

In the beginning was the Word...

An Advent & Christmas Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney



Ponder

Saturday 23rd December 2023



'Pondering #1' by Benjamin Miller (1925, drawing) National Museum of American History, Smithsonian

Scripture: Psalm 25:1-14

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

²O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.

³Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

⁴Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.

⁵Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

⁶Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.

- ⁷ Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!
- ⁸ Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
- ⁹ He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
- ¹⁰ All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.
- ¹¹ For your name's sake, O Lord,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
- ¹² Who are they that fear the Lord?
He will teach them the way that they should choose.
- ¹³ They will abide in prosperity,
and their children shall possess the land.
- ¹⁴ The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.

To reflect:

To ponder, to reflect, to mull over. What are you pondering as we approach the end of Advent? Today's Antiphon is the last of the series as tomorrow is Christmas Eve (as well as the Fourth Sunday of Advent).

Perhaps you're pondering on truths revealed in readings, prayers and song that have been seen afresh this year, something you've seen with fresh eyes, or noticed for the first time. Perhaps you've been reassured walking through the weeks by the reassurances of God is with us and will be with us again. Perhaps it's something else. As we approach the conclusion of Advent what are the ponderings that you want to note and return to, those wonderings and wanderings that have lit your way through the days of December?

Today's Antiphon

O Emmanuel: O Emmanuel our King and law-giver, for whom the nations wait, O Saviour of all people: Come, Lord our God, and save us.

A Clear Midnight by Walt Whitman (1881)

This is thy hour O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,
Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the lesson done,
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the themes thou lovest best,
Night, sleep, death and the stars.

To listen

Advent Antiphons VII: O Emmanuel by Bob Chilcott, one version is by The Sixteen
<https://open.spotify.com/track/59Fgxw68sz40luym3liGPJ?si=dfaacd98329f4688>

The Advent Candle by Bob Chilcott, one version is by The Oxford Candle
<https://open.spotify.com/track/5x0Qc0JwavJjdkdj8mizIp?si=c3f22568dc354cac>

I wonder as I wander (Traditional) one version is by the Cambridge Singers
<https://open.spotify.com/track/7edCdAYLEDSaWv00I3pb13?si=0fe7db48cad9437e>

The word for each day (3-25 December is taken from Advent Word 2023 #adventword).

...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.