St Andrew's Church, Reading Street

November 2026

Pastoral letter

Dear Friends,

COMPLINE: DRAWING CLOSER TO JESUS IN THE QUIET OF ADVENT

An invitation to pause, pray and rest in the presence of the Lord

As we journey through the season of Advent, we are invited to prepare our hearts for the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the midst of the busyness of life, the demands of daily responsibilities and the preparations surrounding Christmas, it is easy to become distracted and lose sight of what this season is truly about. Advent is not simply a countdown to Christmas; it is a time to reflect, to pray, to renew our faith and to deepen our relationship with Jesus, the Light of the world.

One beautiful way to do this is through Compline, and I warmly invite you to join us every Wednesday during Advent, from 7.00pm to 7.30pm, for this special service of evening prayer.

What is Compline?

The word *Compline* comes from the Latin word *completorium*, meaning completion. It is traditionally the final prayer of the day in the Church's daily cycle of prayer. It provides an opportunity to bring the day to a close by becoming still before God, reflecting on His goodness, confessing our shortcomings, giving thanks for His faithfulness and committing ourselves into His loving care.

Compline is a peaceful and reflective service, often characterised by Scripture readings, prayers, silence and sometimes the singing of hymns or the beautiful Compline psalms.

At its heart is a simple but profound invitation: to pause at the end of the day and rest in the presence of God.

Why Compline during Advent?

Advent is a season of waiting, watching and expectation. We remember the first coming of Jesus into the world as our Saviour, while also looking forward with hope to His promised return.

In a world filled with noise, anxiety and distractions, Compline gives us an opportunity to be still and listen to the voice of God. It reminds us that our hope is not found in the things of this world, but in Jesus Christ alone. As we gather in prayer, we are reminded of the words of Psalm 46:10: *"Be still, and know that I am God."*

What a precious opportunity to quieten our hearts, lay down our worries and turn our attention afresh to the One who loves us and gave Himself for us!

The birth of Jesus, which we celebrate at Christmas, is not merely a beautiful story or a cherished tradition. It is the wonderful declaration of God's saving love for humanity. Jesus came into the world to rescue us from sin, reconcile us to the Father and give us the gift of eternal life. The child born in Bethlehem is our Saviour, our Redeemer and our living hope. As we approach Christmas, may Compline help us look beyond the festivities and focus once again on the wonder of Christ's coming.

Come and encounter the Lord in prayer

Whether you regularly attend church, are new to Compline, or have never experienced this service before, you are warmly welcome. You do not need to know the prayers or be familiar with the tradition. Simply come with an open heart and a willingness to spend a little time with the Lord. Let us make space for Jesus this Advent. Let us come together as God's people to pray, reflect upon His Word and draw nearer to Him. For in the quietness of prayer, we are reminded that we are never alone: Christ is with us, His grace is sufficient, and His promises never fail.

Jesus said:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

May this be our invitation and our experience as we gather for Compline.

Philip

Outreach at St Andrew's

As part of St Andrew's mission, we have been opening up St Andrew's, not just to our congregation but, to the local residents and beyond. Historically, there has been The Women's Group, Mother and Toddlers and, of course, the hall is hired by user groups: young people's uniformed groups and fitness classes.

However, this last year has seen the reinstatement of the Community Coffee Mornings on Fridays and a creative writing group, Write Away (once a month on Thursday mornings); both open to all.

In the new year it is proposed to start two new groups that will run on Tuesday afternoons:

Book Group: a chance for people to recommend and discuss their favourite books once a month. It is NOT for everyone reading the same book to discuss.

Art Group: This would be an opportunity for those who like to paint, sketch or craft to come together, probably once a fortnight, to work together in the hall. It would not be a taught class but hopefully there will be someone who will be there to facilitate the group and to give advice.

If you are interested in any of these groups, would you please advise the office so that we can plan ahead. Thank you, Sue (Church Warden)

Christmas Services 2026

Wed.	2nd December: 7.00 pm	Compline service
Wed.	9th December: 7.00 pm	Compline service
Wed.	16th December: 7.00 pm	Compline service
Thu.	17th December: 6.00 pm.	Reading Street Village Carol service at Kitty's Green
Sun.	20th December: 10.00 am	Children's Christmas Nativity
Wed.	23rd December: 6.00 pm	Festival of Nine Lessons and carols
Thu.	24th December: 3.00 pm	Christingle Service (no booking required)
	24th December: 11.30 pm	Midnight Communion
Fri.	25th December: 10.00 am	Christmas Communion
Sun.	27th December: 10.00 am	Family Communion service


St Andrew's
Reading Street
YOU ARE INVITED TO BE A PART OF OUR
CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHOIR
Would you like to meet new people
and sing in a fun and energetic community choir with refreshments served
All ages are welcome!
You don't need to have a background in music. All you need is to have fun and be prepared to dance too, then get in touch!
Learn Traditional and Originally Composed Carols/Songs
MEET NEW PEOPLE
BUILD FRIENDSHIPS
USE YOUR GIFTS TO SERVE GOD AND THE COMMUNITY
Sing • Fellowship • Serve God and the Community
Get in touch quickly
as rehearsals dates are on Tuesdays from 5-6pm:
REHEARSAL DATES
OCTOBER 27TH
NOVEMBER 10TH
NOVEMBER 17TH
NOVEMBER 24TH
DECEMBER 1ST
DECEMBER 8TH
St Andrew's Church
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Come and be part of something special this Christmas!