

## Advent Prayer Journey.

Aim: to give people a quiet space to reflect on Christmas and its meaning for them and allow them to take something of this into their daily lives.

I recently visited a labyrinth and felt drawn to create something similar for the church I am currently working in. The church had never done anything like this before and being a traditional building with fixed pews, had very little open space. This Advent Prayer Journey uses the labyrinth idea of journeying inward to a still centre and then journeying outward back to the world, but is less intricate and utilises the layout of the building. There are 7 prayer stations. The layout is based on the church I am in, but can easily be adapted for other spaces.

At each station there are words, an activity and a visual image. I used some of a collection of prints, 'illuminations' by Mary Fleeson, available from Lindisfarne Scriptorium, but groups could use others to suit their ideas.

### Inward Journey: - letting go / shedding

Station 1 – Beginning the Journey – expectations and hopes  
Seeds, soil in a tray

Station 2 – Recognising the burdens we are carrying and letting them go.  
Stones in a basket, bowl of water, towel

Station 3 – The people sharing our journey  
Prayer Tree - could be a Christmas tree or bare branches, paper leaves with string, pens

**The Centre:** - time with God – Take time to just be with God - relax in His presence - draw on His strength.  
Jesus Poster, small crib scene, cushions

### Outward Journey: - taking that encounter back into the world

Station 4 - Taking His light with us on our journey and out into the world.  
Basket of small votive candles, night lights or other small candles

Station 5 – Being aware of His love for us and taking it with us.  
Heart-shaped 'Post-it' notes, pens

Station 6 - Leaving this quiet space and returning to the world with hope.  
Prayer cards (template for cards at the end of stations)

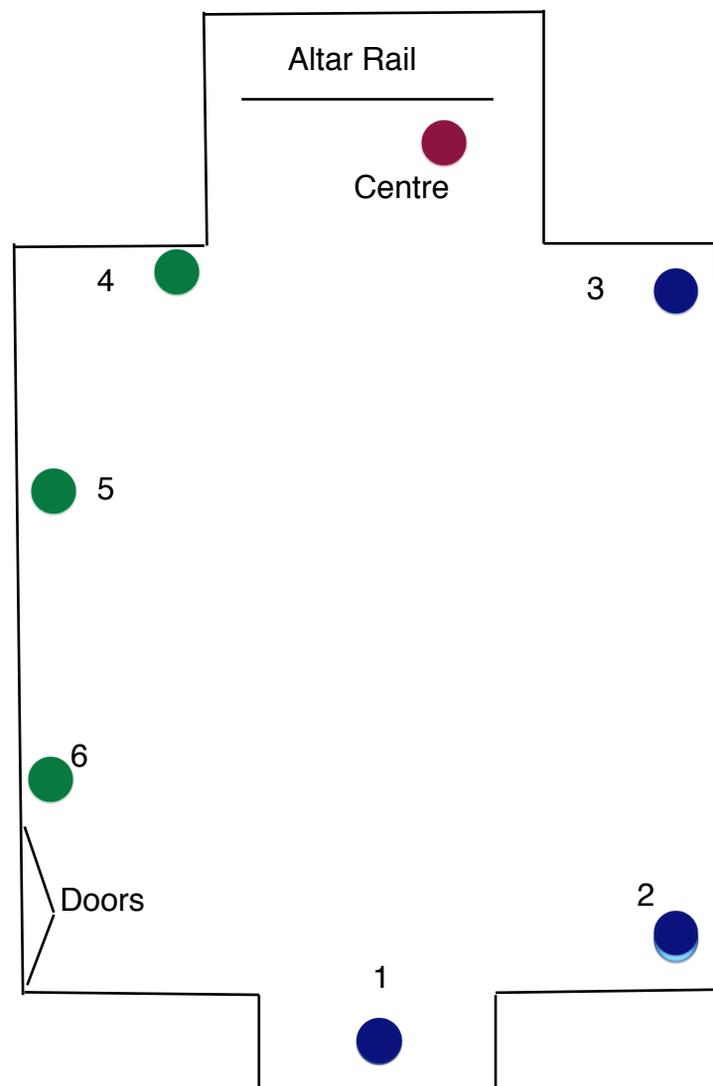
Layout for the journey on next page.

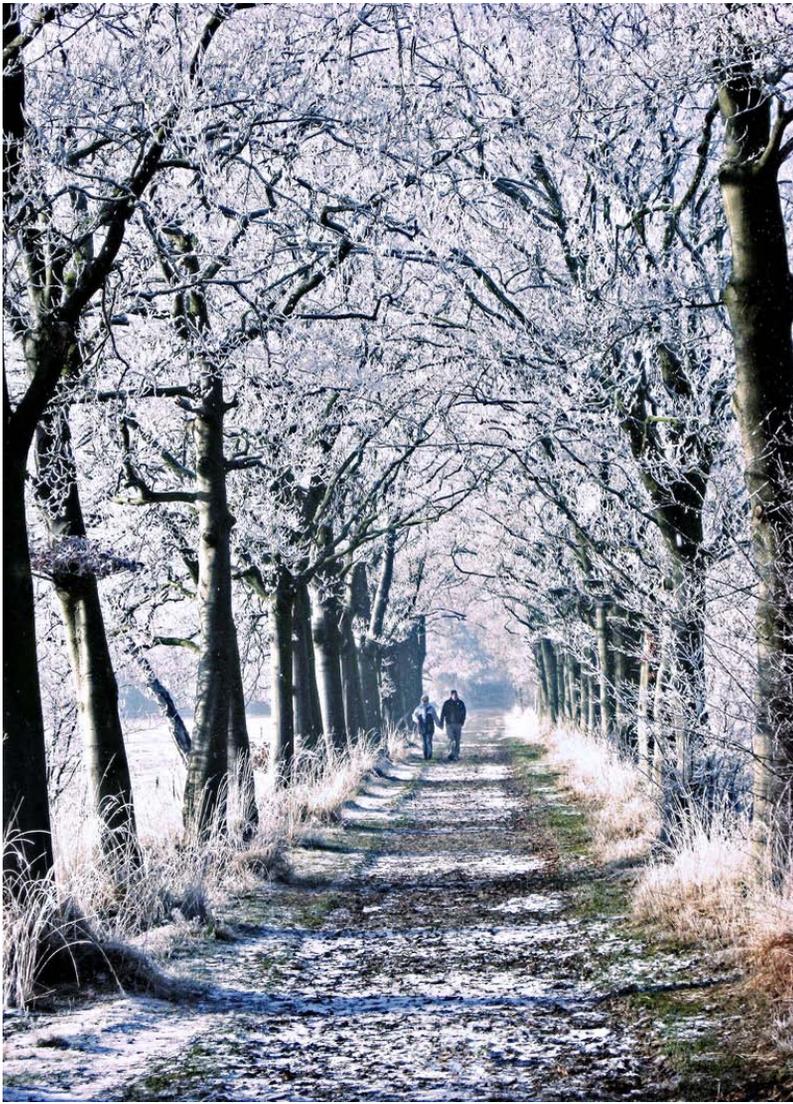
## Church Layout.

The journey begins at the back of the church by the doors and then the inward journey works its way up right aisle to the Sanctuary steps.

The outward journey works its way down the left aisle back to the entrance.

This can be adapted for any space.





# Welcome to the Advent Prayer Journey

The Journey consists of 7 stations, starting at the back of the church, where you can pause for as long as you like.

At each place there is a picture and some words to reflect on and an prayerful activity to do.

Please feel free to do whatever you want to and to take as long as you want.

We want you to enjoy this quiet space.

Each journey will be different, but we pray that you will take away something special for yourself that will help you draw nearer to Jesus as the centre of your Christmas.



## Station 1

We begin our journey.

What expectations and hopes do we have as we get nearer to Christmas?

Take a seed. Such a tiny thing, yet with so much potential for growth.

Let it remind you of your seeds of hope, your expectations for this Christmas.

Use the words on the card to think about your seed and its potential.

When you are ready plant your seed in the soil.

In your own time move on to Station 2



## Small Beginnings

"Things great have small beginnings. Every downpour is just a raindrop; every fire is just a spark; every harvest is just a seed; every journey is just a step because without that step there will be no journey; without that raindrop there can be no shower; without that seed there can be no harvest."

William Wilberforce

For the promise of harvest  
contained within a seed  
we thank you.  
For the oak tree  
within an acorn  
The bread  
within a grain  
The apple  
within a pip  
The mystery of nature  
gift wrapped  
for us to sow  
we thank you.

John Birch, Celtic Prayer and Resources



## Station 2

We are now on our journey, but what are we carrying with us today?

Do we feel weighed down by worry, stress, the busyness around us?

Take a stone. Hold it, feel its shape and texture.

What burdens does the stone represent?

Read the words from the hymn 'What a friend we have in Jesus'

When you are ready, give your burdens to Jesus by slowly dropping your stone into the bowl of water and leave it there.

In your own time move on to Station 3

