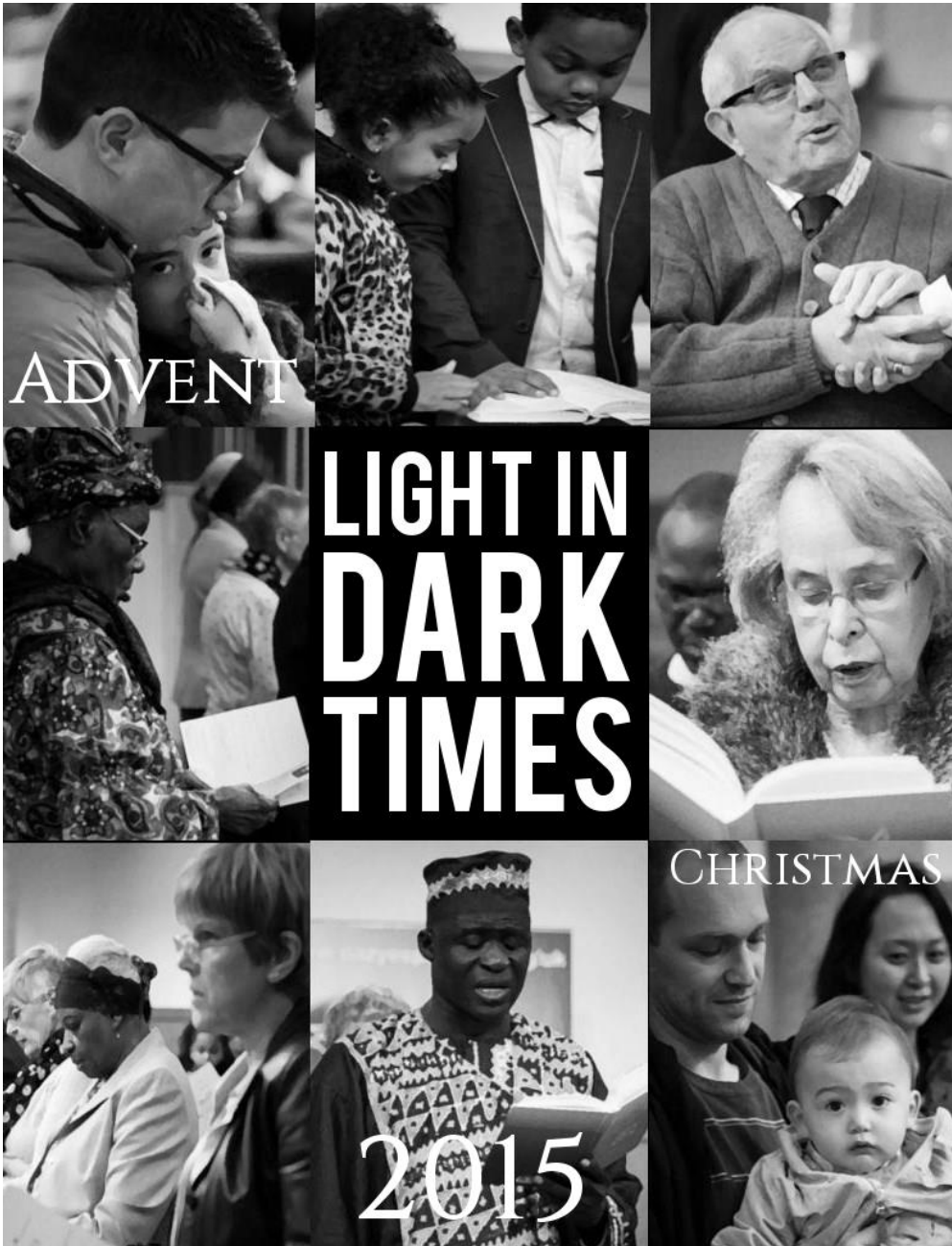




THE CHURCH OF CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE



**Reflections for Advent**  
**ADVENT I**

# Are we in a land without light?

## Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are coming, says the Lord, when I shall bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I have promised them. In those days, at that time, I shall make a righteous branch from David's line; he will maintain law and justice in the land. In those days Judah will be kept safe and Jerusalem will live undisturbed. This will be the name given to him; the Lord our Righteousness.

- Jeremiah was a young man, never wanted to be a prophet, but found himself probably the most unpopular man around as he tried to give warnings- not just to people, but to governments about what was likely to happen
- Again and again he tried to warn about the consequences of injustice and not caring about the most vulnerable in society
- The people were to be defeated and taken away into exile, but although they weren't listening to him, Jeremiah also told them that their journey wasn't over. There was hope. It was to take a while, but God never left them.

## Luke 21:25-36

'Portents will appear in sun and moon and stars. On earth nations will stand helpless, not knowing which way to turn from the roar and surge of the sea. People will faint with terror at the thought of all that is coming upon in the world; for the celestial powers will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When all this begins to happen, stand upright and hold your heads high, because your liberation is near.'

He told them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree, or at any other tree. As soon as it buds you can see for yourself that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all this happening, you may know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, the present generation will

live to see it all. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. Be on you guard; do not let your minds be dulled by dissipation and drunkenness and worldly cares so that the great day catches you suddenly, like a trap; for that day will come on everyone, the whole world over. Be on the alert, praying at all times for strength to pass safely through all that is coming and to stand in the presence of the Son of man.'

- Luke 21 begins with Jesus commenting on a poor widow who gave two tiny coins, all she had into the Temple offering. Then he warned them about what would happen to the Temple which was indeed destroyed in AD 70 – ( maybe by the time this gospel was written that had already happened)
- These verses are hard to understand although maybe you think it's all too easy to see parallels with some of the events that are happening around us now.
- Early Christians did believe that Jesus would be returning in their lifetime, and that they simply had to wait out the persecution.

## **FOR REFLECTION**

**(or discussion if you are in a group)**

- What is your advent journey? Each year we come to this season where we look forward to the coming Christ as well as telling the story of God's coming to the world as a baby. What's going through our minds this week, if we're not already caught up in the shopping and the Christmas tree lights?
- There are things happening around us in the world that seem to echo some of these words from Luke 21. Think and share with others what they are. How does that make us feel?

- If we believe that the kingdom of God is truly near, how does that affect the way we live now?
- What is the light that keeps us travelling onwards?
- How does our worship in church help us with all of this?

## You might also like to read

Psalm 25:1-10; I Thessalonians 3:9-end;

### **ADVENT I** **Prayer of the week**

Here we are, Lord, on the edge of the future,  
alert to the signs in events of today –  
prejudice, poverty, terror, oppression.  
What space in the hard times to welcome new birth?  
Lord of Salvation, come to our rescue.  
Help me light a candle in defiance of the dark.  
AMEN

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