

**St Andrew's and St George's West
Order of Service, 28 November 2021**

Advent 1

The Self-emptying Place



Gathering Music Charles Villiers Stanford, Six Short Preludes & Postludes, Set 1 No. 5
J.S. Bach, Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659

Welcome

Including 'Advent might not be for me!'

Call to Worship

Let us take time to be still
For, in the stillness,
we may yet be moved.
Let us make room to be empty
for in that emptiness,
Lies the space to be filled.

'Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself. (Phil: 2:5-7)

Let us find a way to be silent.
that in the silence,
we may hear God speak.

(A few moments silence)

Hymn Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God.

I am the Lord who saves and heals.
I am the Lord who saves and heals.
I am the Lord who saves and heals.

In you, Lord God, I put my trust.
In you, Lord God, I put my trust.
In you, Lord God, I put my trust.

Advent Candle Lighting

As we begin our journey through Advent
We travel by the light of God.

First Advent candle is lit

Prayer

We begin our journey
open to you,
the light of the world.

**May the candle we light today
light the way on our journey
and may you be
our companion and guide
as we travel. Amen.**

Preparing for the journey

We share of a sign of Christ's Peace

Peace be with you
and also with you.

Hymn 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.

Scripture Readings

Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

Philippians 2: 1-11 (The Message)

If you've got anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you *care*—then do me a favour: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.

Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became *human!* Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion.

Because of that obedience, God lifted him high and honoured him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth—even those long ago dead and buried—will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that he is the Master of all, to the glorious honour of God the Father.

Reflection

'Never Doubt'

'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.'

Margaret Mead

Prayer of Commitment and the Lord's Prayer

**May we empty ourselves of all that hinders true community.
May we value the currency of relationship,
and the power of potential that is realised
through investing ourselves
in those least like us.**

**In doing so we help nurture God's Common-wealth on earth
and bring to life the prayer that Jesus taught:**

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn

When out of poverty is born

When out of poverty is born
a dream that will not die,
and landless, weary folk find strength
to stand with heads held high,
it's then we learn from those who wait
to greet the promised day,
'The Lord is coming; don't lose heart.
Be blest; prepare the way!'

When people wander far from God,
forget to share their bread,
they find their wealth an empty thing,
their spirits are not fed.
For only just and tender love
the hungry soul will stay,
And so God's prophets echo still

'Be blest; prepare the way!'

When God took flesh and came to earth,
the world turned upside down,
and in the strength of woman's faith
the Word of Life was born.
She knew that God would raise the low,
it pleased her to obey.
Rejoice with Mary in the call,
'Be blest; prepare the way!'

Prayers of the People

We praise you for the infinite variety of your creation –
the skies, the mountains, the valleys,
the plains, the rivers and the seas;
the colours of autumn on the trees around us, and
the bulbs we carefully tend to add colour to the New Year.
Let us never forget that the bounty of your creation adds richness and
providence
to the daily lives of all your peoples.

*Lord, hear our prayer: **and let our cry come to you.***

We thank you for the gift of life,
and for the opportunities we have to share in your purposes
as stewards of creation; and we remember lives well lived, lives cut too
short and lives just beginning to give joy to everyone around them.
Give us grace through your life-giving spirit
never to turn back on our responsibility
for the preservation of your creation.

*Lord, hear our prayer: **and let our cry come to you.***

Your Son, our Lord, came to our world in the form of Jesus,
that we might more clearly see your love in action.
Teach and inspire us never to be afraid of the power of those who are
greedy and abusive of the resources of your world and of others.
We give thanks for those, younger and older, who speak truth to power, who
speak to the asylum seeker and the refugee, who write letters for Amnesty
and who, quietly and unobtrusively, get on with the work of supporting
others.

With the love of Jesus in our hearts, we can transform every human
situation into what is good and acceptable in your sight.

*Lord, hear our prayer: **and let our cry come to you.***

We pray only
that the church will be more courageous than cautious;
that the church will not remain silent
when people are suffering;
that the church will not "pass by on the other side"
when the wounded earth is waiting to be healed.

*Lord, hear our prayer: **and let our cry come to you.***

We praise you, Creator God, that you still make all things new.

All of this we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord:

Amen.

Hymn

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, 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 :

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 :

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

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here ;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight :

Blessing

We are looking for God in our midst.
May we seek God in humility and simplicity.

We are looking for God in our lives.
May we be who God desires us to be.

And may God our Shepherd, Protector and Awakener,
Bless you through this Advent journey. Amen.

Sung Blessing

**The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious unto you:
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.**

Sending Music

Niels Gade, Drei Tonstücke, No. 1: Moderato

Worship Leaders: Rev. Rosie Magee, James McNeill
Readers: Dorothy and Alastair MacKenzie
Organist and pianist: Alasdair Grant
Technical team: Alison Bruce, Amy Marcham, Philippa Burgess, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott

Sources:

Image: www.pixabay.com

'Advent might not be for me!' by David Sinclair from 'To Nativity and Beyond', Saint Andrew Press, xiii.

Prayers of the People: Prayer of an indigenous church community in Malaysia, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 1999, p.24.

'Never Doubt' song: Words of Margaret Mead with music by Penny Stone. Sung by

'Protest in Harmony' www.protestinharmony.org.uk/songs/

Scripture readings: New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise stated.

Hymns from Church Hymnary 4th Edition

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