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*Annunciation*

# “A Light in the Darkness”

A Guide for Prayer at Home  
Advent 2024

ALL SOULS  
ANGLICAN CHURCH



# Contents

Advent: An Introduction.....	1
How to use this booklet.....	2
The "Daily Office".....	3
Order for household prayer.....	4
Daily readings for use in household prayer.....	6
Living Advent at home.....	8
Order for small group prayer.....	10
Readings for use in small group prayer.....	17

# Advent: An Introduction

Advent is the season in the Church calendar that runs from the fourth Sunday before Christmas to Christmas day. The beginning of Advent marks the beginning of a "new year" in the Church.

In one sense, it is a season of celebration: Advent begins the new Church year because the arrival ("advent" = "arrival") of the Son of God signaled the beginning (or the "creation") of salvation for the world! If there is no joy to be found in this, there is no joy to be found anywhere.

In another sense, Advent is rightly understood as a season of preparation - a time when Christians recommit themselves to being ready (cf. Mark 1.3: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight!") for the arrival of the Son of God when he returns to make all things new.

And so Advent, like all of the Church's seasons, helps us situate ourselves in the Truth about where and when we live: It is ever true that once in ancient Israel, salvation came to the world in the most surprising of ways, overcoming the sting of death and opening the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. And yet, the world is neither as it should be, nor (praise God) as it will be when Christ comes again in glory. Until then the People of God wait, and hope.

In Advent, then, we remember and participate and celebrate that in Christ Salvation was and is created in the midst of the earth: then, now, and in the last day. Alleluia!

# How to use this booklet

This booklet is intended to be a help for three ways of praying in the season of Advent.

## **First, it is for use within your household as a tool**

for daily prayer together. The prayer liturgy it contains is from the Book of Common Prayer (2019) "Family Prayer in the Morning" (pp. 67-68). The readings appointed for each day are from the Book of Common Prayer (1979) "Daily Office Lectionary." This "office" of prayer usually takes 10-20 minutes.

## **Second, it is for use in your small group prayer time**

each week. The prayer liturgy in this section is the Book of Common Prayer (2019) "Evening Prayer" (pp. 41-56). The readings appointed for small group time are the same as the Sunday readings we'll hear in worship at All Souls. This "office" of prayer usually takes 30-40 minutes.

## **Third, it contains suggestions for “inhabiting” the season**

at home--practical ways to help us all enter into the spiritual emphases of Advent.

# The "Daily Office"

Christianity - the fullness of the good news about Jesus Christ - came very early to what would eventually be called "Anglia" (England) through the witness of soldiers, sailors, merchants, and missionaries.

The early Christian mission in the British Isles was an encounter with pagan tribes and societies. Converts banded together, and in this context communities of common prayer, learning, and Christ-like service emerged, living under agreed rules. Thus "monasteries" became centers of the evangelization of this remote region of the Roman world, and ever more so as the empire disintegrated.\*

The forms of prayer in this booklet, sometimes called prayers of the "daily office," are prayers (mostly from Holy Scripture) which emerged from this Anglican tradition and have, for millions, formed the backbone of what it has meant to "be" a Christian in the world. These words, then, have been in the mouths of women and men across the globe for thousands of years, and to pray together in this way is to join with this Holy Company of sinners and saints, believers and doubters, on a journey from a far country to our Home in God himself.

Some of you will be intimately familiar with this "way" of living and praying as a Christian. Some you may find it (at first, perhaps) restrictive or simply a strange way to spend an evening in the company of others. For both parties - and anyone in between - I encourage you to lean into these ancient prayers (for this season at least), and take your place in something much bigger and older than yourself.

With Love,

Danny+

# Order for household prayer

Leader Therefore stay awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning – lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. Mark 13:35–36

All **Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
O give me the comfort of your help again,  
and sustain me with your willing Spirit.**

(Ps. 51:10–12)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to  
the Holy Spirit:  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever  
shall be, world without end. Amen.**

Various The Readings Appointed (see page 6)

The Apostle's Creed

All **I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
he was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended to heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Various *Prayers here offered on behalf of ourselves and others.*

**All            The Lord's Prayer**

The Collect

Leader    Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and for ever.

**All            Amen.**

# Daily readings for use in household prayer

## Week 1

### **Sunday**

Psalm 146, 147 | Is. 1:1-9 | 2 Pet. 3:1-10 | Matt. 25:1-13

### **Monday**

Psalm 1, 2, 3 | Is. 1:10-20 | 1 Thess. 1:1-10 | Luke 20:1-8

### **Tuesday**

Psalm 5, 6 | Is. 1:21-31 | 1 Thess. 2:1-12 | Luke 20:9-18

### **Wednesday**

Psalm 119:1-24 | Is. 2:1-11 | 1 Thess. 2:13-20 | Luke 20:19-26

### **Thursday**

Psalm 18:1-20 | Is. 2:12-22 | 1 Thess. 3:1-13 | Luke 20:27-40

### **Friday**

Psalm 16, 17 | Is. 3:8-15 | 1 Thess. 4:1-12 | Luke 20:41-21:4

### **Saturday**

Psalm 20, 21:1-7(8-14) | Is. 4:2-6 | 1 Thess. 4:13-18 | Luke 21:5-19

## Week 2

### **Sunday**

Psalm 148, 149, 150 | Is. 5:1-7 | 2 Pet. 3:11-18 | Luke 7:28-35

### **Monday**

Psalm 25 | Is. 5:8-12, 18-23 | 1 Thess. 5:1-11 | Luke 21:20-28

### **Tuesday**

Psalm 26, 28 | Is. 5:13-17, 24-25 | 1 Thess. 5:12-28 | Luke 21:29-38

### **Wednesday**

Psalm 38 | Is. 6:1-13 | 2 Thess. 1:1-12 | John 7:53-8:11

### **Thursday**

Psalm 37:1-18 | Is. 7:1-9 | 2 Thess. 2:1-12 | Luke 22:1-13

### **Friday**

Psalm 31 | Is. 7:10-25 | 2 Thess. 2:13-3:5 | Luke 22:14-30

### **Saturday**

Psalm 30, 32 | Is. 8:1-15 | 2 Thess. 3:6-18 | Luke 22:31-38



# Daily readings for use in household prayer

Week 3

## **Sunday**

Psalm 63:1-8 | Is. 13:6-13 | Heb. 12:18-29 | John 3:22-30

## **Monday**

Psalm 41, 52 | Is. 8:16-9:1 | 2 Pet. 1:1-11 | Luke 22:39-53

## **Tuesday**

Psalm 45 | Is. 9:1-7 | 2 Pet. 1:12-21 | Luke 22:54-69

## **Wednesday**

Psalm 119:49-72 | Is. 9:8-17 | 2 Pet. 2:1-10a | Mark 1:1-8

## **Thursday**

Psalm 50 | Is. 9:18-10:4 | 2 Pet. 2:10b-16 | Matt. 3:1-12

## **Friday**

Psalm 40, 54 | Is. 10:5-19 | 2 Pet. 2:17-22 | Matt. 11:2-15

## **Saturday**

Psalm 55 | Is. 10:20-27 | Jude 17-25 | Luke 3:1-9

Week 4

## **Sunday**

Psalm 24, 29 | Is. 42:1-12 | Eph. 6:10-20 | John 3:16-21

## **Monday**

Psalm 61, 62 | Is. 11:1-9 | Rev. 20:1-10 | John 5:30-47

## **Tuesday**

Psalm 66, 67 | Is. 11:10-16 | Rev. 20:11-21:8 | Luke 1:5-25

## **Wednesday**

Psalm 72 | Isa. 28:9-22 | Rev. 21:9-21 | Luke 1:26-38

## **Thursday**

Psalm 80 | Is. 29:13-24 | Rev. 21:22-22:5 | Luke 1:39-48a

## **Friday**

Psalm 93, 96 | Is. 33:17-22 | Rev. 22:6-11, 18-20 | Luke 1:57-66

## **Dec 24**

Psalm 45, 46 | Is. 35:1-10 | Rev. 22:12-17, 21 | Luke 1:67-80

## **Christmas Eve (night)**

Psalm 89:1-29 | Isa. 59:15b-21 | Phil. 2:5-11

## **Christmas Day**

Psalm 2, 85 | Micah 4:1-5 | 1 John 4:7-16 | John 3:31-36

# Living Advent at home

## **1. Use only candlelight after sunset**

Try to have dinner by candlelight and do evening routines by candlelight. A candle in the darkness helps us remember that Jesus is the True Light of the world (electric candles are a good option for kids too small to be trusted with real candles).

## **2. Sing together**

Learn the “O Antiphons” as a household or just gather together in the evenings to enjoy singing familiar Christmas carols.

The “O Antiphons” are traditional advent songs dating back to the 8th century (you may recognize them as the basis of “O Come O Come Emmanuel”). They are songs that talk about how much we want Jesus to come and restore all things.

Each antiphon is a name of Jesus taken from the Old Testament:

Wisdom: Isaiah 11:2-3, Isaiah 28:29

Adonai: Isaiah 11:4-5, Isaiah 33:22

Root: Isaiah 11:1, Isaiah 11:10

Key of David: Isaiah 22:22, Isaiah 9:7, Isaiah 42:7

Morning star: Isaiah 9:2

King of Nations: Isaiah 2:4, Isaiah 28:16

Emmanuel: Isaiah 7:14

### **3. Bless a neighbor**

During Advent, we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus, one way we can do this is through blessing others. Talk with your kids about a neighbor or friend you can bless through a gift or kind word. You may want to do this on St. Lucia day (Dec 13) in remembrance of St. Lucia being martyred for giving food to persecuted Roman Christians. It is also traditional for the oldest girl in a family to bless her family on St. Lucia day by getting up early to make them breakfast.

### **4. Decorate slowly**

Because Advent is a time of waiting, you can display this to your kids by decorating your house over a period of time instead of all at once. You may choose to decorate your tree over several days- adding the lights but waiting to add the ornaments- or go all the way and wait until Christmas Eve to get your tree. Easy decorating ideas for kids include dried citrus garlands, cranberry and popcorn garlands, and paper stars.

### **5. Read Christmas books**

Contact Emily Hindman ([emily@allsoulsrva.org](mailto:emily@allsoulsrva.org)) for some favorite Christmas books for all ages!

## Order for small group prayer

Leader Therefore stay awake - for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning - lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.

Mark 13:35-36

Let us humbly confess our sins to almighty God.

All **Most merciful father,  
we have erred and strayed from your ways like  
lost sheep.  
We have followed too much the devices and  
desires of our own hearts.  
We have offended against your holy laws.  
We have left undone those things which we  
ought to have done,  
and we have done those things which we ought  
not to have done;  
and apart from your grace, there is no health in  
us.  
O Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Spare all those who confess their faults.  
Restore all those who are penitent, according to  
your promises declared to all people in Christ  
Jesus our Lord.  
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,  
that we may now live a Godly, righteous, and  
sober life, to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

Leader Grant to your faithful people, merciful Lord, pardon and peace; that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and serve you with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**People Amen.**

Leader O Lord, open our lips;

**People And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Leader O God, make speed to save us;

**People O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Leader Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

**People As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.**

Leader Praise the Lord.

**People The Lord's name be praised.**

Phos Hilaron

**People O gladsome light,  
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,  
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!  
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,  
and our eyes behold the vesper light,  
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,  
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,  
and to be glorified through all the worlds.**

Various *The Readings Appointed (see page 17)*

Magnificat

People

**My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;  
For he has regarded  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold, from now on,  
all generations will call me blessed;  
For he that is mighty has magnified me,  
and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on those who fear him,  
throughout all generations.  
He has shown the strength of his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of  
their hearts.  
He has brought down the mighty from their  
thrones,  
and has exalted the humble and meek.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent empty away.  
He, remembering his mercy has helped his servant  
Israel, as he promised to our fathers, Abraham and  
his seed forever.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the  
Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall  
be, world without end. Amen.**

(Luke 1:46-55)

Nunc Dimittis

People

**Lord, now let your servant depart in peace,  
according to your word.  
For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared before the face of all  
people;  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles,  
and to be the glory of your people Israel.**

(Luke 2:29-32)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the  
Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

The Apostle's Creed

People

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
he was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.**

People **On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended to heaven  
and is seated at the right hand the Father.  
From there he will come to judge the living and  
the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Leader The Lord be with you.

People **And with your spirit.**

Leader Let us pray.

Leader Lord, have mercy upon us.

People **Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Leader Lord, have mercy upon us.

People **Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy Name.  
Thy Kingdom come.  
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
The power, and the glory,  
For ever and ever.  
Amen.**



Leader O Lord, show your mercy upon us;  
**People And grant us your salvation.**

Leader O Lord, guide those who govern us;  
**People And lead us in the way of justice and truth.**

Leader Clothe your ministers with righteousness;  
**People And let your people sing with joy.**

Leader O Lord, save your people;  
**People And bless your inheritance.**

Leader Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;  
**People Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Leader Give peace in our time, O Lord;  
**People And defend us by your mighty power.**

Leader Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**People Amen.**

Leader Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous, and all for your love's sake.

**People Amen.**

Various *Prayers here offered on behalf of the small group and others.*

Leader Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will grant their requests. Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come, life everlasting.

**People Amen.**

Leader Let us bless the Lord.

**People Thanks be to God!**

Leader Glory to God whose power, working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.

**People Amen.**

# Readings for use in small group prayer

## **Week 1**

Isaiah 64:1-9 | Psalm 80 | 1 Cor. 1:1-9 | Mark 13:24-37

## **Week 2**

Isaiah 40:1-11 | Psalm 85 | 2 Peter 3:8-18 | Mark 1:1-8

## **Week 3**

Isaiah 65:17-25 | Psalm 126 | 1 Thess. 5:12-28 | John 3:22-30

## **Week 4**

2 Sam. 7:1-17 | Psalm 132:8-19 | Romans 16:25-27 | Luke 1:26-38

# About the cover image

The image on the front of the booklet is a reproduction of an icon made by the Ukranian iconographer Ulyana Tomkevych. Tomkevych is a part of a new “school” of Eastern Orthodox and Catholic iconographers, largely based in Lviv, Ukraine. Many of the artists who are a part of this community are graduates of the Lviv National Academy of the Arts, and their work has begun to attract attention around the world. Their continued production is a gift, given both the quality of their work as well as the context in which it is conducted as the Russian invasion of Ukraine nears the completion of its third year. This Advent, as they bless us with works of their hands and hearts, perhaps it would be good and right for us to pray for their protection as well as an end to hostilities in Eastern Europe. May the Prince of Peace return to us quickly.

Sundays at 10 am

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