Oh God of this Advent, we pray for those who wait – for their child to be born, for loved ones reunited, for justice and peace.

We pray for them the ongoing unfolding and presence of the living God.

Oh God of this Advent, we pray for those we know who need good news for themselves. We pray for those who need the Christ born amongst them.

We pray for them the ongoing unfolding and presence of the living God.

Where we struggle to know how to pray, let us pray together.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Choose a piece of music to listen to or sing.

Closing Responses & Blessing

Let us go from here today as people of hope,
As people watching and waiting,
As people of the way of Jesus Christ.

Bless us and the people we meet along the way.
Father,
Son
and Holy Spirit. **Amen**.

Unless otherwise indicated
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SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Mark 13: 24-37
Advent 1

Welcome to all.

An opportunity to welcome people to worship.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we find ourselves, the ……. people, and we pay our respects to their elders, past present and emerging.

Responses & Gathering Prayer

God of our Advent.
God of birth and life.
God of the cry going out to all the world,
God of hope,
We open our ears to your eternal calling down throughout the ages. [silence]

Forgive us when we simply make Advent a time of the past and forgo your invitation to us in the present.
[silence]

With thankfulness let us come because of the Good News we have heard. With thankfulness let us come because of all your indwelling amongst us God. With thankfulness let us come as your people, longing for you to be born anew within and around us. You, O Lord, are our hope.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: O Come O Come Emmanuel
Sufjan Stevens
https://music.sufjan.com/track/o-come-o-come-emmanuel

or found on:
https://open.spotify.com/track/6gP7dUSdWheJnqwVTdKcFL?si=69e1c83dffab46f4

Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

Mark 13: 24-37

The Coming of the Son of Man

24 'But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
26 Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. 27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

28 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

The Necessity for Watchfulness

32 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering. Word Around the Bush.
https://saltbushcommunity.uca.org.au/resources/the-word-around-the-bush/

Questions for conversation

- What are your thoughts about watching and waiting in terms of your faith?

- How do you hear the parable of the fig tree speaking into our lives?

- What did you hear in today's word?

A time of Silence

Spend some time in silence sitting still. Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert. Simply be still and open to God.

Prayers for others

Let us learn the lesson of the fig tree, that we might see the changing seasons and be open to the ongoing unfolding and presence of the living God.

Oh God in this Advent, we pray for those who have little hope, who wait for death, who see no goodness.

We pray for them the ongoing unfolding and presence of the living God.

Oh God of this Advent, we pray for those who work for peace, who feed the hungry, who take in people who have nowhere to shelter.

We pray for them the ongoing unfolding and presence of the living God.