

Dear all,

This morning at Morning Prayer, I was struck by the words of 2 of the prayers specific for Advent.

The first was the Prayer of Thanksgiving at the beginning of the service:

Blessed are you, Sovereign God of all,
to you be praise and glory for ever.
In your tender compassion
the dawn from on high is breaking upon us
to dispel the lingering shadows of night.
As we look for your coming among us this day,
open our eyes to behold your presence
and strengthen our hands to do your will,
that the world may rejoice and give you praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

I occasionally take Muffin out as dawn is breaking, and this image is so evocative of the impact Jesus can make in our lives – dispelling, banishing the darkness. The word ‘shadow’ is perhaps more descriptive of the negative effect that it can have on our lives.

The second is the response to the Benedictus:

Like the sun in the morning sky, the Saviour of the world will dawn;
like rain upon the meadows, the Christ will come down upon us.

Again, we have the image of dawn breaking. To this is added a further image from nature. And, I must admit, I don't have the image of a hammering rainstorm; rather a gentle shower, bringing refreshment, life and growth.

This Sunday is the Forth Sunday in Advent, and focusses especially on Mary (though you perhaps would not guess this from the readings!).

The hymns for the morning are: [Come thou Redeemer of the Earth - YouTube](#), [LIVING-LORD, LORD JESUS CHRIST - YouTube](#) and [Tell out my soul \(in full\) - YouTube](#).

The readings usually are Micah 5: 2-5a; Hebrews 10: 5-10; Luke 1: 39-55. The Psalm is Psalm 80: 1-8, however we will be using the alternative of the Magnificat as the Psalm.

Versions of the Magnificat include:

[VOCES8: Magnificat Primi Toni - Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina - YouTube](#)

[Johann Sebastian Bach: Magnificat in D major, BWV 243 - Nikolaus Harnoncourt \(HD 1080p\) - YouTube](#)

[Stanford: Magnificat in G \(King's College Choir, Cambridge\) - YouTube](#)

[Taizé - Magnificat Anima Mea Dominum - YouTube](#)

And for a totally different take: [Magnificat - A virgin Mary Hymn - YouTube](#)

Anthems etc. suggested for this Sunday include:

[A Tender Shoot by Goldschmidt - YouTube](#)

[Annunciation - YouTube](#) John Tavener

[VOCES8 - A Hymn to the Virgin - YouTube](#) Benjamin Britten

[The Angel Gabriel : Kings College, Cambridge - YouTube](#)

[The Angel Gabriel - Maria GoJa & Celina Jiménez \(Christmas Song Weihnachtslied\) - YouTube](#)

Finally, don't forget...



Sadly, due to COVID safety measures, we have decided to cancel the refreshments after the service.



Stay safe.

Blessings and love

Mark