

# Advent: 17th December - A deep, reverential fear



Standing stones, photography by  
Stephen Wood

## O Antiphon: [Wisdom](#)

The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding. Isaiah 11:2-3

Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high,  
Who ordered all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
and teach us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel!

[Sung O Antiphon \(I-IV\), Arvo Part](#)

## The story continues...

When Elizabeth was full-term in her pregnancy, she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives, seeing that God had overwhelmed her with mercy, celebrated with her. On the eighth day, they came to circumcise the child and were calling him Zachariah after his father. But his mother intervened: “No. He is to be called John.” “But,” they said, “no one in your family is named that.” They used sign language to ask Zachariah what he wanted him named. Asking for a tablet, Zachariah wrote, “His name is to be John.” That took everyone by surprise. Surprise followed surprise—Zachariah’s mouth was now open, his tongue loose, and he was talking, praising God! A deep, reverential fear settled over the neighborhood, and in all that Judean hill country people talked about nothing else. Everyone who heard about it took it to heart, wondering, “What will become of this child? Clearly, God has his hand in this.” (*Luke 1:57-66*)

## Silence and Imaginative exercise

There are moments when we know and see God clearly. It is evident that he is active. We stop and wonder, and a little awe drops into our centre. Maybe God is more active than our current sight affords. Stop. Look at your day.

## Closing Blessing

Be a bright flame before me,  
Be a guiding star above me,  
Be a smooth path below me,  
And be a kindly shepherd behind me,  
To-day, to-night, and for ever.

*Garmina Gadelica*