Wait, watchers!

Mark 13:24-37

Jesus tells the disciples to keep alert for the coming of God. He encourages them to read the signs of the times. But no one knows the day or the hour, so they are to keep awake at all times.

Read this week's passage:



ACT

With Christmas approaching, you might already be making plans for the festive season. Research ways of making your celebrations more sustainable this year. You could also see if you can find tips to make your church activities more eco-friendly.

OBSERVE

An Advent calendar with a difference – instead of opening a door each day, look for a sign of Jesus in the world.

PLAY

Think of as many different ways of saying 'keep watch' as you can (e.g. 'be alert', 'look alive', 'wake up'). You could play a game where each person mimes or draws the phrase, to be guessed by the other players.

Living Scripture

'And the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.' Mark 13:25

In *The Last Battle* by C. S. Lewis, there is a moment towards the end of the story when Aslan shouts, 'now is the time' and suddenly the world he created, Narnia, begins to seemingly fall apart; however, it is just the beginning of a Narnia which is described as 'real' rather than the 'shadow or copy' which had been before.

Lots in this passage may seem frightening or overwhelming, but there is a sense that for new life and recreation there must be change. While you could read this thinking about destruction, it may be helpful to consider the natural patterns in our world – for example, the life of a tree. If you look at trees when all their leaves have fallen and the branches are bare, it looks as though that is the end and perhaps the tree will die. However, all of that needs to happen for the new life of the tree to begin in spring.

Advent is a time for watching and noticing the world around us as we make ready for Christ to come, but it can also be a time to notice carefully what is within us and what might need to be 'remade'.

First impressions

- What are you waiting for, this Advent?
- What might 'waiting well' look like?
- What signs of hope have you noticed in the past week?



Pray

God, you call us to wait.
God, you call us to watch.
Help us to be ready for you when you come among us.
Help us to use this Advent to prepare to meet you at Christmas.
Amen.

See

Spend some time really noticing the things in the natural world which you would more easily overlook. Pay attention to details, e.g. how many leaves remain on a tree near you, or the temperature changes through the week, the stars coming out at night. What does it feel like to be so attentive and watchful?

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