

Advent Reflections

This year our advent reflections are looking back at the first coming of Christ, but also looking forward to the Second Advent when Jesus will return.

We will be having a special United service on 30th December where everyone will have a chance to share their thoughts.

As you follow these readings ask God what he might want to say through you.

Week 1 - Hope

The First and Second Advents are both about hope and redemption - understanding that Christ is coming and he's coming to rescue. As you read each Bible passage ask yourself **"What does this tell me about my hopes and what Jesus will do for me?"**

Sunday 2nd December

Messenger of good news, shout from the mountaintops! Shout it louder, O Jerusalem. Shout, and do not be afraid. Tell the towns of Judah, "Your God is coming!" Yes, the Sovereign Lord is coming in power. He will rule with a powerful arm. See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.
Isaiah 40:9-10

Monday 3rd December

Just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ died once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him. *Hebrews 9:27-28*

Tuesday 4th December

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay."

Hebrews 10:35-37

Wednesday 5th December - Day of Prayer & Fasting ::

Prayer Meeting 7-8pm

And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honour. 1

Peter 5:4

Thursday 6th December

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

Romans 8:18-21

Friday 7th December

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words. 1

Thessalonians 4:16-18

Saturday 8th December

And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. *Philippians 1:6*

Week 2 - Ready

The First Advent was foretold and it really happened. The Second Advent is foretold and it will really happen. What does that mean to us and are we ready? As you read each Bible passage ask yourself **“What does the second coming mean for me?”**

Sunday 9th December

A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it." *Isaiah 40:3-5*

Monday 10th December

For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead. *Acts 17:31*

Tuesday 11th December

Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God. *1 Corinthians 4:5*

Wednesday 12th December - Life Groups in Bradeley & Hartshill tonight

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. *Isaiah 52:7-8*

Thursday 13th December - Life Groups in Hanley & Newcastle today

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

2 Peter 3:8-10

Friday 14th December

Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left. So you, too, must keep watch! For you don't know what day your Lord is coming.

Matthew 24:40-42

Saturday 15th December

And there will be strange signs in the sun, moon, and stars. And here on earth the nations will be in turmoil, perplexed by the roaring seas and strange tides. People will be terrified at what they see coming upon the earth, for the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then everyone will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with power and great glory. So when all these things begin to happen, stand and look up, for your salvation is near! *Luke 21:25-28*

Week 3 - Present

One of the most important messages of the First and Second advents is that God is with us. He is present, He is not absent. As you read each Bible passage ask yourself **“What does it mean that God is with me?”**

Sunday 16th December

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" – which means, "God with us." *Matthew 1:22-23*

Monday 17th December

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. *1 John 4:4*

Tuesday 18th December

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. *John 1:1-3,14*

Wednesday 19th December - Prayer Meeting 7-8pm

God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. *Colossians 1:27*

Thursday 20th December

Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit. *Ephesians 2:20-22*

Friday 21st December

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. *Isaiah 43:2*

Saturday 22nd December

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. *John 14:16-17*

Week 4 - Impact

When people realised that God had come, it had a massive impact upon them. As you read each Bible passage ask yourself **“What was it like to have been there? What will it be like to be there when he comes again?”**

Sunday 23rd December - United Christmas Celebration - Carols & Children's Nativity

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Saviour—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger." Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." *Luke 2:9-14*

Monday 24th December

When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. *Matthew 2:10-11*

Tuesday 25th December - Christmas Day Service 10.30-11.30am

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 9:6*

There are no midweek meetings this week.

**Sunday 30th December - United Service 10.30am
A chance to share what God has been saying to you**

Tuesday 1st January - Walk at Ruyard Lake 10.30am

Wednesday 2nd January - Day of Prayer & Fasting

**Prayer Drop-in 6-8am ::
Prayer Meeting 7-8pm**