

19th December 2020

Slow

**“Time is too slow for those who wait,
Too swift for those who fear,
Too long for those who grieve,
To short for those who rejoice;
But for those who love,
Time is eternity.”**

*Henry Van Dyke, Time is too slow
(read at the funeral service of Diana, Princess of Wales)*

There's a bus-shelter opposite our house for the regular service from our village into the city of Edinburgh. There's a slight bend in the road, so, from the bus-shelter, you can't see the bus till it's almost arrived. So what do people do? They cross the road to watch for the bus by our gate, their impatience showing all the while. Does it make the bus come more quickly? Of course not! Van Dyke is right ... Time *is* too slow for those who wait – especially at our bus-shelter when people are impatient!

So what about this Advent waiting time? Of course, we're excited – despite the many differences we'll experience in Christmas this year – for the meaning of this Season is as important ever. We're impatient too, for life has been difficult in recent months, and all of us are looking forward to something that will raise our spirits. And for many of us, time will be too slow, as we wait and wait – impatiently – for good things to come.

We can't hurry time, but we can alter our attitude, and slow down in the waiting. “A watched kettle never boils”, we say. It takes as long as it ever does. It's our impatience that makes it *seem* too long. “The 26 bus can't be seen yet!” the people at our bus-shelter say. But it takes as long as it needs to, and, at the start of its route, it'll run pretty close to its timetable. It's our impatience that makes it seem too long. “Still 6 more sleeps to Christmas!” we say today. But 25th December will take as long to come around as it ever did. It's our impatience that makes it seem too far away. So, slow down, still yourself and be less anxious. Time will still bring us what we yet long for. Even the 26 bus will come – eventually!

A prayer for today

Companion God, when life is slow, give me patience; when life is fast, keep me stable and safe; which life is uncertain, give me wisdom and peace. Amen

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