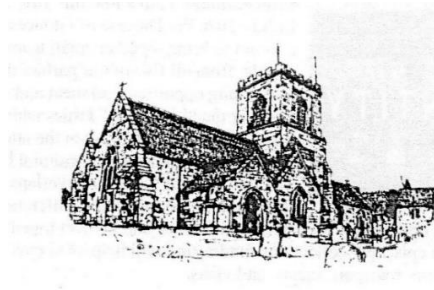


**Sunday 29th
November**

**Advent
Sunday**

**The Church of
Saint George,
Brockworth**

E service



To journey in faith and share God's love

The Gathering

The day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Sit in silence and think of those (naming them if you can) with whom you would normally worship. Reflect that even on your own you are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses and, most importantly, that the Risen Christ comes and stands in the midst of his disciples.

Blessed are you, Sovereign God of all, to you be praise and glory for ever. In your tender compassion the dawn from on high is breaking upon us to dispel the lingering shadows of night. As we look for your coming among us this day, open our eyes to behold your presence and strengthen our hands to do your will, that the world may rejoice and give you praise. Blessed be God for ever. **Blessed be God for ever.**

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. **Amen**

Say or sing:

Come, thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee
Israel's Strength and Consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart

Born Thy people to deliver
Born a child and yet a King
Born to reign in us forever
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne

Confession

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.

Turn to us again, O God our Saviour, and let your anger cease from us. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.** Show us your mercy, O Lord, and grant us your salvation, Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

Your salvation is near for those who fear you, that glory may dwell within your land. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

Grant us, Lord, the wisdom and the grace to use aright the time that is left to us here on earth. Lead us to repent of our sins, the evil we have done and the good we have not done; and strengthen us to follow the steps of your Son, that leads to the fulness of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Readings from the Bible:

Isaiah 64. 1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—² *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!³ When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.⁴ 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.⁵ 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.⁶ 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.⁷ 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.⁸ Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.⁹ Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Mark 13. 24-37

‘But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken²⁶ Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in clouds” with great power and glory. ²⁷ 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.

²⁸ ‘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. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he^{*} is near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³² ‘But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert;^{*} for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ 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. ³⁵Therefore, 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, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

Reflection – David Sutch

Advent means “coming” – not the coming of Santa Claus whose agents, despite rumours that he had not survived Covid 19, have been active in our stores and on our screens far too long already (but understandably in this strange season of lockdown and uncertainty) – but the coming of God – and not just as the Babe of Bethlehem on 25th December, but as Judge at a date and time unknown. Traditionally the four Sundays in Advent focused on the themes of Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell.

The image from our Isaiah reading is that God makes us like a potter moulding/shaping clay. BUT He can remake us if we go off course or out of shape. He will remake us to be perfect after breaking the mould or what He had started to form.

In Mark, the fig tree shows the natural seasons and signs of what is to come. In these unusual times during Lockdown, I tidied up my patio and moved various magnolia trees and started to water them regularly. They flowered in the summer – out of season- because of the love and attention they received. It's wonderful when we thrive because we are loved and cared for.

The post communion prayer asks that we prepare for the coming of the Lord, not just for Xmas. NO! NO! NO! X is not an unknown quantity -We MUST refer the Feast of our Lord's birth as CHRISTmas and as He is coming again to judge and examine our discipleship we can be grateful that many of the medieval wall paintings depicting judgement and hell have been whitewashed over. God loves us so much that he gave his Son to be the “propitiation” for our sins. But that does not mean we can sin and get away with it. We will still be answerable for our actions (free will has responsibilities).

We pray “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. Amen

We say or sing

1 Ye servants of the Lord,
each in his office wait,
observant of his heavenly word,
and watchful at his gate.

2 Let all your lamps be bright,
and trim the golden flame;
gird up your loins as in his sight,
for awful is his name.

3 Watch! 'tis your Lord's command,
and while we speak, he's near;
mark the first signal of his hand,
and ready all appear.

4 O happy servant he
in such a posture found!
he shall his Lord with rapture see,
and be with honour crowned.

5 Christ shall the banquet spread
with his own royal hand,
and raise that faithful servant's head
amid the angelic band.

We profess our faith with the Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended to hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Our prayers of intercession are led by Louisa

Lord prepare us for your coming with hopeful thankful hearts. Open our church to the free flow of your refreshing spirit. Give to our church a new vision and hope.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer

Lord prepare us for your coming in the world . Come drive away despair from our politics , revive our dreams of justice , restore our passion for what is good, right, and true. Establish your just and gentle rule in the places where there is pain and suffering,. Grant wisdom to the leaders of the church and the world.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayers.

Lord prepare us for your coming in our community be. In the problems that we are all facing now ,help us never to forget the power of love. May love heal the social ills which drag us into despair,. Father we bring before you all who have found this lock down hard the lonely , the anguished, and the bereaved. Show us where we can show some love.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

Lord prepare us for your coming in those in need give us eyes to search the face of those we meet and see your face in them. There are those we know who are ill , struggling to handle the pain. Let us name them in our hearts before you now. Pause

Lord in your mercy hear our prayers

Advent Lord come ever nearer .come to rejuvenate our faith. Come to open our eyes in wonder. Make us ready to welcome the Christ child with hope in our hearts for a new year. Let our gifts to him be our love for each other and complete trust in him. Thank you for all your many blessings . Thank you most of all for Jesus and all that he means to those who believe and trust in him.

Mercifull father accept these prayers for the sake of your son Jesus Christ. amen

We say the Christian family prayer

We say or sing

Hail to The Lord's Anointed;
Great David's Greater Son!
Hail, In The Time Appointed,
His Reign On Earth Begun!
He Comes To Break Oppression,
To Set The Captive Free,
To Take Away Transgression,
And Rule In Equity.

He Comes, With Succour Speedy,
To Those Who Suffer Wrong;
To Help The Poor And Needy,
And Bid The Weak Be Strong:
To Give Them Songs For Sighing,
Their Darkness Turn To Light,
Whose Souls, Condemned And Dying,
Were Precious In His Sight.

He Shall Come Down Like Showers
Upon the Fruitful Earth:
Love Joy And Hope Like Flowers,
Spring In His Path To Birth:
Before Him, On The Mountains,

Shall Peace The Herald Go;
And Righteousness In Fountains,
From Hill To Valley Flow.

Kings Shall Fall Down Before Him,
And Gold and Incense Bring;
All Nations Shall Adore Him,
His Praise All People Sing;
For Him Shall Prayer Unceasing
And Daily Vows Ascend;
His Kingdom Still Increasing,
A Kingdom Without End.

O'er Every Foe Victorious,
He on His Throne Shall Rest;
From Age To Age More Glorious,
All-Blessing And All-Blest.
The Tide of Time Shall Never
His Covenant Remove;
His Name Shall Stand For Ever,
His Changeless Name Of Love.

O Lord, you have set before us the great hope that your kingdom shall come on earth, and that we have been taught to pray for its coming: give us grace to discern the signs of its dawning, and to work for the perfect day when your will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

To him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Saviour through Jesus Christ, our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. **Amen**

May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching and waiting. **Amen**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

If it has been your custom to bring your crib set(s) to Church to be blessed, you might like to use this prayer over your crib scene at home:

Let us pray that God our Father will bless this crib, and that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God, our Father, on this day (night) your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation; bless + this crib which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth; may all who see it be strengthened in faith, and receive the fullness of life he came to bring; who lives and reigns for ever. **Amen**

We can worship together again - hooray! So, 9am Sunday 6th December we will worship in church again. Same guidelines as before: please email or phone Karen at the church office if you would like to be there, because of the social distancing rules we can only have 30 people in church. The service will also be streamed live on our YouTube channel.

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