

North Leith Parish Church  
Sunday 13 December 2020  
Third Sunday in Advent



Click the link below to listen to the Welcome and Call to Worship

[Welcome & Intimations](#)

**Call to Worship**

*(from Isaiah 61, v1-4)*

Rejoice in the Lord,

**We delight in our God.**

He brings good news to the burdened,

**He binds up the broken-hearted,**

He proclaims liberty to the captives,

**He declares release to the prisoners,**

He comforts those who weep,

**He repairs ruin and destruction,**

**We praise and rejoice in the Lord.**

*Click the link below to listen*

[CH4 472 Come, thou long-expected Jesus](#)

Come, O long-expected Jesus,  
born to set your people free;  
from our fear and sins release us,  
Christ, in whom our rest shall be.

Israel's strength and consolation,  
born salvation to impart;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.

Born your people to deliver,  
born a child, and yet a King;  
born to reign in us for ever,  
now your gracious kingdom bring.

By your own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by your all-sufficient merit  
raise us to your glorious throne.

*Click the link below to listen*

[Prayer of Adoration and Confession ending with the Lord's Prayer](#)

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Adoration

Lord God,

O come let us adore you not just on Christmas day but in every day help us to be humble like Mary and to accept your will for our lives. In the noise of Christmas help us to remember the quietness that brought your Son into the world. As we prepare to have a different Christmas, help us to remember that your love for us never changes.

Confession

Lord we come to you to say sorry. We are sorry for focusing on our own needs and desires. We should be focusing on you and the birth of your Son. We ask for forgiveness for this and for anything else we may have done which displeases you.

Lighten our way Lord as we journey to do your will. As we grow impatient for your Son's coming, prepare our hearts for that special day when the Prince of Peace was born not in a palace but in a stable.

In gratefulness for your mercy and your love for us, we say together the prayer which Jesus taught us to say:-

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,**

**for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

*Mark Cooper*

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**



*Click the link below to listen*

[Christmas is coming the Church is glad to sing](#)

**ALL: 'Christmas is coming!'  
the church is glad to sing,  
and let the advent candles  
brightly burn in a ring.**

The first is for God's promise  
to put the wrong things right,  
and bring to earth's darkness  
the hope of love and light.

The second for the prophets,  
who said that Christ would come  
with good news for many  
and angry words for some.

The third is for the Baptist,  
who cried 'Prepare the way.  
Be ready for Jesus  
today and every day'.

**All: 'Christmas is coming!'  
the church is glad to sing,  
and let the advent candles  
brightly burn in a ring.**

## Scriptures:

*Click the link below to listen*

### [1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24](#)

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray continually, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

<sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not treat prophecies with contempt <sup>21</sup> but test them all; hold on to what is good, <sup>22</sup> reject every kind of evil.

<sup>23</sup> May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

### [John 1: 6-8 and 19-28](#)

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>19</sup> Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup> He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, 'I am not the Messiah.'

<sup>21</sup> They asked him, 'Then who are you? Are you Elijah?'

He said, 'I am not.'

'Are you the Prophet?'

He answered, 'No.'

<sup>22</sup> Finally they said, 'Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?'

<sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, 'I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Make straight the way for the Lord."' "

<sup>24</sup> Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> questioned him, 'Why then do you baptise if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?'

<sup>26</sup> 'I baptise with water,' John replied, 'but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.'

<sup>28</sup> This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptising

*Reader Mark Cooper*

*Click the link below to listen*

[Reflection](#)



*Katherine Taylor*

*Click the link below to listen*

[Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession](#)

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Thanksgiving

Lord God,

We have so much to be thankful for. We thank you for loving us despite our faults. We thank you for guiding us through the current pandemic even though at times we find the situation challenging. Thank you for the gift of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Intercession

Loving God, having sought your encouragement through hearing your Word read and spoken, we now turn to think of others.

We pray for those who are alone or separated from loved ones. For a long time they may have been surrounded by fun and noise at Christmas but this year they are facing a quiet Christmas. Let them know that you are there as a comfort and guide.

We pray for all those involved in making decisions about our country. May they be guided by your will and supported by your love.

We pray for those who are hungry or homeless, that they may find the support they need.

We give thanks for everyone involved in supporting the Covid 19 recovery whatever they do, be they medical frontline workers, involved in the development and distribution of the vaccine or social care workers. We pray for wisdom for everyone so that we may stay safe.

We pray for those who are ill. May you give them and all involved in their care the strength and healing they need.

We pray for the dying and recently bereaved. May they feel the comfort of your love.

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayers,

We ask in Jesus' name,

Amen.

*Mark Cooper*

*Click the link below to listen*

[\*\*Hymn 291 Make way, make way, for Christ the King\*\*](#)

*Click the link below to listen*

[Blessing](#)

[Go in peace to love and serve the Lord and  
may the Blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all, now and for  
evermore.](#)

[Amen](#)



### **Closing Voluntary**

*Click the link below to listen*

[Prelude and Fugue in F major.](#)

JS Bach (1685-1750)

### **INTIMATIONS**

#### **Sunday Services**

Services continue at 11am each Sunday. All are very welcome. If you are going to attend, it would be helpful if you could contact the church office by the Friday before to give us an idea of numbers.

**If you mean to come to the Christmas Day service then you must, please, let us know by Tuesday 22 December.**

Thank you to Mark Cooper and our organist Iain Mackinnon, for his choice of voluntary.

#### **Church Open for Prayer**

The church building continues to be open for us all on Tuesday and Friday mornings from 10am until 12 noon.

#### **Christmas Appeal**

The appeal is open from now till early January. Please put donations in an envelope marked 'Christmas' and put it in the collection plate or the box on the way out of the church. If you can give by Gift Aid please use one of the Gift Aid envelopes. Alternatively, if you use online banking, you can give by bank transfer to the church's bank account putting 'Christmas' in the reference field (in this case gift aid will be applied if you already give to the church by gift aid).

**Meadowbank Church**

*(Russell McLarty our Interim Moderator's church)*

**Church Open with Prayer Trees and Mini Labyrinth**

every day between 1-4pm Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December until Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December. All welcome.

**Picture**

[John the Baptist](#), from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

**Joint Churches Call to Prayer**

**SUNDAY 13 December 2020 Pray @ 7pm**

“As we continue on in our Advent journey, we hear of a witness who has come ‘to testify to the light’. The light is not yet with us but the messenger comes to bear witness to the ‘true light’ of God that will soon break into our world (John 1: 6-9). Even now, the light breaks on the horizon, for the light of God is coming into our world once more.”

**We pray:**

Lord, we are your people who have journeyed in darkness  
And who long to see your light once more.  
We are those who have journeyed through hard times  
And who long to see life and community renewed.  
Lord in your mercy,  
Hear our prayer.

Lord, we give thanks for scientists and researchers  
And for those who have created the vaccines that give hope to the world.  
We pray for the just sharing of these precious gifts  
And for the renewal of life in every nation.  
Lord in your mercy,  
Hear our prayer.

Lord, we are those who journey on  
Towards the horizon where light shall surely break.  
We journey in times where we are distanced  
And trust that in time the distance shall be overcome.  
Lord in your mercy,  
Hear our prayer.

Lord, we pray for those who care for the living  
And for the dying.  
We pray for the bereaved and for the bereft  
And ask that you would draw near to them in your compassion.  
Lord in your mercy,  
Hear our prayer.

Lord, we are those who have heard  
Of the true light that is coming into the world.  
We ask that we might become your messengers  
And bear witness to Jesus Christ, the light of God that is to come.  
Lord in your mercy,  
Hear our prayer.

