**A LITURGY FOR ADVENT**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Among us the Spirit of God conceives new life,

**and we feel the life within us.**

In our history the Christ makes gentle entry,

**and we see the light before us.**

Within our dreams the truth of our God is revealed;

**we await the hope of the world.**

Mary of Nazareth,

flowing bravely

with all the possibilities

for life,

touching close the deep centres

of being,

and present to the Holy Spirit

of God,

creating and moving

and bursting through

membranes of pain and doubt,

through labour-filled passages

into the light

of the star-shine world

and the poor,

who kneel in hope

before the sign of God.

**O God, give to us all the eyes and heart of Mary,**

**who saw the vision for the liberation of the world,**

**and with love and courage committed herself**

**to live out that hope.**

**Amen.**

CONFESSION

In silence,

let us reflect on moments in our own lives and in the life of the Church

when we have experienced

the life-giving movement of the Holy Spirit

and have allowed it to die –

moments when we have had

a sense of grief about ourselves,

a sense of betraying our own possibilities.

In weakness,

in smallness of hope,

in vulnerable faith,

we stand before you, O God.

**We come in penitence**

**and await your renewing Spirit**.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Where the Spirit of the Lord is,

there is liberty!

God is always faithful to us

and gives to us a new day.

Amen. **Amen!**

*Silent reflection*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us affirm our faith:

We believe in God

who lives and speaks in sunsets,

in love-wrapped gifts,

and fleeting butterflies’

in women weeping strongly

for stillborn dreams

and hopes they never conceived.

**We believe in God,**

**indwelling wholly,**

**in suffering and celebration.**

We believe in Christ,

honouring our humanness,

who took nourishment

from a woman’s breasts;

who climbed trees,

skinned knees;

who laughed and cried,

loved and wept,

bled and died.

**We believe in the Christ, sanctifying life, and death.**

We believe in the Spirit,

mystically joining us

to peoples everywhere;

who intercedes

with sighs and groans

too deep for words;

a share consuming struggle

bending our will to God.

**We believe in the Holy Spirit**

**incorporating us into Christ.**

We believe in the Church,

being and becoming,

chosen as God’s presence in the world

despite its frailty,

its foolishness,

its failings.

**We believe in the Church,**

**seeking, however imperfectly,**

**to act justly, love mercy,**

**and walk humbly with our God.**

DEDICATION

As Mary offered herself in her humanness, so we offer our gifts to you, O God.

**We bring them in faith.**

**We bring them in gratitude**

**for all that we have received.**

**Amen.**

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Rejoice in Bethlehem,

two thousand years ago.

**Rejoice in the life**

**that was conceived,**

**lived and given for us.**

Go in peace

to love and serve the world.

And may your waiting be in hope,

each day be lived in faith

and the love in Christmas be moving toward you.

**Amen**

**AN ADVENT LITURGY**