

***St Michael and All Angels Colehill
Prayers and Resources for Advent,
Christmas and the New Year***



**Free Daily Hope Prayer Line –
Seasonal Readings,
Prayers and Hymns
0800 804 8044**

ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS

BRING YOU
Comfort
and Joy



Carols and Readings at Home

livestreamed from St Michael's Colehill

20th December @ 6.30pm

Christingle and Blessing of the Crib Online

Christmas Eve @ 4pm

DIY Christingle Packs (excluding orange) available for collection from the Church Centre on Wednesday 16 December, 2-30-4pm, and Saturday 19th December 10-12noon

Christmas Day Services

8am Holy Communion in Church

10am All Age Christmas Communion (livestreamed)

Please contact Meg on pccsec.st.m@gmail.com to book your place as numbers are limited due to Covid restrictions

First Sunday of Christmas 27th December

10am Communion and Carols (livestreamed)

Please contact Meg on pccsec.st.m@gmail.com to book your place as numbers are limited due to Covid restrictions



People might well have feared that Christmas has been cancelled this year, but this could not be further from the truth. It is just that we need to celebrate a bit differently this year. Advent is the time of waiting and hoping and longing for the promises of God to be fulfilled, and Christmas is the time when we remember that God came down, to a broken and hurting world, and stepped into the mess with love, hope, light and peace. If anything, these messages have never been more needed this year – and churches are active throughout the UK in seeking to enable people to mark and celebrate the season of Advent, Christmas and into the New Year and beyond. The resources have no particular set way to use them. There are reflections and prayers that you can dip into at any time in the hope that they will provide you with some inspiration during this season.

Advent

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to all who dwell in darkness and the shadow of
death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace
Luke 1:78,79

An Advent Poem

Jesus the light of the world comes.
A light for the ancestors whose story
Showed us God's power and goodness and glory
Who passed on to us every promise God gave
That God would come near us to help and to save...
When Jesus the light of the world comes

Jesus the light of the world comes.
A light for the prophets so brave and so bold
Speaking God's truth when it had to be told
And shouting God's warnings to do what is right,
Do justly, love mercy and look for the light...
When Jesus the light of the world comes

Jesus the light of the world comes.
A light for the Baptist, preparing the way,
Wild man of the wilderness, day after day
Crying out, crying loudly to all who would hear:
Change your ways and be ready, soon God will come near...
When Jesus the light of the world comes

Jesus the light of the world comes.
A light for his mother, so brave and so young,
Obedient, rebellious, in speech and in song
She welcomed a kingdom far greater than Rome
And offered her body and heart as God's home.
When Jesus the light of the world comes

Jesus the light of the world comes.
A light for the baby who lies in the manger
God in our helplessness, God as a stranger,
God who entrusted himself to our care
To fit us for heaven to live with him there...
When Jesus the light of the world comes
By Rev Caroline Beckett, shared with permission

Advent Bible Reading Plan

If you have time, perhaps read a small passage of the bible each day as we head towards Christmas.

1 st	Isaiah 2:2-5	13 th	2 Peter 3:3-13
2 nd	Isaiah 9:1-7	14 th	Mark 14:60-45
3 rd	Isaiah 11:1-9	15 th	Jeremiah 33:14-17
4 th	Isaiah 11:10-16	16 th	Micah 5:2-5
5 th	Isaiah 39:5-40:11	17 th	Ezekiel 34:11-31
6 th	Isaiah 51:1-12	18 th	Zechariah 8:1-8
7 th	Isaiah 61:1-4	19 th	Zephaniah 3:14-17
8 th	Galatians 4:4-6	20 th	Isaiah 7:10-17
9 th	1 Thess 4:13-18	21 st	Matthew 1:11-17
10 th	1 Thess 5:1-11	22 nd	Luke 1:26-38
11 th	1 Cor 15:20-28	23 rd	Luke 1:39-56
12 th	Colossians 1:15-20	24 th	Matthew 1:18-25

A Prayer if you are Struggling

I call you God.
Are you my God?
I speak!
Do you hear?
Are my words of any worth to you?
Do they make a difference?

I have accepted the invitation to pray
And so here I am.
The world feels a mess.
The pandemic instils fear and anxiety.
It causes sickness and death.
It strikes our NHS.
It causes division among family and friends.
It's wrecking our economy.
It's driving the poorest into the dust.

Please hear me.
Please come to our help.
Give us what we need to see this through.
And at its ending,
may it mark a new beginning
Of friendship,
Peace and kindness;
Of generosity, hope and faith.
Amen.

Bishop Bev Mason, *Prayers for Our Nation*

Some Advent Prayers

Christmas is coming, Lord,
Yet little cause for cheer.
Is there any point in tinsel and glitter?
Will there be any coming together?
What of the funny foibles and quirkiness
that drive us to distraction;
the silly jokes and games;
the overspend, overfeed, over-indulged
that have made Christmas, Christmas.

With so much stripped away,
bring us back to the heart of Christmas
when love became incarnate.
May the flame of the Christmas lantern
illuminate my mind;
And the love that came down at Christmas,
fill my heart;
May the angels' song of peace and goodwill
Bless again the earth.
Give to each one cup of kindness,
One measure of joy
and stir up in us good Christmas cheer
For the love of the him who gave Christmas its name:
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bishop Bev Mason, *Prayers for Our Nation*

Holy God, just as we are we come to you,
and ask for your kingdom to come in us
and in our homes and our hearts,
increase our faith and love for you,
so that we may become the lights in the darkness
that we are called to be. Amen

Living Stones, Prayers of Intercession. Susan Sayers

Lord
I pray that I will have faith
and trust in you my God,
Even when I think there is no hope
because you are our true God
and you never let us down. Amen

Prayers from the Edge. Catherine Von Ruhland

Loving God,
your Son Jesus Christ came
that we might have life
and have it abundantly;
pour out your blessing upon our nation;
where there is illness,
bring your healing touch;
where there is fear,
strengthen us with the knowledge of your presence;
where there is uncertainty,
build us up in faith;

where there is dishonesty,
lead us into truth; where there is discord,
may we know the harmony of your love;
this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer for the Nation, Church of England

Holy God, we bring to you in love
those who are weary
with ongoing pain and weakness,
those for whom this time is filled with fear and doubt,
those who struggle as we face uncertainty,
Pour your living strength into each of our lives
and fill us with your peace. Amen

Living Stones, Prayers of Intercession. Susan Sayers

Come, Lord, come down
come in, come among us.

Enter into our darkness with your light.
Come fill our emptiness with your presence.

Dispel the clouds and reveal your glory.
Come refresh, renew and restore us.

Come, Lord, come down, come in, come among us. Amen

Traces of Glory. David Adam

Creative Advent Prayer

As you turn your
lights on each evening,
allow them to remind you
that Jesus came as light in the darkness,
and pray for him to show you ways that you can bring light to
others. You could also do this as you walk or
drive around and see other people's
Christmas lights.

If you have a nativity scene, perhaps build it slowly this year,
adding a character each day. Ask God what you can learn from
each character in the nativity story.

Light a candle each evening and whilst it burns pray for those
who are in darkness and who need to know God's light, love
and peace this advent season.

As you give and receive Christmas cards this year,
pray Christ's blessings on the recipient or the giver

Christmas

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Some Questions

as we prepare for Christmas

(Taken from Together at Home – Church Resources)

What is your favourite part/memory of Christmas day?

What is your favourite Christmas service?

How is Christmas going to be different this year?

What is the best present you have ever given or received?

Christmas reminds us that God's love is a free gift for everyone
– how can we share that this Christmas?

How many sources of light can you find in the Christmas story?

How can we be a light in the world at Christmas?

Midnight Prayers

As Christmas Eve turns to Christmas Day we would usually be in church, celebrating and remembering together – maybe this is something you have not been able to do for a long time. If you are still awake, these are some prayers that you can use as Christmas Day begins.

Welcome all wonders of the night
Eternity shut in a span.
Summer in winter; day in night,
Heaven in earth and God in man
Great little one whose all embracing birth
Brings earth to heaven and heaven to earth

“Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the Lord.
Now the word is made flesh and laid in a narrow manger.
From eternity to eternity you are God
And now we see you in a newborn child.

Eternal God, who made this most holy night
To shine with the brightness of your one true light;
Bring each of us, who have known the revelation of that light on
earth, to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
Through Jesus Christ you Son our Lord
Who is alive and reigns with you,
one God, now and forever. Amen

Church of England , Times and Seasons

A Christmas Reflection

Christmas Day comes, as it has for hundreds of years and we remember a tiny baby, born in obscurity to young parents, far from home, in less than ideal circumstances. But in those less than ideal circumstances God's eternal plan was being revealed. Worked out through ordinary people who made space to listen and to respond to the words of God. That tiny, naked, vulnerable baby was the pinnacle of the salvation plan of God. God, come to earth to save us all. Angels watched with wonder as God humbled himself to share in our humanity in all its joys and sorrows. Our circumstances today may be less than ideal. We may be missing people and traditions that usually make Christmas day special for us. But if the Christmas story teaches us anything it is that God continues to work and to act, even when we can't quite see it. Even when all around looks like chaos and no one is where they want to be due to following the rules (remember that census that sent everyone far from home?) God works and shows his amazing love for us. Today try to look for signs of God's love. Remember his greatest gift, Jesus, and remember that nothing can separate us from his love.

Christmas Prayers

If you have time today, try to find some quiet, maybe light a candle and pray one of these prayers.

Holy Jesus,

By being born one of us

And lying humbly in a manger

You show us how much God loves the world.

Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts,
Until we reach our home in heaven
And see you on your throne of glory. Amen.

Church of England, Times and Seasons.

Lord, by the song of the angels
You disclosed your birth to your own people
And by the leading of star
You revealed your glory to strangers
Teach us to know you now
And to make you known to all. Amen

Church of England, Times and Seasons

Child of Bethlehem, weak and helpless,
have pity on my weakness.
Child of Bethlehem, peaceful in a manger, calm my restlessness.
Great son of God made flesh, hold me in your strong arms.

Stations of the Nativity, Raymond Chapman

The New Year

2020 has been a strange and difficult year, but as the new year dawns there is some light on the horizon. We are hopeful that a vaccine will make a difference in 2021. As we look ahead we are reminded that God is constant and faithful, and in Christ through the Spirit he journeys alongside us, promising to hold us fast. As we move into 2021 these are just some suggested words that you might like to pray if they are helpful.

Holy and ever-present God
2020 is a year that we are pleased to say farewell to,
Yet even this year,
You have been present and active.
Help us to remember
the moments of peace and joy,
And to leave at your feet
the moments of fear and grief.

As we look to 2021,
We pray for more glimpses of your kingdom,
We pray that we will start this year with hope,
And with an expectation that you will work
And we pray that we will continue to seek connection
As we long for the day we can all be together. Amen.

In a world of change and hope,
of fear and adventure,
faithful God glorify your name.

In human rebellion and obedience,
in our seeking and our finding,
faithful God glorify your name.

In the common life of our society,
in prosperity and need,
faithful God glorify your name.

As your Church proclaims your goodness
in words and action,
faithful God glorify your name.

Among our friends
and in our homes,
faithful God glorify your name

In our times of joy,
in our days of sorrow,
faithful God glorify your name.

In our strengths and triumphs,
in our weakness and at our death,
faithful God glorify your name.

In your saints in glory
and on the day of Christ's coming,
faithful God glorify your name.

Church of England , Times and Seasons

So now we leave this year behind us
And while so much of the road ahead is uncertain,
the path constantly changing,
we know some things that are as solid and sure
as the ground beneath our feet,
and the sky above our heads.

We know God is love.

We know Christ's light endures.

We know the Holy Spirit is there,
found in the space between all things,
closer to us than our next breath,
binding us to each other, until we meet again,
Know Christ's peace.

*© Rev. Nora Vedress, Calvary United Church in Prince Albert,
Saskatchewan, Canada (adapted)*

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and place thine hand into the hand of God. That, for thee, shall be better than light and safer than the known way."

(M. Louise Haskins, 1908)



"a Lamp at Midday" by Judy Croome
www.judycroome.com

Image purchased from iStock.com

This leaflet has been produced with grateful acknowledgement to clergy colleagues who have shared ideas and resources.