

## Longings for the Sovereignty of God

*Jesus preached the sovereignty of God in word and deed and he embodied it in his life and death.*

*During the season of Advent leading up to Christmas, the Church has often expressed its longing for that sovereignty of God-with-us in Christ. It did so in a series of what are known as the "O Antiphons". They could be used one at a time as an introduction and response to Mary's revolutionary Song, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55); or as separate prayers. They could also be used altogether as one prayer or meditation. They are perhaps best known in the hymn "O come, O come, Immanuel" (StF 180).*

*That longing does not end with Christmas, and is all the more relevant in a time of turmoil in world affairs, after Brexit, and during the Coronavirus pandemic. The following take the expression forward into the period between Epiphany and the start of Lent. They have been adapted from suggestions by the Revd Micky Youngson, and can be used creatively in any of the above ways.*

### **O come, O come...**

#### **... Wisdom**

Where are the wise and how are their words heard amidst the clamour of the 24 hour news cycle? Where is wisdom in the decision making of our leaders - of nations and of the church? Whose voices should we tune into?

#### **... Adonai**

Ruler and head of the house of Israel, you kneel to wash the feet of those marginalised, outcast and treated unjustly to make their lives matter. Come and show us to whom we should bend the knee in your name.

#### **... Root of Jesse.**

What are we rooted into? What of our tradition holds us firm and stable? Or are we rooted to the spot, like rabbits in headlights, unable to move?

#### **... Key of David**

What locks people in? Can we be part of their liberation? Who has the power to break the deadlock in social and political turmoil? If we the church are the Body of Christ come and show us how we can unlock hope and peace.

#### **... Morning Star**

We move from the shortest day to the hope of more light and warmth. The world keeps turning and the sun keeps burning, regardless of our efforts to control and our failure to notice the rhythms of the seasons.

#### **... King of the nations**

Do you come as a new 'leader of the free world'? Or a child, showing us a different kind of leadership? Will it take a crisis such as a pandemic to show us? What leadership might unite the nations in these times?

#### **... Immanuel**

You are God with us. Where do we see the glimpses of God's glory and the signs of the divine in our world? In the food bank, in the hospital isolation unit, in the refugee camp, in our personal lives, or where?