

Thoughts and Prayers for the Week

Sunday 27th November 2022



1st Sunday of Advent
Almighty God,
as your kingdom dawns,
turn us from the darkness of sin
to the light of holiness,
that we may be ready to meet you
in our Lord and Saviour,
Jesus Christ.
Amen



Readings this week:

Isaiah 2: 1-5

Psalms 122

Romans 13: 11-14

Matthew 24: 36-44

Advent Calendars...

A year ago, in writing 'Thoughts and Prayers' for the start of Advent in 2021, I ended with a poem by Rowan Willams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. This time I make no apologies for starting with it, because it's such a powerful simile about Christ's coming, leading us through Advent to an amazing conclusion:

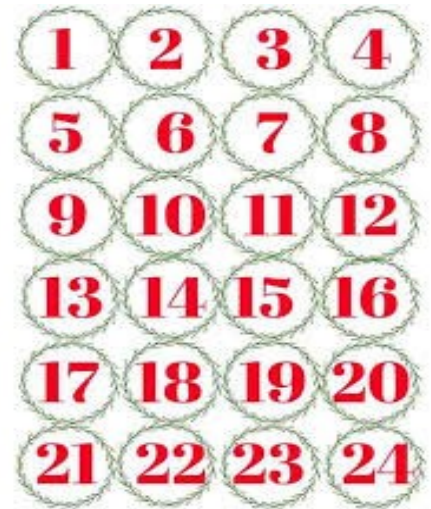
'Advent Calendar'¹

*He will come like last leaf's fall.
One night when the November wind
has flayed the trees to bone, and earth
wakes choking on the mould.
the soft shroud's folding.*

*He will come like frost.
One morning when the shrinking earth
opens on mist, to find itself
arrested in the net
of alien sword-set beauty.*

*He will come like dark.
One evening when bursting red
December sun draws up the sheet
and penny-masks its eye to yield
the star-snowed fields of sky.*

*He will come, will come,
will come like crying in the night,
like blood, breaking,
as the earth writhes to toss him free
He will come like child.*



Another Archbishop – the current Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell – has also produced an Advent Calendar in 'Let It Slow', his little book of fun observations and practical ideas, in which he responds to '...the imagined voice of the sort of frazzled and fragmented person that many of us become at Christmas' with brief reflections and suggestions on 'how to make sense of this and start sorting things out'.² The clue is in the title.

Very different in style, tone and focus, both of these Archbishop-authored Calendars encourage us to engage properly and fully with Advent, so that we are prepared not just materially but spiritually for what happens next.

So, let's make the most of Advent: let's try to find time and space to be aware, to stop for a moment, to be still, watchful and receptive – and to be confident that God is coming, 'like child'. In the words of the Advent prayer: 'Maranatha' – 'Our Lord, come'. (1 Corinthians 16.22).

~Liam Pilgrim~

¹Rowan Williams, *After Silent Centuries* (Oxford: Perpetua Press, 1994); poem now widely available online, eg Wymondham Abbey website <<https://www.wymondhamabbey.org.uk/advent-calendar-by-rowan-williams-2/>>.

²Stephen Cottrell, *Let it Slow: An Advent Calendar with a Difference*, 2nd edn (London: Church House Publishing, 2020), p.9.

Let us continue to support and strengthen each other

- ◇ Daily, by saying The Lord’s Prayer together, morning and evening
- ◇ Lighting a candle at home 10.00am on Sunday if we are unable to come to church

Our Services:

Sunday 27th Nov 2022 1st Sunday of Advent	10:00am Group Eucharist The Right Revd. Bishop David Gillett (retired Bishop of Bolton; Honorary Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Norwich)	Hempnall Church
	6:00pm Advent Evening Service	Via Zoom
Sunday 4th Dec 2022 2nd Sunday of Advent	10:00am Group Eucharist Revd. Sue Hensley Halls, Diocesan AWA Co-ordinator	Topcroft Church
	4:00pm Family Praise	Hempnall Church
	6:00pm Advent Evening Service	Via Zoom

This week we pray for:

- ◇ In the morning: the day and its tasks; the world and its needs; the Church and her life
- ◇ The Church, that she may be ready for the coming of Christ
- ◇ The leaders of the Church
- ◇ The nations, that they may be subject to the rule of God
- ◇ Those who are working for justice in the world
- ◇ The broken, that they may find God’s healing
- ◇ In the evening: peace; individuals and their needs

Food Bank

Items for our Food Bank are still needed; we are very grateful to all who continue to contribute during this difficult time.

Our next collections will be on:

Sunday 4TH DECEMBER 2022. Any items can be left at

Hempnall Church Office Mon-Thu, 9am-12:30pm.

Please phone before arrival – 01508 498157

WE REMEMBER:

Martin, Molly, Ian

Hempnall: Lesley and family,

Phillip, Sophie

Bedingham/Woodton:

Sheila, Hilary, Peter, Liz, Anne, Chris, Barrie

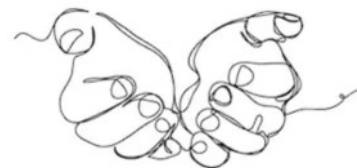
Topcroft: Gerald

LONG TERM CARE:

Bedingham /Woodton:

Dennis, Shirley, Jacob, Myrtle, Rudolph

Fritton/Morningthorpe: Beryl



RECENTLY DIED:

June Lloyd, Mary Peck, Geoff Moulton



Please ring us if you need:

Group Office: Mon-Thurs 9am-12.30pm

01508 498157

Email: hempnallgroup.office@btinternet.com

