

# ADVENT 1

(using materials from the Christmas Bowl,  
National Council of Churches)

## Lali

The Lali calls us to be still and prepare our hearts once again for gathered worship.

### OPENING HYMN - O Come, O come Emmanuel (Em/E)

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and fill our lives, all dark and fear dispel,  
as once an exiled Israel you found,  
redeemed, restored and set on holy ground.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.

O come, O light of Christ, so bright and clear  
and lift our spirits by your advent here.  
In all who gather, show us your face,  
that we may know the warmth of your embrace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.

O come, O Wisdom, mind and heart divine,  
help us restore a world we've let decline.  
Enlighten us; your way we would know  
and show us where new seeds of hope to sow.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.

O Advent God of hope, joy, love and peace,  
in you we pray our sad divisions cease.  
Bind us as one, a people of grace,  
for at your table each one has a place.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.

These fresh words to an ancient hymn were penned by Susan Wickham in 2010, who is a Minister of the Word, serving the UCA in Adelaide, SA.

<https://youtu.be/iO7ySn-Swwc>

## Call to worship

Rev Dr Clive Pearson

Loving God, this Advent season calls us to watch and wait.  
Help us notice the signs of your presence around us.  
In ancient times you acted to save  
Come again and restore your people  
Just when we had given up hope  
**You come to our aid**  
Just when we thought it was all in vain,  
**Your words of promise revive us**  
When we remember your kindness and compassion  
**Our hearts are glad**

## Vakavinavinakataki na Veiciqomi: Acknowledgement of Country:

Eda rokova ka vakananumi ira na wekada nai Taukei niqele ena vanua eda sa mai tiko kina, kei ira na wekadana Torres Strait Islanders, ko ira era sa liu, era bula tikoena gauna oqo kei ira era na muri mai.  
[We respect, honour and remember our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters past, present and future.](#)

Eda vakananuma na nodrai talanoa, nai i tovo kei nanodra i vakarau ni bula ko i ira nai taukei ni uma qeleeda sa tiko kina oqo.  
[We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's on the lands in which we live on.](#)

Eda vakananuma na veika rarawa era lako curuma enagauna sa oti, ka so se lako curumi tiko ga ena oqo, ka da tu vata kei ira ena vakanuini ni na ia na veisereki kei naveivakasaututaki.  
[We acknowledge the pain and suffering they still face to this day and stand in solidarity with them in hopes of justice.](#)

Me da vakadeitaki keda ena cakacaka vata, me da veivueti cake, ka vakanuini ena veisiga vinaka nimataka.  
[May we commit to building a better and brighter future together.](#)

## LIGHTING OF CANDLES

Hope for the Land: Vladimir

In the Top End of Australia  
the buildup means we are near the end of the Dry Season.  
We wait for refreshing rains to come.  
When the first rain hits the ground  
the Top End people call this 'Nurru-djulyuna' (Gupapuyru).  
It is sacred time for Yolngu people,  
to remember loved ones who are no longer with us.

Just like the rain that comes to cleanse and renew the land,  
our tears help wash away our worries and fears.  
We ask God to help us face life again and give us hope.  
When your face shines upon us a candle of hope is lit in our hearts  
God of Hope renew our hope.  
Amen.

Candle Song

Amelia

'Christmas is coming'  
the church is glad to sing  
and let the Advent candles  
brightly burn in a ring.

The first is for God's promise  
to put the wrong things right,  
and bring to earth's darkness  
the hope of love and light.

'Christmas is coming'  
the church is glad to sing  
and let the Advent candles  
brightly burn in a ring.

Readers (2 from each congregation)

Ones: If ever there was a year we needed Advent, this is the year.  
We hardly know how to describe the year we have lived through.  
We hesitate to reflect on all the mess around us in 2020.  
All we know is that nothing seems right,  
nothing seems like it used to be, nothing.  
We need Advent!

Twos: The prophet Isaiah cried out for us,  
"O that you would tear open the heavens and come down ...  
To make your name known ... so that nations might tremble at your presence."  
So tear through the mess, O Lord, and come down to us again.  
We long to be your people, a people of hope.

Ones: We light this first candle as a sign of our hope.  
Hope that you can meet us, even in the mess of our world.

Hope that you still see us, though we feel we are lost in the rubble. Let this light be the guide that brings us to Emmanuel once more.

Twos: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Online Service - Remember when you feel like the water is getting over your head...  
there is Hope.

[http://ctm.ucahost.com/Movie\\_files/ZoriahHope.mov](http://ctm.ucahost.com/Movie_files/ZoriahHope.mov)

## READINGS

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (Westmead)

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved. O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure. You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves. Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved. But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name. Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9 (Leigh)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Song** Fijian Congregation

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**Message of Hope**      **Beginning Again** - Rev Dr Amelia Koh-Butler

**Dedication of the offering**      Sunil Baek

Hope-bringing God,  
we thank you that through the Christmas Bowl Appeal  
we can support those in need, bringing hope into difficult situations.  
By our words and actions,  
in giving and our daily giving,  
may your seeds of hope be planted and grow.  
Amen.

## Prayers of the People

Amelia to start

In a world often bereft of hope we turn to you.

**Remind us that hope can be found in the most surprising of places.**

*There will be a period for prayer.  
People are invited to pray in groups,  
led by the Pastoral Team.*

Today we particularly pray for the people of Afghanistan.

Comfort those whose arms ache

to hold loved ones lost through war and acts of violence.

We particularly pray for your blessing on efforts

to enable education and literacy for girls and women.

**Renew our hope in a better future as we join with you**

**in dreaming of a world where all your children**

**can have opportunities to learn and grow and be valued and cherished.**

**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer (sung in Fijian)

### Ringing in Advent

The bells call us back and send us out...

### Carol Long ago, prophets knew (Em/B)

LONG ago, prophets knew  
Christ would come, born a Jew.  
Come to make all things new;  
Bear his People's burden,  
Freely love and pardon.

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!  
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!  
When he comes,  
When he comes,  
Who will make him welcome?

God in time, God in man,  
This is God's timeless plan:  
He will come, as a man,  
Born himself of woman,  
God divinely human. [Refrain]

Mary, hail! Though afraid,  
She believed, she obeyed.  
In her womb God is laid;  
Till the time expected  
Nurtured and protected. [Refrain]

Journey ends! Where afar  
Bethlem shines, like a star,  
Stable door stands ajar.  
Unborn Son of Mary,  
Saviour, do not tarry!

<https://youtu.be/T2sc-GdARvA>

**Sending out**    Mary

Go in the strength, knowledge, grace and power of God  
who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
We will watch and wait,  
looking for signs of God's presence in our lives  
Nurture the hope that is God's gift and share that hope with others.  
Amen.