

A Seasonal All Age Worship Service

(SAAW010)

Advent:

Get ready for the King

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“ADVENT: GET READY FOR THE KING”

Service Aim:

To encourage people to be ready for Jesus' return.

Biblical Reference(s):

Romans 13:11-14, 14:10, Matthew 24:29-30, 42-44, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Revelation 1:7, John 10:14, 17:3

Outline of Service:

Welcome	Introduce the theme
Opening Prayer	
Herald:	Town crier enters and makes an announcement
Opening songs:	<u>A couple of Advent songs to draw people into worship</u> (See Appendix 1)
Light candle:	Light 1 st Advent candle to remind us that Jesus is returning
Bible Reading 1:	Matthew 24:42-44
Puppets:	“The Queen’s Visit”
Talk 1:	The Lord is returning in power and glory
Song:	<u>A song/s about Jesus the King</u> (See Appendix 1)
Warning signs:	Guess what they mean
Film clip:	From “Titanic” film
Talk 2:	Jesus warned us to be ready for His return. Will we take any notice?
Songs:	<u>A song/s about Jesus returning</u> (See Appendix 1)
Link:	So how do we prepare for Jesus’ return?
Drama:	“The Father returns home”
Talk 3:	We get ready for Jesus’ return by getting to know Jesus.
Bible Reading 2:	Romans 13:11-14 (Promise Version)
Talk 4:	We get ready for Jesus’ return by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stopping doing what is wrong and by doing what is right
Confession:	
Song:	<u>A song about knowing Jesus</u> (See Appendix 1)
Prayers:	Including bursting balloons and the Lord’s Prayer
Notices	Include “Takeaway”
Herald:	Town crier enters and makes an announcement
Final song:	<u>Advent song</u> (See Appendix 1)
Blessing	

Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

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Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the service and to the theme of “Advent – Get ready for the King”

Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from a book like “New Patterns for Worship”¹ that the congregation can say together,
- or the following prayer that the congregation can say together:

Lord Jesus,

Thank you that you first came to us as a baby in a stable.

**Come amongst us now through the power of your Holy Spirit,
and prepare us for that day when you will come again,
in your great majesty and glory.**

Amen.

Herald:

As soon as the opening prayer has been said, someone dressed as a Town Crier comes bursting into church, ringing a hand-bell and shouting at the top of their voice (as they walk to the front of the church) some words from Matthew 24 (v29-30):

Hear ye, hear ye, all citizens of earth.

WAKE UP, for the King of Kings, the Lord God Almighty is coming back to earth.

“The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. And then all the peoples of the earth... will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Get your lives in order now while there is still time - for He is returning soon.

Having delivered the announcement the town crier walks to the back of the church ready for when they will be needed later in the service.

Opening Songs:

A couple of Advent songs to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1

Light candle:

If you have an Advent wreath, invite a child to come and light the first candle. Tell the congregation that this candle is a reminder that Jesus will return one day.

Bible Reading 1:

The Bible reading is Matthew 24:42-44 and can be read by a child, young person or adult in a modern version of the Bible.

¹ Church House Publishing – ISBN 0715120603
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Puppets:

The puppet script is called “The Queen’s Visit” (see Appendix 2). This script works with a boy puppet “James”² and an older man puppet “Grandad.” The aim of the puppet script is to challenge people to be ready for Jesus’ second coming.

Talk 1:

Wasn’t it such a shame that James missed the Queen when she came to his school?

- He got distracted and missed what was really important.

One day something is going to happen that is much more important than the Queen coming to school.

- One day Jesus has told us (in our Bible reading) that He will return to earth, although He hasn’t told us on what day He will come.

When Jesus comes this time, it won’t be quietly like the first time He came as a baby.

- Paul says this to the Thessalonian church: “*For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

The next time that Jesus comes to earth, He will return in all of His majesty and glory, and everyone will know about it.

- The book of Revelation says this: “*Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him.*” (Revelation 1:7)

Jesus **is** coming back.....He is coming back to earth as King and Judge.

- Our message today is: Wake up. Make sure that you are ready for King Jesus’ return.
- Don’t get distracted by other things in life and fail to prepare properly.
- So let’s stand and worship King Jesus now.

Song:

A song/s about Jesus the King as per Appendix 1

Warning Signs:

You need a working smoke detector for this talk. The pictures of the “unusual signs” can be found in Appendix 3.

We are all used to coming across warning signs at different points in our lives aren’t we?

- I expect many of you have smoke detectors fitted in your homes so that if a fire broke out you would receive a warning - a bit like this (*Press alarm of smoke detector*)
- If you drive you might have a little light that comes on when you are low on petrol. This light normally warns you that you can only drive a few more miles before the petrol tank is empty.

I’ve found a few unusual warning signs to show you today.

- This is a warning sign for slow badgers, (*Project picture 1 from Appendix 3*)
- This one is for falling Christmas trees, (*Project picture 2 from Appendix 3*)
- and this final sign is warning you not to feed your child to a crocodile! (*Project picture 3 from Appendix 3*)

Warnings are very important aren’t they?

- The question is, “are we willing to take notice of them?”

² You can purchase both a boy and a Grandad puppet from www.onewayuk.com
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Many of you will have seen the film Titanic about a ship that people thought was unsinkable.

- During the film the captain receives a couple of warnings from another ship nearby that there were icebergs ahead, however instead of heeding those warnings he kept the ship moving at full speed believing that nothing could happen to it.
- Watch what happens:

Film Clip:

The film clip comes from the film “Titanic.”³ On the DVD the clip is from 1:34:46-1:36:48. It begins with a telephone ringing. A man picks up and a voice on the other end of the telephone says, “Is there anyone there? Iceberg ahead!” The clip ends with the young couple kissing!

Talk 2:

Warnings are very important aren't they?

- Are we willing to take notice of them?

Before Jesus left earth, He warned us to “**be ready**” for the day of His return.

- So why do we need to be warned to be ready for Jesus' return?
- What's the big deal?

The big deal is that when Jesus returns the second time, the world as we know it now will end.

- We will “*all stand before God's judgment seat*” as St Paul tells us in Romans 14:10.
- When we stand before God's judgment seat we will have to give Him an account of how we have lived our lives and whether we have received Jesus' gift of salvation or not.

For those people who have loved and built a relationship with Jesus, it will be a time of great rejoicing as we see the Lord face to face and are welcomed into spending eternity with Him.

- Jesus even promises rewards for faithful service.

However those people who have rejected Jesus in this life will experience great pain as they face spending eternity without Him.

Jesus has warned us to “**be ready**” for the day that He returns so that we are not taken by surprise.

- Like the Titanic steaming along in the water, we are moving through life heading for that momentous day.
- Are we willing to take notice of Jesus' most important warning to “**be ready**” before it is too late?

Songs:

A song/s about Jesus returning as per Appendix 1

Link:

We have heard the truth that one day Jesus will be coming back to earth and we have received Jesus' warning to “**be ready**,”

- so for the next part of the service we are going to think about how we get ready.

³ You can purchase the “Titanic” film (1997 edition with Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet) from Amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

The most important way to prepare for Jesus coming back is to “know Jesus,” to have a relationship with Him, and to be “known by Him.” Watch this:

Drama:

The drama is called, “The Father returns home” and can be found in Appendix 4. The aim of the drama is to provoke the question within the watcher, “Am I known by Jesus?”

Talk 3:

When you meet Jesus at the end of time, don’t you want him to say to you: “Welcome……it is so good to see you,” not, “who are you?”

So the most important thing we can do while we wait for Jesus to return is to get to know him.

- Jesus said in John 10:14 *“I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me”*
- We need to know who we are going to spend all of eternity with!
- So get to know Jesus now, and the way that we do that is the same way that we get to know anyone else, by spending time with Him.

Make it a priority to spend time each day talking to Him in prayer and reading your Bible, allowing Him to speak to you so that your relationship grows.

- Then, on the day that He returns, you will have nothing to fear as Jesus welcomes you into His kingdom.

St Paul gives us a couple of other ways of getting ready for Jesus’ return. Let’s hear what He says in our second Bible reading.

Bible Reading 2:

The Bible reading is Romans 13:11-14 and can be read by a child, young person or adult in a modern version of the Bible. This passage works well in “The Contemporary English Version” of the Bible ie:

¹¹ You know what sort of times we live in, and so you should live properly. It is time to wake up. You know that the day when we will be saved is nearer now than when we first put our faith in the Lord. ¹² Night is almost over, and day will soon appear. We must stop behaving as people do in the dark and be ready to live in the light. ¹³ So behave properly, as people do in the day. Don’t go to wild parties or get drunk or be vulgar or indecent. Don’t quarrel or be jealous. ¹⁴ Let the Lord Jesus Christ be as near to you as the clothes you wear. Then you won’t try to satisfy your selfish desires.⁴

Talk 4:

For this talk you need a flipchart with white paper, and a large piece of black paper mounted on a board. You also need some post it notes and a pen.

St Paul says that we need to prepare for Jesus’ return by:

- choosing to live as children of God, behaving in ways that honour Jesus and,
- choosing to stop doing things that we know are wrong.

I have a couple of pieces of paper here. (*flipchart and black paper in place with post its and a pen*)

- We will cover the white paper with post it notes on which we are going to write down the things that God wants us to do as His children.

⁴ Contemporary English Version (CEV) Copyright © 1995 by American Bible Society

We will cover the black paper with post it notes on which we are going to write down the things that God wants us to stop doing as His children.

So what are we going to write on the white paper? How do you think children of God should live?

- *(On the white paper include things like: - Choose kindness, love, helpfulness, faithfulness, patience, gentleness, compassion, humility, forgiveness, service etc.)*

So what are we going to write on the black paper? What do you think children of God should stop doing?

- *(On the black paper include things like: - Stop lying, stealing, gossiping, jealousy, fighting, quarrelling, getting drunk, sex outside of marriage, watching bad stuff on TV etc.)*

Now we obviously cannot **earn** our way into the Kingdom of God by choosing to do the things that we have written on the white paper, and by stopping doing the things we have written on the black paper.

The way that we enter the Kingdom of God is by turning away from our sins, and trusting in what Jesus did for us on the cross.

- However, once we have come into the Kingdom, we need to live in ways that are fitting for God's children....
- So we choose to do the things that we have written down on the white paper, and we choose to stop doing the things that we have written down on the black paper.

Today we have heard that Jesus will be coming back to earth one day.

- We have received Jesus' warning to "**be ready**",
- and we have heard that we get ready by knowing Jesus and by living as His children, who choose to do what is right and who stop doing what is wrong.

Can I encourage you today, to choose to get ready before it is too late?

Confession and Absolution:

You may want to simply leave some silence and allow the Holy Spirit to convict people of their sins before saying a prayer of Confession together. You may say something like:

Let us spend a moment quietly now allowing God to speak to us. He may want to show us something that He wants us to stop doing - any sins that we need to confess to him. He may also want to show us something that He wants us to start doing for Him. He may also want to challenge us to "know Him." PAUSE

This can be followed by saying a Confession prayer together from a book like "New Patterns for Worship" or the prayer below⁵:

**God our Father,
we come to you in sorrow for our sins.**

**For turning away from you,
and ignoring your will for our lives;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.**

⁵ This Confession Prayer been taken from the C of E website at: <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship/>

For behaving just as we wish,
without thinking of you;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

For failing you by what we do,
and think and say;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

For letting ourselves be drawn away from you by temptations in the world
about us;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us.

For living as if we were ashamed
to belong to your Son;
Father, forgive us:
save us and help us. Amen.

Follow this with a prayer of Absolution. This could be:

- an informal prayer led by the service leader or
- an Absolution prayer from a book like “New Patterns for Worship.” (See footnote 1 on p.3)

Song:

A song about knowing Jesus as per Appendix 1

Prayers:

Use four simple prayers, praying around the theme of being ready for Jesus’ return. You may want to have four blown up balloons. At the end of each prayer, burst the balloon (if you don’t have too many tiny children around!) and use the response:

Come Lord Jesus,
And help us to be ready to welcome you.

End the prayers with the Lord’s Prayer.

Notices:

If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that just before the final song. That way the flow of worship is unbroken. After the notices, give people the “takeaway” of an A5 piece of paper saying, “Jesus is coming back. Are you ready?”(see Appendix 5) and encourage them to put it on their fridge.

Herald:

As soon as the notices are finished, the person dressed as a Town Crier marches up to the front of the church, ringing a hand-bell and shouting at the top of their voice some words from Matthew 24 (v29-30):

Hear ye, hear ye, all citizens of earth.
WAKE UP, for the King of Kings, the Lord God Almighty is coming back to earth.

“The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. And then all the peoples of the earth... will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Get your lives in order now while there is still time - for He is returning soon.

Having delivered the announcement the town crier walks to the back of the church and the final song is sung.

Final Song:

Advent song as per Appendix 1

Blessing:

Pray a simple prayer to end the service something like:

Go from here knowing that Jesus, our Lord and Saviour will return one day.

Be ready to welcome Him!

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) A couple of Advent songs to draw people into worship. Ideas include:

- At the name of Jesus (Caroline M. Noel)
- Come, let us worship the King of Kings (Nathan Fellingham © 2001 Thankyou Music)
- Glorious light (Keith & Kristyn Getty & Ian Hannah © 2004 Thankyou Music)
- Make way, make way (Graham Kendrick © 1986 Thankyou Music)
- Welcome King of Kings (Noel Richards © 1991 Kingsway's Thankyou Music)

ii) A song/s about Jesus the King. Ideas include:

- Above all powers (Lenny LeBlanc, Paul Baloche © 1999 LenSongs Publishing)
- Crown Him with many crowns (Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring)
- Hallelujah, hallelujah, you are worthy (Ben Cantelon © 2007 Thankyou Music)
- Jesus is greater than (Gillian E. Hutchinson © 1992 Sea Dream Music)
- Jesus is King and I will adore Him (Wendy Churchill © 1982 Authentic Publishing)
- Jesus is the name we honour (Philip Lawson Johnston © 1991 Thankyou Music)
- King of Kings, majesty (Jarrod Cooper © 1996 Sovereign Lifestyle Music)
- The splendour of the King (Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, Jesse Reeves © 2004 sixsteps Music)
- We bow down (Viola Grafström © 1996 Thankyou Music)

iii) A song/s about Jesus returning. Ideas include:

- And He shall reign (Graham Kendrick © 1991 Make Way Music)
- Blessed is the King who comes (Ian Smale © 1993 Thankyou Music)
- Creation sings the Father's song (Keith & Kristyn Getty & Stuart Townend © 2008 Thankyou Music)
- I know that my Redeemer lives (John Hartley & Chris Eaton © 2008 Thankyou Music)
- I see the King of glory (Hosanna) (Brooke Ligertwood © 2006 Hillsong Music Publishing)
- Jesus is exalted (Alan Rose © 1999 Thankyou Music)
- Lift up your heads to the coming King (Steve Fry © 1974 Birdwing Music)
- Sound the trumpet (David Bilbrough © 1991 Thankyou Music)

iv) A song/s about knowing Jesus. Ideas include:

- All glory to the King (Chris Spring, Paul Oakley © 2005 Thankyou Music)
- All I once held dear (Graham Kendrick © 1993 Make Way Music)
- All I want is to know you Jesus (Scott Underwood © 1996 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing)
- All of my heart (Doug Marks-Smircich © 1991 Right on the Mark)
- I want more of you (Chris Jackson © 2009 Powerpack)
- Jesus my King, my wonderful Saviour (Andy Bromley, J. M. Harris © 2005 Thankyou Music)

v) Advent song. Ideas include:

- Great is the darkness (Gerald Coates, Noel Richards © 1992 Thankyou Music)
- Lo He comes with clouds descending (Charles Wesley)
- O come, O come Emmanuel (John Mason Neale, Thomas Helmore)
- Soon and very soon (Andraé Crouch © 1971 Bud John Songs, Inc.)
- There is a higher throne (Keith Getty & Kristyn Lennox © 2002 Thankyou Music)
- When I stand before your throne (Matt Redman, Tim Wanstall, Jonas Myrin & Chris Tomlin, Robert M. McCheyne © 2011 Thankyou music)

Appendix 2 – Puppet Script - “The Queen’s Visit”

Characters:



The script is a dialogue between a young boy puppet called “James” who wants to follow Jesus but keeps getting things wrong, and his wise old “Grandad” puppet who helps to sort him out. Each puppet is operated by one person from behind a screen and so it is essential that the voices are heard; radio-microphones are ideal. Puppets and puppet screens can be purchased from many sources including <http://www.onewayuk.com/>

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Enter Grandad

Grandad: James, James, what are you doing? Are you still playing on that X-box? You’re going to get square eyes. Come and tell me about your week.

Enter James

James: Hi Grandad.....do you really think my eyes might turn square? Cool!

Grandad: James I really do think you spend too much time staring at that screen.....now why don’t you tell me what you have been doing with yourself all week?

James: Nothing much really Grandad....

Grandad: Isn’t your school preparing for the visit of the Queen.....she must be coming soon?

James: Oh yes.....we are, but I am getting rather bored with it all. We seem to have been getting ready for ages.

Grandad: So what have you been doing?

James: We have been painting pictures to decorate our classroom.....I got a bit bored with that so I decided to paint something a little bit more interesting.

Grandad: Like what James?

James: The floor.

Grandad: What do you mean the floor?

James: I thought that when important people come to visit, you normally put down a red carpet. I knew we didn’t have a red carpet at school, so I painted a nice long stripe of red paint right down the middle of the classroom, so that when the queen visits she can walk on it.

Grandad: What did Miss Smith think about that?

James: She didn’t see it until I had finished, and the funny thing was that she went the same colour as the paint and ran out of the classroom.

Grandad: Can I ask you what sort of paint you were using?

- James: Oil paint Grandad
- Grandad: Ahhh.....poor Miss Smith.....well what else have you been doing to prepare?
- James: In cookery we have been making special sweets for her to eat.
- Grandad: What sort of sweets?
- James: Peppermint creams, orange creams, chilli creams, lem.....(*Grandad interrupts*)
- Grandad: Did I hear you right then James, chilli creams? I have never heard of those before.
- James: They are my own invention....that will give the queen a new taste sensation won't it Grandad?
- Grandad: Hmm....I suppose it will. I don't expect Miss Smith knows about those does she?
- James: No....she left us to make them ourselves, and I found the chilli powder in the cupboard. I think someone left it behind after the last cookery class.
- Grandad: Apart from painting and cooking have you been doing anything else to prepare James?
- James: Oh yes Grandad loads of things...in fact all rather boring things, like writing stories, writing poems, making models....I'm fed up with it all Grandad.
- Grandad: But it will all have been worth it when the queen eventually arrives won't it James?
- James: Oh yes Grandad....It will be a wonderful day because Miss Smith says that she is going to shake each one of us by the hand and speak to us. I'm practising my poshest voice. Good morning, your royal highness....what a pleasure it is for your humble servant James Augustus Horace Wilfred William Henry Beaumont to meet you.
- Grandad: Hang on a minute, what's all this with the names? Those aren't all your names.
- James: I know Grandad....but I want to impress her. And then I shall take a bow. I am so excited about that Grandad....and then as a class we are all going to have our photo taken with her....and then we are going to sit down together to eat....
- Grandad: Don't tell me....your chilli creams.
- James: Yes Grandad....and we will have a chance to show her our work. Yes I am looking forward to her coming even though we seem to have waited for ages.
- Grandad: What day is she coming James?
- James: Oh one Saturday....we all have to be at school by nine o'clock in the morning as she is arriving at half past nine. Miss Smith thinks that we will be home again by lunch time.

Grandad: How wonderful. Oh look at the time. Do excuse me James as I must go and put on the television. In a few minutes time it is the England - Scotland rugby match and I have been looking forward to watching it. This day is etched on my memory.... Saturday, February 16th.

James: Did you say Saturday February 16th Grandad?

Grandad: Yes James I did, why?

James: *(slowly)* Saturday February 16th is the day the queen is coming. Grandad what time is it?

Grandad: It's five to two James....you have been watching television and playing on your Xbox all morning. Are you sure it is today that the queen is coming?

James: Yes Grandad....it was today.....and I have missed it. Oh, why wasn't I ready?

Exit James and Grandad

Appendix 3 – “Unusual Warning Signs”

1. Slow Badgers



2. Falling Christmas Trees



3. Do not feed your child to a crocodile!



Appendix 4 – Drama: The Father returns Home

Cast: Father, three sons /daughters, (P1, P2, P3) one person unknown to the Father, (P4)
Voice off stage (V).

Props: Rucksack, suitcases, coat for the Father.

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(Enter Father who is dressed as if he has been on a long journey. He is carrying a rucksack and suitcases. He slowly walks around the church making his way "home," which is at the front of the church. Four people are looking out for him from the front of the church. Three of these people are his children (P1-3), who are standing together and one is a person he doesn't know (P4), standing apart.)

P1: I can't wait to see dad when he returns. It has been such a long time since we last saw him.

P2: I hope he likes the way I have developed his business while he has been away.....it has certainly become more profitable while he has been gone.

P3: I'm sure he will be really impressed. I hope he likes what I have done with the garden while he has been away.....I had to take a few risks.

P1: You have done an amazing job with the garden, working so hard each day.....dad will love all the different varieties of vegetable that you have managed to grow....

P3: I hope so.....but you haven't sat around doing nothing. You have managed to keep his football team really well coached.....they are top of the league now.....I am sure dad will be very proud of you too.

P4: Ah hello.....I don't know your dad, but I thought I'd hang around here because rumour has it that there is going to be a big party for his children when he returns.

P2: But you aren't one of his children. Why do you think you can come?

P4: I've heard that your Father is so kind and generous that he'll be more than happy to welcome another person to his big party.....I can't wait.....it looks like it is going to be amazing judging from all the food that I have seen going into your house.

(Father arrives on the scene. He embraces each of his children and speaks to them by name eg.)

Father: *(to P1)* P1 *(insert name of person)* my child.... it is so good to see you again. I have planned a real celebration tonight. I can't wait to hear how you have been getting on with the football team.

(to P2) P2 *(insert name of person)* how lovely to see you my child. I have been thinking so much about you and wondering how you have coped with the responsibility of running my business.

(to P3) P3 *(insert name of person)* my child..... I have longed for this day. I wonder what you have managed to grow in that garden of ours.....we have so much to share together tonight

Come my children, come and join with me in my celebration

P4: Oh hello, I'm Peter/Pamela (*whichever name is appropriate*), I'd like to come to the party too if that's OK?

Father: I'm very sorry Peter/Pamela but this party is for my children to celebrate my return, and I don't know you.

V: *"Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent"* (John 17:3)

(Father and children walk off together in a mutual embrace. P4 walks away sadly in the opposite direction.)

Appendix 5 - Takeaway



Jesus is coming back



Are you ready?