



The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 7th December 2025: Advent 2

Theme for today is “the Advent Hope” Prepared by Rev Derek Grimshaw

Opening Words:

We have come,
Come, O come, Lord Jesus, Immanuel.
May we know your presence here with us, in this advent season.
May we know the light of your love shining through and into our lives.
In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.



Hymn 180 (StF) – O come, O come, Immanuel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKu0or0t8Uw>

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, 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:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

O come, thou dayspring, come
And cheer our spirits
By thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And deaths dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

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 of misery:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
Who to thy tribes, on Sinai’s height,
In ancient times didst give the law
In clouds and majesty and awe:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

Opening Prayer

Peaceful and Gracious God, we thank you today on this second Sunday in Advent, for fulfilling your promises, spoken through prophets, in your son Jesus Christ, bringing chances of hope and peace in the prospect of a new era of justice.

Teach us to live in harmony as one people.

United in Christ our living hope.

We must live through the heartaches and hardships to work towards the reward of a just and equal world.

Give in us, hearts that seek righteousness in action not name alone in the pursuit of truth.

Through this, help us to pave the way for others turning away from sin to the light that shines in our hearts from your presence.

Before the peace and restoration we long for, there must be repentance to renew hope and peace, opening the way for each of us to live out the purpose woven into our story from the start.

Let us want for nothing in the way of selfish desires in this festive season.

Let us look towards and embrace the new year and the opportunities we can create.

For a new era of justice.

For peace amongst all.

For the hope of all nations.

May your kingdom be here on earth just as it is in Heaven. We ask this in your loving and powerful name.

Amen.

Hymn 706 Longing for light, we wait in darkness. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kt3Qc04ulOM>

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.

Chorus

*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.

Chorus

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

Chorus

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

Chorus

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Chorus

Scripture: Isaiah 11: 1-10 Romans 15: 4-13 Matthew 3: 1-12

Reflection:

For years I have been an avid viewer of BBC question time, the programme keeps me abreast of some of the current affairs in the world and supplemented by daily news bulletins I find it important to have one foot firmly fixed in the life and work of the Church and the other in the affairs of the world. I remember as a teenager hearing somebody say that he always tried to get home in time for the six o'clock news and expected to be able to concentrate on the programme demand quiet from his three young children. At the time, I couldn't think of anything I would want to do less, so I'm quite surprised about where I am today. I confess that as I look at what is going on in the world it scares me and challenges me. The problems facing the twenty-first century world with conflicts, climate change, AI, social media and some of the most unreliable world leaders, I find myself at a loss as to know what needs the greatest priority and how ever get into a position of peace and harmony.

The story of faith is fairly straight forward. The Bible teaches us that God created a world of peace and harmony and then as early as the book of Genesis everything started to go wrong and the whole of the Old Testament teaches of the continual struggle to get back to that perfect world. Somewhere around two thousand years ago years ago, we believe that God made the decision to come into the world in the form of a human being and teach us how this should be done. We have heard the gospel story and through the words of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we can hear again that amazing teaching. Even after Christ had been crucified, his disciples and followers developed a Church where the teaching was shared with the wider world.

With all this investment into the work of the Kingdom, one could assume that two thousand years on, we would have got the hang of how to make peace in the world work, yet for some reason, human instinct still desires, power, wealth, processions and notoriety. There is something built into our human Psyche that causes people to want be the one admired and worshipped by others, in many ways, rather than wanting to worship God, far too many people actually want to be God.

I encourage you to take a moment and read again the three passages of scripture.

- **Isaiah** is prophesying at a time when the Israelite people had been in exile in Babylon. His message is one of hope and of God's supremacy. We will never know whether his words are directly about Jesus, but they are proclaiming a time when God will reign supreme and will be the one being worshipped by all humankind.
- **John** in his gospel is reflecting on the life and teaching of this man, Jesus of Nazareth. Who was he? Where did he fit in the great story of faith? What have we learned from all of his teaching?
- **Paul** in his letter to the Church in Rome, tries to explain in practical terms what it means to be a part of the Christian community and faced with the challenges of the world we inhabit, how the teaching of Christ informs our thinking and our living

As we journey through Advent this year, maybe daunted by some of the challenges of life, we still face those same challenges, not much has changed since the days recorded in the book of Genesis, but that is no reason to give up, it is the impetus that keeps us going.

Prayers for others and ourselves

Holy God, whose kingdom is justice and joy, whose desire for humanity is flourishing for all, help us to know your story intimately.

Help us to look upon the earth as you do:

- to see the broken beauty of creation
- to see the woeful state of the wonderfully created humanity
- to see the terrible imbalance of power, food, resources, between nations and peoples.

Holy God, whose kingdom is justice and joy, whose desire for humanity is flourishing for all, help us to live your story faithfully.

Help us to walk upon this earth as Christ did:

- to challenge oppression and injustice
- to speak up for those who are silenced by others
- to rebel against the status quo which tells us some lives are worth more than others.

Holy God, whose kingdom is justice and joy, whose desire for humanity is flourishing for all, help us to share your story generously.

Help us to speak with others about you:

- to acknowledge that the walk with you can be challenging
- to share the deep joy of knowing you in Jesus
- to be bold when we fear that others don't want to hear the story that has changed the world and can change their lives.

This advent, plant your story deep in us, and help us to be good tellers of the wonderful good news.

This we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 185 Sing we the king who is coming to reign

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlqcBEcWpQw>

Sing we the King who is coming to reign,
Glory to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain;
Life and salvation his empire shall bring
Joy to the nations when Jesus is King.

*Come let us sing: Praise to our King,
Jesus our King, Jesus our King:
This is our song, who to Jesus belong:
Glory to Jesus, to Jesus our King.*

All shall be well in His kingdom of peace,
Freedom shall flourish and wisdom increase,
justice and truth from his sceptre shall spring
wrong shall be ended when Jesus is King.

*Come let us sing: Praise to our King,
Souls shall be saved from the burden of sin
Doubt shall not darken his witness withing
Hell has no terrors, and death has no sting
Love his victorious when Jesus is King.*

*Come let us sing: Praise to our King,
Kingdom of Christ, for thy coming we pray,
Hasten, O Father, the dawn of the day
When this new song Thy creation shall sing,
Satan is vanquished and Jesus is King.*

Come let us sing: Praise to our King,

Blessing

May you rise from this time, inspired.

May you go from this place, uplifted.

May you travel with the light of the Lord in your hearts, this day and always.

Amen.