



**We fear a long winter.**

In the land of Narnia the author CS Lewis asks us to imagine a world held captive by the wicked witch. It is a world where “it is always winter but never Christmas”.

Fortunately for Narnia, and for us, Christmas does come.

The coming of Jesus, the hope of the nations, breaks through. This is the hope that in this long winter we wait for, the hope that will not disappoint.

**Brendan**

**Each Sunday, stop for a few minutes, light a candle, use these prayers to wait for the coming Lord.**

### Advent 1 – Dawn

**By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.** *Luke 1.78-79*

Dawn is the time when we wait in hope for the light, waiting for it to wake the world to light, to dispel the darkness and chase away our fears. Lord we wait in hope for your light to dawn on us. Help us as we prepare to celebrate Christmas to look for signs of your presence in the darkness and to be bearers of your light to others. Drive away all loneliness and may your presence always be near. **Amen**

### Advent 2 – Noon

**And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.** *John 3.19*

When the bright light of noonday reveals the dark corners and the messy truth of our lives, the prophets call out the contrast between those who have so much and those who have so little. They cry out for a saviour to bring light into the dark places. Lord, as we prepare to celebrate Christmas with joy, help us to look into the dark corners of our community for those who have no prospect of joy and no hope of celebration. Hear the cries of those crying out to you from the dark corners. **Amen**

### Advent 3 – Evening

**The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight”** *Mark 1.3*

As evening comes, we fear the dying of the light and the return of darkness. John the Baptist cries out that it is time to change, time to put things right. Time to fight for justice, to release those imprisoned by poverty, loneliness or pain. Lord, as we prepare to celebrate Christmas, help us to bring the light of your love to those who are in despair or pain, those who are lonely or afflicted. Be close to us all and comfort us. **Amen**

### Advent 4 – Night

**Joseph went to Bethlehem to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.** *Luke 2.5,8*

In the darkness of the stable, the heavily pregnant Mary waited for her child to be born. In the fields, the shepherds watched their flocks, protecting their pregnant ewes, waiting for their lambs to be born. And then, at the darkest time in the night, in the deepest depths of her pain, the child was born, and the heavens blazed with light. Lord, as we watch and wait in the darkness for the coming of Christmas, as we endure the pain of loss, of loneliness, of separation from our loved ones, of fear of losing our job or of having no place to stay or no food to put on the table, be born in us today. Drive out the darkness of our fears and fill us with the light of your love. **Amen**

## Christmas Day - Light in the Darkness

**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.** *John 1.5,14*

When God’s light comes, the darkness cannot overcome it. The babe in the manger is Emmanuel, God with us and God for us. He will be beside us in our darkest times, bringing the light of his love to dispel our fears and soothe our pain. He will share our joy as we celebrate life’s special moments. Sometimes that light will be the tiniest glimmer like a candle, sometimes a blazing light which overcomes us with joy as we sing with the angels.

**But the darkness will never overcome God’s light.**

Emmanuel, God with us,  
fill us with your light and drive away all darkness;  
fill us with your joy and drive away all sorrow;



fill us with your peace and drive away all fear.  
Walk beside us all our lives and fill us with  
the light of your love.

**Amen**