

**The Anglican Parish of
St Luke Toowoomba
(in partnership with the Parish of St George with Dirranbandi)**



**First Sunday in Advent
29 November 2020
Morning Prayer for Sunday (APBA p 382)**

Notes about year of Mark:

Our Sunday readings follow a three year Cycle, referred to as years A, B and C, and as the years of Matthew, Mark and Luke (reflecting the order of the Gospels in the New Testament). Through this next year we will be reading primarily from the Gospel of Mark.

Mark's Gospel is the shortest and most likely the earliest written in the form in which we have the Gospels. That does not mean that it was all written afresh in the 6th decade of the first century. Mark clearly relied on a variety of sources. There are some who suggest that the Passion Narratives (the stories which tell of the death and resurrection of Jesus), especially in Mark, may have existed much earlier as an independent unit.

Mark was both an eyewitness (it is believed that he may be the young man who ran away naked when confronted in the garden of Gethsemane – Mark 14:51) and he had access to many people who were also around to hear and speak with Jesus. Their memories were included in this account. There were also many ways in which the stories had been shared in the growing Christian community, including in worship.

There are several important themes which we will explore throughout this 'year of Mark'. One key theme is 'journey'. In Mark's Gospel there is significant movement described. As Jesus travels around the Holy land the journey seems to move without clear direction UNTIL the middle of the account (chapter 8 of the 16 chapters) when Peter declares that Jesus IS the Messiah. From that point on the journey is all towards Jerusalem and the events there. There is also great energy in the movement and in people's responses to Jesus. One of the phrases Mark uses more than any others is 'kai euthus' – 'and immediately'. This gives a great sense of energy to the story.

Another key theme is that the disciples, those closest to Jesus, seem not to see clearly. They do not understand what is happening. When something IS explained to them clearly Jesus tells them to keep those truths secret. The hearers and readers get the sense that they understand more than is able to be revealed and this invites them, and us, into deeper engagement with the story. The 16 chapters are easy to read. Take that as a challenge. Before we get through ADVENT, before the end of the calendar year, read your way completely through Mark's Gospel. Then read it again and again through the year. This will help enormously as we read the selected passages and enable you to hear each week's reading in context.

The Sanctuary Party enters in silence

Opening Song: Jesus, name above all names. (All Together Again 157)

**Jesus, name above all names,
Beautiful Saviour, Glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us,
Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.**

Naida Hearn

Advent Welcome

Today we begin a new year. On this first Sunday in Advent we look ahead with fresh eyes to all that will come. In the fourth week of the new year we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Every birth is anticipated, prepared for with care, requires and brings a change of situation, status and connection. The birth of a child opens our hearts to look forward.

On this first Sunday in Advent we light the first candle in the Advent Wreath, the candle of HOPE. Looking forward, especially into unknown futures, can take us to a place of concern and worry. The world around us, when there is turmoil and fear and threats abound, can take us to that disturbing place.

At the beginning of a new year we look forward with hope, inspired by those who looked forward to the birth of Jesus and who looked forward from within his life to all that was still unfolding.

The first Advent Candle is lit. While it is lit we sing:

The Lord is my Light (TIS 747)

**The Lord in my light, my light and salvation.
In God I trust. In God I trust.**

Let us pray:

**God of hope,
place within our hearts the courage to face the future
and the confidence to trust in your loving care for us.
Open our hearts to love, now and always. Amen.**

Introit: 'Morning has broken' (TIS 156)

**Morning has broken
like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken
like the first bird.
Praise for the singing,
praise for the morning,
praise for them, springing
fresh from the word.**

**Sweet the rain's new fall
sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall
on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden,
sprung from completeness
where his feet pass.**

**Mine is the sunlight;
mine is the morning
born of the one light
Eden saw play.
Praise with elation,
praise every morning,
God's recreation
of the new day.**

*Eleanor Farjeon
1881-1965*

Sentence

'Heaven and earth will pass away,' says the Lord, 'but my words
will not pass away.'

Mark 13.31

Prayer of Confession

Lay Assistant:

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness,
and disclosing the purposes of the heart.

Silence may be kept

Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our
sins in penitence and faith.

**Heavenly Father,
you have loved us with an everlasting love,
but we have gone our own way
and broken your laws.
We are sorry for our sins
and turn away from them.
For the sake of your Son who died for us,
forgive us, cleanse us and change us.
By your Holy Spirit, enable us to live for you,
and to please you more and more;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

A short time of silence is held.

Absolution

May God who loves us, have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

May our hearts be open to hear God speaking to us.

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, you that led Joseph like a flock:
you that are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine out in glory;

**² Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh:
stir up your power, and come to save us.**

³ Restore us again, O Lord of hosts:
show us the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

⁴ O Lord God of hosts:

how long will you be angry at your people's prayer?

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears:

and given them tears to drink in good measure.

⁶ You have made us the victim of our neighbours:

and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

⁷ Restore us again, O Lord of hosts:

show us the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷ Let your power rest on the man at your right hand:

on that son of man whom you made so strong for yourself.

¹⁸ And so we shall not turn back from you:

give us life, and we will call upon your name.

¹⁹ Restore us again, O Lord of hosts:

show us the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Notes on 80:1-7, 17-19

"What is going on???" The people are feeling in chaos. They are deeply disturbed by the feeling of being cut off from God. Yet in their hearts they know that it is not God who has moved away, but they have moved away. So they pledge to return with their hearts to God. That is always the truth. God never abandons us. It is we who wander off. Advent is a journey and an invitation to find again that path to life. Paul Mitchell

The First Reading, from the Old Testament, Isaiah 64:1-9

¹ O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence - ² as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil - to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! ³ When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴ From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

⁵ You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶ We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷ There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸ Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹ Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider, we are all your people.

At the end, the reader says:

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Notes on Isaiah 64:1-9

New journeys, fresh starts, the beginning of a new year all find their best point of origin in honesty. Here the people are recognising that they have sinned, disturbed the pattern of life with which God has blessed them. And the way forward will be found with open eyes and open hearts. Paul Mitchell

The Second Reading, from the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, ² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: ³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord

Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

At the end, the reader says:

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

Notes on 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

As we read on in this first letter of Saint Paul to the church in Corinth we know that Paul was not entirely happy with them. There were things happening within the church community which deeply disturbed him. Yet Paul begins by setting the scene for his necessary critical comments by reminding the community of his love for them, their love for God and for one another and reminding them of the ways in which they were deeply blessed. In the light of that knowledge they will then be able to hear the words of correction which are necessary for being able to move forward in their life. Paul Mitchell

Hymn: 'O come, O come Emmanuel' (TIS 265)

1

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

Refrain

Rejoice! rejoice!

*Emmanuel shall come to
you, O Israel.*

2

O come, O come, great Lord of might
who to the tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Refrain

3

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

Refrain

4

O come, O branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save
and give them victory o'er the grave.

Refrain

5

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

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Refrain

Anon., Latin, 18th cent. or earlier based on Antiphons from 9th cent. or earlier *tr.* John Mason Neale 1818-66 *alt.*

The Gospel Reading (Mark 13:24-37) All stand

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Saint Mark,
chapter thirteen, beginning at the twenty-four verse.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ 'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds"

with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸ 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³² 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

At the end, the reader says:

Hear the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Notes on Mark 13:24-37

Keep awake, be alert! Open your eyes and see what is actually happening. Lift up your eyes so that you can see beyond what is immediately in front of you. That stands as exceptionally important advice whether the view we have of our life is of great riches OR if all we can see is darkness. Lift up your eyes and be aware of a broader perspective. Look for the signs of life and the signs of hope and the signs that there is more to see than we may recognise when our heads are down. Paul Mitchell

The Sermon. Silence follows.

The Nicene Creed. Please stand

Lay assistant:

Let us affirm our faith in God:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge
the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the**

**forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

The Prayers

Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Collect for the first Sunday in Advent:

Faithful God,
whose promises stand unshaken through all generations:
renew us in hope,
that we may be awake and alert
watching for the glorious return of Jesus Christ,
our Judge and Saviour,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Advent Litany

The world is waiting for hope. Hope often seems elusive or out of sight. Loving God touch our hearts and give birth to hope within us all. May we wait WITH hope.

Maranatha,

Come. Lord Jesus. Come into our hearts.

The world is waiting for peace. There is so much violence and pain in our world. In so many places ongoing conflict surrounds and disturbs communities. May peace begin in each of our hearts and may we wait WITH peace.

Maranatha,

Come. Lord Jesus. Come into our hearts.

The world is waiting for joy. There is so much sadness in our world and so many people feel alone and as if they are not valued. In so many places fear and doubt and worries overwhelm us and cause the spark of joy within to be a bare glimmer. May we fan that spark into a flame and WITH joy.

Maranatha,

Come. Lord Jesus. Come into our hearts.

The world is waiting for love. Being embraced and held and cherished, being valued and knowing that those around us desire our good, desire us to flourish, want us to be whole, ... these things are expressions of love. Wherever they are lacking may they ripple out from each of our hearts and may we wait WITH love.

Maranatha,

Come. Lord Jesus. Come into our hearts.

After the final intercessions:

Almighty God, You have promised to hear our prayers:

**Grant that what we have asked in faith,
We may by Your grace receive
through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn: 'Come thou long expected Jesus' (TIS 272)

1

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.

2

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

3

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

4

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

Charles Wesley 1707-88

The Morning Collect

Eternal God and Father, by whose power we are created and by whose love we are redeemed; guide and strengthen us by your Spirit, that we may give ourselves to your service, and live this day in love to one another and to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Closing Prayers

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.

Amen.

Notices

Missional Song: 'Brother, sister let me serve you' (TIS 650)

**Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace
to let you be my servant too.**

**We are pilgrims on a journey
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.**

**I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.**

**I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.**

**Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.**

*Richard Gillard
1953-*

The service concludes with celebratory music.

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