

ABM Speakers' Corner

Issue Four, November 2014



ABM acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land; and the Elders both past and present, who have contributed to the life journey of all.

Speakers' Prayer

Almighty God, as we engage with our ABM family and friends around Australia, may the gifts that you have taught us give us the confidence to spread your word and bring our work into the hearts of all Australians. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Amen

A WARM WELCOME

A very warm welcome to your fourth edition of Speakers' Corner for 2014. Your feedback is always most welcome.

Thank you for your hard work, tireless efforts and support of ABM - we really can't do it without you.

Yours in Christ.

Michael Robinson

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The "Advents" of Christ

The Christian season of Christmas actually begins on Christmas Eve and lasts for twelve days, ending on January 6. (No, the twelve-day season of Christmas did not start with the song. It was the other way around.) The time before Christmas is Advent, *a season of preparation for Christmas*. Christians prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus by remembering the longing of the Jews for a Messiah. In Advent, we're reminded of how much we ourselves also need a Savior, and we look forward to our Savior's second coming even as we prepare to celebrate his first coming at Christmas. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "visit." In the season with this name, we keep in mind both "advents" of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come.

Pay Attention to the Advent Content of Corporate Worship

If your church celebrates Advent, be ready to pay close attention to the readings, prayers, songs, and seasonal pageantry (like the lighting of the Advent wreath). Your intentionality in worship can infuse your whole life with Advent expectation.

Many churches, even if they don't plunge into the depths of Advent, nevertheless wade into Advent themes in their pre-Christmas worship. They use readings from the Old Testament prophets or sing Advent carols like "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." The more you pay attention to these Advent elements, the more your personal experience will be enriched.

If your church doesn't acknowledge Advent, you may decide to talk with your pastor or worship leader about it. But, please, be kind and encouraging!

Do Acts of Kindness and Justice that Inflammate Your Hope for God's Future

Advent is a season to consider both "advents" of Jesus. When Jesus comes again as a victorious King, he will usher in the Kingdom of God with all of its blessings. God's peace and justice will fill the earth. There will be no more sorrow or tears. People will turn implements of war into tools to produce food, and "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4). It's easy for those of us who live in safety, comfort, and prosperity to neglect a godly hope for the coming of the kingdom and all of its benefits. Yet, this hope can be inflamed within us when we reach out to share life with and care for people in need, for the hungry and homeless, for victims of injustice and oppression, for those who suffer from sickness or sadness. Advent can be a time to touch those in need, not only so that we might share God's love with them, but also so that our yearning for the kingdom might be renewed within us.





Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD! (Psalm 27:14)
For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. (Psalm 62:5-7)

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning. (Psalm 130:5-6)

O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities. (Psalm 130:7-8)

Those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. (Isa 40:31)

The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (Rom 8:18-25)

Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. (1 Peter 1:13)

The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Rev 22:20)

SPEAKER FEEDBACK.

Hi Chris and Michael,

Thought I'd report in on my speaking engagement from Sunday. All went really well (see Dawn's lovely feedback below!)

I gave out all the bits and pieces Lorraine had provided and I think everyone was interested in ABM's work so, tick – job well done!

Funnily enough, I have also been invited to go to the Cathedral in November and speak at an MU gathering. Details still TBC but you might like to note it in your schedule Michael.

From: dawn morris (dawnmorris123@gmail.com)

Sent: Tuesday 21 October 2014 8.33 am

To: Elizabeth Baker (ABM Media Consultant)

Subject: St. Peter's East Maitland Mission Lunch

Dear Elizabeth

Thank you so much for being our guest speaker at the Mission Lunch. I've had many positive comments about your presentation – so young! So knowledgeable! So good to hear what is happening! Just wonderful – thanks.

Keep up your great work.

Best wishes and God Bless

Dawn (Morris)



The Spirit of Advent

Advent is marked by a spirit of expectation, of anticipation, of preparation, of longing. There is a yearning for deliverance from the evils of the world, first expressed by Israelite slaves in Egypt as they cried out from their bitter oppression. It is the cry of those who have experienced the tyranny of injustice in a world under the curse of sin, and yet who have hope of deliverance by a God who has heard the cries of oppressed slaves and brought deliverance!

It is that hope, however faint at times, and that God, however distant He sometimes seems, which brings to the world the anticipation of a King who will rule with truth and justice and righteousness over His people and in His creation. It is that hope that once anticipated, and now anticipates anew, the reign of an Anointed One, a Messiah, who will bring peace and justice and righteousness to the world.

Part of the expectation also anticipates a judgment on sin and a calling of the world to accountability before God. We long for God to come and set the world right! Yet, as the prophet Amos warned, the expectation of a coming judgment at the "Day of the Lord" may not be the day of light that we might want, because the penetrating light of God's judgment on sin will shine just as brightly on God's people.

Because of this important truth, especially in the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Season of Advent has been a time of fasting and penitence for sins similar to the Season of Lent. However, a different emphasis for the season of Advent has gradually unfolded in much of the rest of the church. The season of Advent has come to be celebrated more in terms of expectation or anticipation. Yet, the anticipation of the Coming of the Messiah throughout the Old Testament and Judaism was not in connection with remembrance of sins. Rather, it was in the context of oppression and injustice, the longing for redemption, not from personal guilt and sin but from the systemic evil of the world expressed in evil empires and tyrants. It is in that sense that all creation groans for its redemption as we witness the evil that so dominates our world (Rom 8:18-25).

the Prayer of Advent is still:
***Come, O Come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel!***

Contact List

This list only contains people who have given ABM written permission to have their contact details published. To be included, please email your details to Michael Robinson (see address below).

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|--------------------|---|
| <i>Bendigo</i> | <i>The Ven Michael Hopkins</i> |
| <i>Brisbane</i> | <i>The Rev'd Ken Spreadborough</i> |
| <i>Bunbury</i> | <i>The Rev'd Bill Byleveld</i> |
| <i>Canberra</i> | <i>The Rev'd Rebecca Newland</i> |
| <i>Grafton</i> | <i>The Rev'd Brian Mueller</i> |
| <i>Melbourne</i> | <i>Mr Brett Collins</i> |
| <i>Newcastle</i> | <i>The Rev'd Canon Katherine Bowyer</i> |
| <i>Perth</i> | <i>The Ven. Lionel Snell</i> |
| <i>SA Province</i> | <i>The Right Rev'd David McCall</i> |
| <i>Sydney</i> | <i>Mrs Edwina Waddy</i> |
| <i>Tasmania</i> | <i>The Rev'd Warwick Cuthbertson</i> |

List of Resources

For Education and Publicity

- Prayer Diary
- Project Book
- Partners' Magazine
- Annual Report
- ABM DVDs
- Partner Brochures
- Magnets
- Posters (Marks of Mission, Country overview)
- Banners

For Fundraising

- Duplex (Giving) envelopes
- Purses
- Lanyards
- Bequest Forms
- Crosses

CONTACT US AT ABM

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