

Fourth Week of Advent

CELEBRATION

Reflect : The powerful words of the Magnificat speak as much into our present world as they did when sung by Mary. It is her song of celebration of the possibilities of a new society to be built.

Read : *A song is a thing of joy,
and, if we think carefully about it, a thing of love.
So the man who has learned to love a new life
has learned to sing a new song.....
...make sure that your life
sings the same song as your mouth.
sing with your voices, sing with your hearts,
sing with your lips, sing with your lives.....
Are you looking for praises to sing?
The singer himself is the praise contained in the song.*

St Augustine

Read : Luke 1. 46 -55

Pray : for those who are alone this Christmas

A Prayer suitable for Advent

O God you tarry often beyond the time that we hope for but never beyond the time appointed by you. From you comes in due season the counsel that cannot fail and the truth that cannot lie. Give us courage to stand upon our watchtower and see what you will say to us through Christ our Lord. Amen

(Based on Habakkuk 2. 1 – 3)



Advent Prayer Leaflet 2012

Dear Friends,

As I write this leaflet I look back on a year of many happenings. World events are transmitted to us so graphically and rapidly - Syria, sinking deeper into frightening civil war, a solemnly carried casket of another young Australian life cut short in Afghanistan, the steely courage of Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma and a 14 year-old girl, Mulala in Pakistan in their determination to speak for justice. 2012 has had its times of hope and its times of despair. We have felt inspired, encouraged, appalled, sorrowing.

In our own families we recall 2012 with mixtures of laughter and tears, happiness and sadness. In my own family there has been the joy of birth and the sadness of death, and much change. Each of these experiences brings new ways of living each day. For the Christian the paradox is that death is also "new life". It all sounds a little like the well-known passage from Ecclesiastes, 'for everything there is a season'.

Christ came into the world at just such a time. Long-expected but revealed in an unexpected way. The four weeks of Advent are a gift of time to us for looking back over the past year and beginning a new year in our spiritual journey. This Advent leaflet looks at the themes of Expectation, Proclamation, Revelation and Celebration as they weave through both the Biblical story and our own stories.

God's blessings for Advent and Christmas, *Bronwyn*

First week of Advent

EXPECTATION

Reflect : The coming of the Messiah was long –expected. Yet Jesus was not recognised by so many who had a different idea of what that meant. Advent alerts us to Christ’s first coming and also to the second coming. The Gospel is clear – we are to expect it and live every day in this spirit.

Read : *The one who watches for Christ .. is awake, alive, quick-sighted, zealous in seeking and honouring him; who looks out for him in all that happens, and who would not be surprised ...if he found that he was coming at once.* John Henry Newman

Read : Luke 21. 25 - 38

Pray : for grace to live each day alert to signs of God around us

Second week of Advent

PROCLAMATION

Reflect : John the Baptist’s mission was to proclaim the need for repentance and change. His message prepared the way for Jesus and the coming of the kingdom of God. This is the time we now live in, when the kingdom of God is now.

Read : *What kind of kingdom is this? It is a kingdom made known in metaphors : as the new covenant, the seed springing up, the ripe harvest the great banquet, the royal feast.* Hans Küng

Read : Mark 1. 2 – 8

Pray : mission agencies in the church

Third Week of Advent

REVELATION

Reflect : God is a God of surprises who is often revealed where we would least expect him. That is God’s way of working. The Incarnation is both unique and ordinary. It is the unique breaking through into the ordinary and transforming it. A baby is born, and in that the whole world is changed.

Read : *God determined to be different from the standards we think best, in his choice of friends and family, lets forgotten folk be blessed.* John L. Bell

Read : John 1. 14 - 18

Pray : for those who work amongst the poor, for the work of Anglicare.

