

Music for Reflection

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

Closing Responses & Blessing

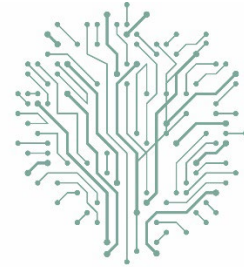
Send us out with ears to hear.

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

**Matthew 24: 36-44
Advent 1**

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

Matthew 24: 36-44

36 'But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 37 For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, 39 and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. 41 Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. 42 Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. 43 But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

The Message

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

Questions for conversation

- How do we live with that expectation of God doing, acting, unfolding, present in our world, communities and lives?
- What did you hear in today's word?
- How then might we respond?

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, how shall we pray in this season of Advent. This time of waiting and watching and yet this season of the predictable, the commercial and the weariness.

Help us to pray even as your people of expectation and hope.

We pray for your coming in places of war and fear. Amongst lives of struggle and poverty. We pray for your coming and human change in ways beyond what we can imagine.

We pray for our world. [silence]

We pray for your coming and your hand within and through humanity where people seek something beyond themselves.

For those we draw to mind, far or near, who need some rest, wholeness or hope at this time in their lives.

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

We pray for your coming near to us. That we would be expectant and watchful with broad minds and open hearts.

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.