

## CLOSING

*Leader: Let us pray...*

*All: O God, most high and most near  
you who send glad tidings to the lonely,  
and do not hide your face from the poor.  
Those who dwell in darkness you call into light.*

*Take away our blindness,  
remove the hardness of our hearts,  
and form us into a humble people,  
that, at the advent of your Son  
we may recognise him in our midst  
and find joy in his saving presence.*

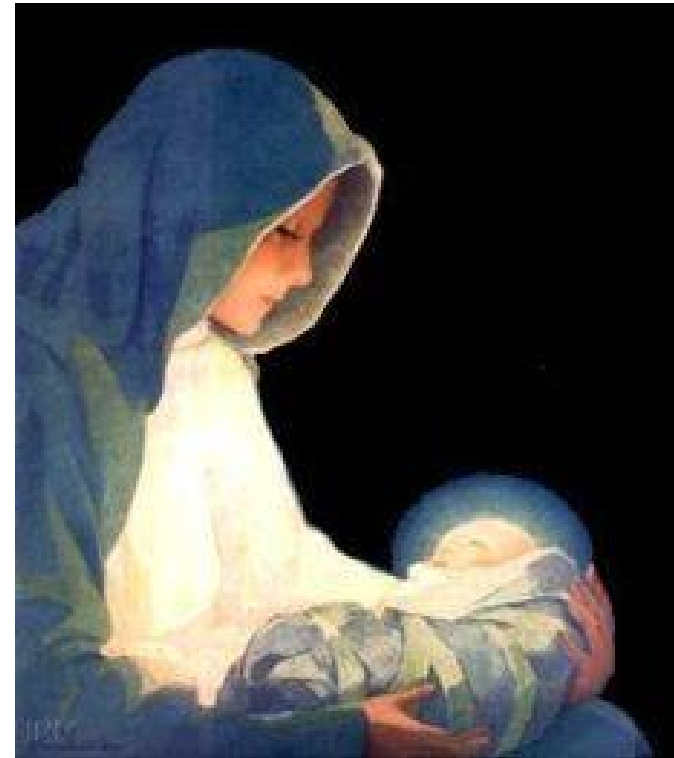
*We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

## BLESSING

*All: May the God of peace bless us,  
and keep us safe and blameless  
as we wait for the coming  
of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.*



# ADVENT PRAYER



2005

## GATHERING

*Leader:*

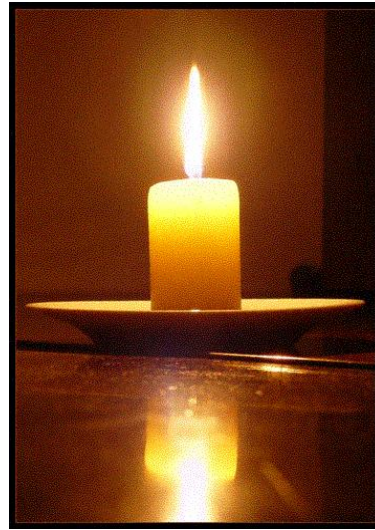
Our southern Advent  
is a season of hard joy and peace,  
a beginning time of the  
Church's year  
in the frantic end time of our social  
calendar  
and so...

*All:* **We watch, we wait!**

*Leader:*

We seek in these days  
to prepare a way into its mystery  
lest the Word be far from us,  
lest He come unrecognised  
And so...

*All:* **We watch, we wait!**



## REFLECTING IN WORDS AND SONG

*Wait in joyful hope,  
a saviour will come.  
Jesus Christ  
the light of the world.  
Wait in joyful hope,  
a saviour will come,  
Welcome to the Word of God.*

*(Michael Herry: Sing Spirit, Sing Life)*



*Reader 1:*

**Advent is the greening of the earth with hope**  
that springs from the tired dryness of the old church year;  
a greening with the hope  
that when human history comes full term  
and the birth pangs of creation erupt  
into a new heaven and a new earth,  
and God, Immanuel  
is everything to everyone.

*Repeat chant*

*Reader 2:*

**Advent is preparing to give birth**  
to the One who has come and is coming,  
mindful that our life's work is to conceive him,  
with the seed of God's grace,  
and bear Jesus to our world.  
Advent is recognising, welcoming and befriending  
the vulnerable and the stranger,  
the desert places in myself and others,  
believing it is there God stirs and saves.

*Repeat chant*

*Reader 3:*

**Advent is the season that belongs to children:**  
to children lost in wonder at shop windows;  
to children covered in the soft white whiskers,  
hoping for tomorrow's presents wrapped in love;  
to children lost in feeble joy before one protein biscuit;  
to children nursed at dry, poor breasts,  
bones wrapped in rags, tomorrow's present for a grave.  
Advent belongs also to that kingdom child in each of us  
who struggles to be born.

*Repeat chant*

*Reader 4:*

**Advent is the mystery of those who await another birth:**  
the long-delayed birth  
for those who sit in the dark womb of pain  
or in the shadows of lost memories and loneliness.  
It is waiting in small rooms  
where the Word is wordless now.  
For us, the aged and sick are Advent sacraments  
of the end from which all will start  
to labour slowly into life.

*Repeat chant*

