

Week 1.

- What are our expectations about Christmas?
- How might the period of Advent change these?
- Read Matthew 24:36-44
- In this reading who was actually prepared for God's intervening in 'normal' life? What was everyone else doing?
- What metaphors does Jesus use to describe the Lord's return?
- How does this passage make you feel?
- Why do you think God does not want his people to know the day or hour when Jesus will return?
- Read the quote opposite.
- As we enter the season of Advent, what are you carrying with you from seasons past?*
- How might God use what is most present in your life—even the chaos and messiness and unpredictability—to fashion a space of welcome, not only for Christ but also for you?*
- How might we grow in 'watchfulness' during the Advent season?
- Can you think of ways in which we can prepare for Christmas without engaging with the commercialism of the season?
- Close in prayer for one another and particularly those for whom this is perhaps the busiest time of their year.



Advent Expectations : Be Prepared

'Advent asks us to resist recoiling and instead to press into the insecurity and unsettledness of this passage—and of our lives. Advent beckons us beyond the certainties that may not serve us—those sureties we have relied on that may have no substance to them after all. Advent is a season to look at what we have fashioned our lives around—beliefs, habits, convictions, prejudices—and to see whether these leave any room for the Christ who is so fond of slipping into our lives in guises we may not readily recognise.'

Questions marked with * and quotes from :
THROUGH THE ADVENT DOOR Entering a
Contemplative Christmas : 2011 :
Jan L. Richardson : Upper Room Books &
Available on Kindle.

