

We pray for people who touch our lives. [silence]

It is not true that that we are unloved, unforgiven or unable and it is not true that we cannot share in hope and life.

We pray for ourselves and those we love. [silence]

In this time of Advent, we are reminded that it is true that good things shall be born amongst us, that love and light shall shine even in the darkness and that you, God, are eternally present. And we are thankful.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

You might like to include a piece of music of your choosing in this time of Advent.

Closing Responses & Blessing

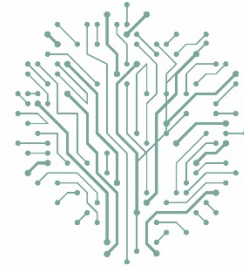
Send us out with ears to hear.

Journey with us in this season of waiting and watching.

Bless us and the people we meet along the way,

Father,
Son
and Holy Spirit.

Amen



SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

**Luke 3: 7-18
Advent 3**

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

Gathering Prayer

God of our Advent.
God of birth and life.
God of the cry going out to all the world,
We open our ears to your eternal calling down
throughout the ages.

[silence]

Forgive us when we simply make Advent a time of the past and forgo your invitation to us in the present.

[silence]

With thankfulness let us come because of the Good News we have heard. With thankfulness let us come because of all your indwelling amongst us God. With thankfulness let us come as your people, longing for you to be born anew within and around us.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: O Come O Come Emmanuel

Sufjan Stevens

<https://music.sufjan.com/track/o-come-o-come-emmanuel>

or found on:

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6gP7dUSdWheJnqwVTdKcFL?si=69e1c83dffab46f4>

Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

Luke 3: 7-18

7 John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" 11 In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." 12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13 He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." 14 Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

Questions for conversation

- Is Advent just a time of remembering... or is our Advent time a time of listening for the word of prophets and being awakened to what God is doing in our world and lives?

- How then might we respond?

- What one action can you or your church take in response to the Word today?

Silence in Two Ways

Spend some time in silence sitting still (suggested 5 minutes). Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert.

- You may like to say the prayer phrase "Mar-an-ath-a" (which means come Lord). Say this as four syllables. Do not try to think or imagine anything. If thoughts or distractions come simply return to saying the word.

- Or you may like "sitting with God" — a silent time in which we focus all our mind, heart and soul on the presence of God without trying to create it. Simply be still and open to God.

Prayers for Others

Eternal God, we thank you for the prophets. For those voices who have called people to faith, to justice, to hope and to change.

We thank you for the voices of the prophets who call us to truth and remind us what is not true.

It is not true that people must live in fear, or poverty, or oppression, and it is not true that we can consume without hurting each other and your creation.

We pray for our world. [silence]

It is not true that we cannot live as neighbours, that people will always be lonely, or that pain cannot be healed and sorrows forgiven.