



North  
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**Meditation for  
Advent Sunday  
29<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

## **A Season of Waiting**

This meditation is taken from a Quiet Advent service that we used in my former churches in 2018. It's probably best followed on the eve of Advent, or on the evening of Advent Sunday.

You may like to dim your lights and have a candle ready to light during the meditation.

**Listen to:** [A Matins Responsory](#)



I look from afar:

And lo, I see the pow'r of God coming,  
and a cloud cov'ring the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say:

Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

High and low, rich and poor, one with another.

Go ye out to meet him and say:

Hear, O thou shepherd of Israel, thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep:

Tell us, art thou he that should come?

Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come:

to reign over thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost.

I look from afar: And lo, I see the pow'r of God coming  
and a cloud cov'ring the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say:

Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

**Read:** from Isaiah 9

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light.  
They lived in a land of shadows,  
but now light is shining on them.  
You have given them great joy, Lord;  
you have made them happy.  
They rejoice in what you have done,  
as people rejoice when they harvest grain  
or when they divide captured wealth.  
For you have broken the yoke that burdened them  
and the rod that beat their shoulders.  
A child is born to us!  
A son is given to us!  
And he will be our ruler.  
He will be called, "Wonderful Counsellor,"  
"Mighty God," "Eternal Father,"  
"Prince of Peace."  
His royal power will continue to grow;  
his kingdom will always be at peace.  
He will rule as King David's successor,  
basing his power on right and justice,  
from now until the end of time.  
The LORD Almighty is determined to do all this.

**Listen to:** ['Within our darkest night.'](#)

*during this, as seems right, please light your candle*

Within our darkest night,  
you kindle the fire that never dies away,  
that never dies away.  
Within our darkest night,  
you kindle the fire that never dies away,  
that never dies away.

**Read:** Jesus' Promise

Jesus said ' I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me will never walk in  
darkness, but will have the light of life.'

John 8: 12



**Listen to:** [Come, thou long-expected Jesus](#)

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of ev'ry nation,  
joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;  
born a child and yet a king;  
born to reign in us for ever;  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit,  
rule in all our hearts alone:  
by thine all-sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.

**Read:** Genesis 1: 1-5

In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the Spirit of God was moving over the water. Then God commanded, "Let there be light" - and light appeared. God was pleased with what he saw. Then he separated the light from the darkness, and he named the light "Day" and the darkness "Night."

Evening passed and morning came—that was the first day.

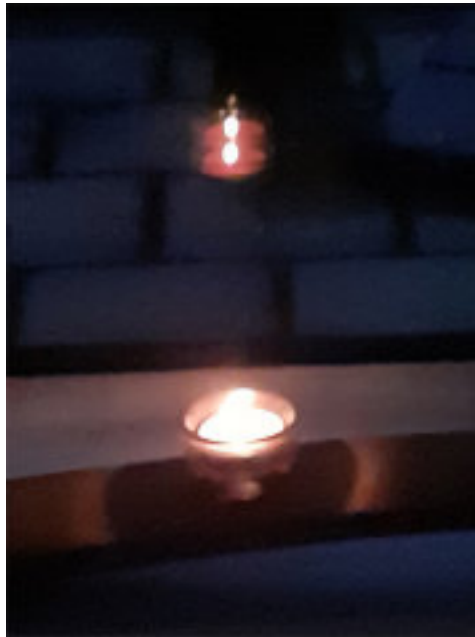
**A STORY OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS**

In the beginning  
God allowed for chaos,  
for troubled dreams,  
and uncertain sounds,  
and fear in the darkness.

Then, when the chaos was most threatening  
and hope was bleakest,  
God said, 'Let there be light.'

**And there was light.**

*a first candle is lit*



So remember the chaos,  
the uncertainty  
the confusion in which you once floundered,  
and give thanks for the light.

*Silence*

## Sung Response

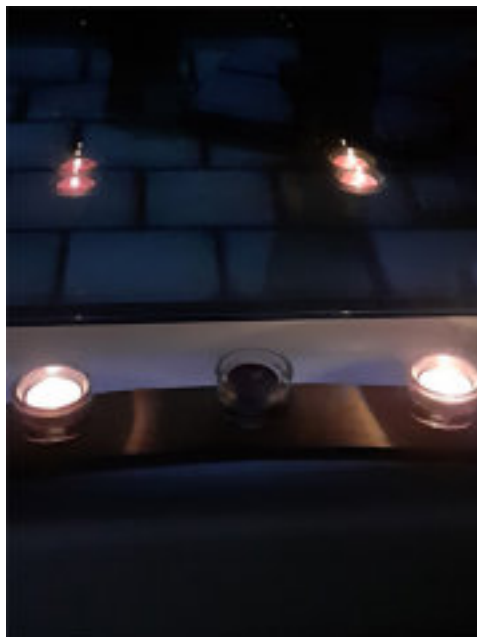
(you might like to pause the video when the verse is sung through once, and pick it up again at the next point; we use this response 4 times).

Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let not my doubts and my darkness speak to me.  
Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let my heart always welcome your love

In the course of time  
God allowed for a journey  
from ourselves to other people,  
from restriction to freedom,  
from a forgotten place to a promised land.

And when the journey was hardest  
and the way ahead unclear,  
and the temptation to turn back most alluring,  
God said 'Let there be light.'  
**and there was light.**

*a second candle is lit*



So remember your journey  
and how far you have travelled,  
and give thanks for the light.

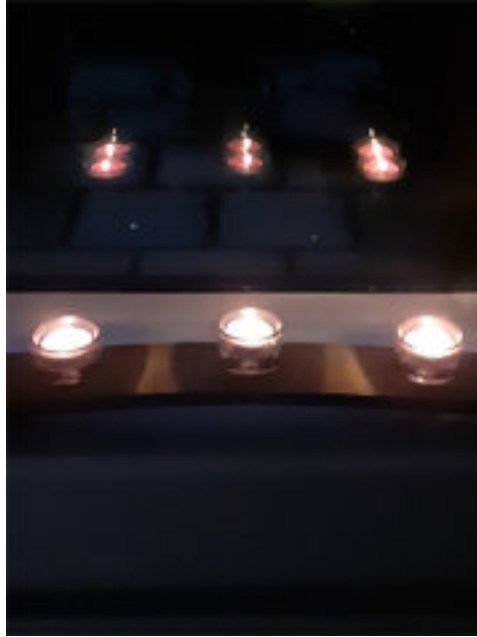
*silence*

**Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let not my doubts and my darkness speak to me.  
Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let my heart always welcome your love**

Later yet,  
God allowed for the special:  
for friendship to grow,  
for truth to be discovered,  
for faith to become real.

On the mountain top  
and in quiet places  
God blessed us, saying 'Let there be light.'  
**and there was light.**

*a third candle is lit*



So, remember not why,  
but how and when and where you've been blessed  
and give thanks for the light.

*sung response*

**Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let not my doubts and my darkness speak to me.  
Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let my heart always welcome your love**

And then,  
when the light was brightest,  
and life was good,  
despite our better judgment,  
but in solidarity with all humankind,  
we chased shadows,  
and chose darkness.

*please extinguish your candle*

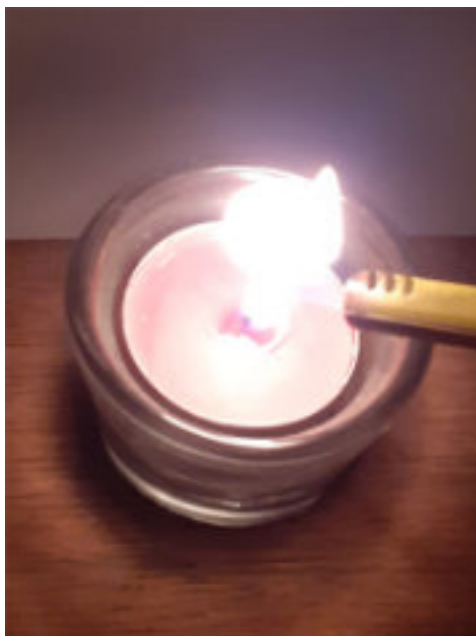
So, remember how and when and where  
and perhaps why you have wandered  
from the light.

*silence*

Because God loves us,  
there will be light again.

Not first in chaos,  
not first on the journey,  
not first for the special place,  
but on the ground  
and in a hidden place,  
God will come,  
offering a baby's hand,  
to greet us.

*Please relight your candle during the singing of this,  
and listen to the remaining section of the video.*



**Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let not my doubts and my darkness speak to me.  
Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us  
Let my heart always welcome your love**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who chose, at Bethlehem, to meet us,  
make us ready to lose and leave  
all that makes us proud and sufficient.

Let our knees bend to you,  
our hearts cradle you,  
our lips sing you songs of love.

*Cloth for the Cradle © Wild Goose Worship Group*

**Listen to:** [Adam lay ybounden](#)

**Listen to:** [Like a candle flame](#)

Like a candle flame,  
flick'ring small in our darkness.  
Uncreated light shines  
through infant eyes.

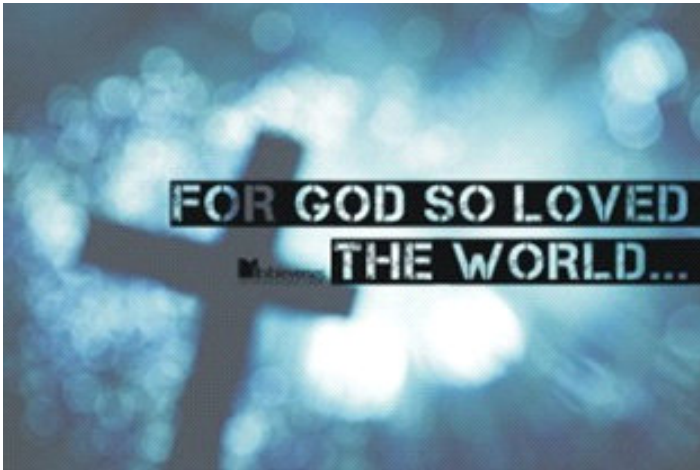
*God is with us alleluia,  
come to save us, alleluia,  
alleluia.*

Stars and angels sing,  
yet the earth sleeps in the shadow;  
can this tiny spark  
set a world on fire?

Yet His light shall shine  
from our lives, Spirit blazing,  
as we touch the flame  
of His holy fire.

© *Graham Kendrick*

**Read:** John 3: 16-21



For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.

Those who believe in the Son are not judged; but those who do not believe have already been judged, because they have not believed in God's only Son.

This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil. Those who do evil things hate the light and will not come to the light, because they do not want their evil deeds to

be shown up. But those who do what is true come to the light in order that the light may show that what they did was in obedience to God.

### **Confession**

Lord Jesus Christ, we confess our sins before you.

Forgive us, we pray for the times we shun your light  
And prefer to hide in the darkness of our hearts

Jesus, light of the world,  
**Shine in our darkness.**

Forgive us, we pray, for the times we do not stand up for your truth  
but hide in the darkness

Jesus, light of the world,  
**Shine in our darkness.**

Forgive us, we pray, for our own selfishness and greed

Jesus, light of the world,  
**Shine in our darkness.**

Forgive us, we pray for the harmful things we do and say to others

Jesus, light of the world,  
**Shine in our darkness.**

Forgive us, we pray, that we live by the light of our own  
eyes and not by your light of truth

Jesus, light of the world,  
**Shine in our darkness**

May the God of love  
bring us back to himself,  
forgive us our sins,  
and assure us of his eternal love.

**Amen**

**Listen to:** [Christ Be Our Light](#)

Longing for light, we wait in darkness  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light!  
Shine in our hearts.  
Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in your church  
gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.  
Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
Walls made of living stone.

Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another,  
Making your kingdom come.

© *Bernadette Farrell*

**Prayer**

O come, O come, Immanuel  
God of light and longing, with hope we look to you this day.  
At this season of the year – this time of short days and long nights –  
we are looking for the turning of the tide,  
that movement which assures us that darkness  
will not overcome the world.

With an anticipation overflowing with longing,  
we tune our hearts afresh to the ancient hymn  
and once more sing from the hidden regions of our souls,  
O come, O come, Immanuel.  
**O come, O come, Immanuel.**

Our longing for your light is our longing for justice.  
We know our world needs to be different,  
so we look afresh for the coming of the great promise of God.  
O come, O come, Immanuel.  
**O come, O come, Immanuel**

Our longing for light is our longing for renewal.  
We know our lives can become wedged in tired custom,  
we look for the day-spring to cheer us again into life.  
O come, O come, Immanuel.  
**O come, O come, Immanuel.**



**Listen to:** [O Come, O Come Emmanuel](#)

This is Enya's version – it doesn't have 'all the words' – but there's a haunting and longing quality about it that brings out some of the meaning.

Or a [different arrangement](#)  
(children's choir, adult choir and orchestra)

Or [Carols from Kings](#)

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here,  
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, thou rod of Jesse, free  
thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell thy people save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, thou key of David, come  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,  
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times didst give the Law  
in cloud and majesty and awe.



## Intercessions

Among the Poor ([Beginning and end chorus](#))

(sung) Behold, behold,  
I make all things new,  
beginning with you  
and starting from today.  
Behold, behold,  
I make all things new,  
my promise is true,  
for I am Christ the way.

Among the poor,  
among the proud,  
among the persecuted,  
among the privileged,  
Christ is coming,  
**He is coming to make all things new.**

In the private house,  
in the market place,  
in the wedding feast,  
in the judgement hall,  
Christ is coming,  
**He is coming to make all things new.**

With a gentle touch,  
with an angry word,  
with a clear conscience,  
with burning love,  
Christ is coming,  
**He is coming to make all things new.**

That the kingdom might come,  
that the world might believe,  
that the powerful might stumble,  
that the humble might be raised,  
Christ is coming,  
**He is coming to make all things new.**

Within us,  
without us,  
among us,  
before us,  
in this place,  
in every place,  
for this time,  
for all time,  
Christ is coming,  
**He is coming to make all things new.**

(sung) Behold, behold,  
I make all things new,  
beginning with you  
and starting from today,  
Behold, behold,  
I make all things new,  
my promise is true,  
for I am Christ the way.

*Cloth for the Cradle © Wild Goose Worship Book*

**Listen to:** [Be Still](#)

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here;  
come, bow before him now, with reverence and fear.  
In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;  
he burns with holy fire, with splendour he is crowned.  
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of Light!  
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place,  
he comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace.  
No work too hard for him, in faith receive from him;  
be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

**Blessing**

God sends us out in the light of Christ  
To bring light into our world of darkness.  
May the light of Christ so shine in our hearts  
that we might bring his light to others.  
And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among us and remain with us always. **Amen**



**Listen to:** [There's a Light Upon the Mountain](#) (this version doesn't have the 3<sup>rd</sup> verse)

There's a light upon the mountains, and the day is at the spring,  
when our eyes shall see the beauty and the glory of the King;  
weary was our heart with waiting, and night-watch seemed so long;  
but his triumph-day is breaking, and we hail it with a song.

There's a hush of expectation, and a quiet in the air;  
and the breath of God is moving in the fervent breath of prayer;  
for the suffering, dying Jesus is the Christ upon the throne,  
and the travail of our spirit is the travail of his own.

He is breaking down the barriers, he is casting up the way;  
he is calling for his angels to build up the gates of day;  
but his angels here are human, not the shining hosts above;  
for the drum-beats of his army are the heart-beats of our love.

Hark we hear a distant music, and it comes with fuller swell;  
'tis the triumph-song of Jesus, of our King, Immanuel:  
Zion, go now forth to meet him; and, my soul, be swift to bring  
all your finest and your noblest for the triumph of our King.