

North Leith Parish Church  
Sunday 20 December 2020  
Fourth Sunday in Advent

Lessons and Carols



*Annunciation to Mary*

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

[Welcome and Intimations](#)

**Call to Worship**

*Based on Mary's Song of Praise - Luke 1:46-55*

Our souls magnify the Lord,  
**Our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour,**  
**Holy is his name!**

The Lord looks with favour on the lowly,  
**The Mighty One does great things for those he favours,**  
**Holy is his name!**

The Lord is full of mercy for those who obey him,  
**The Lord blesses the generations,**  
**Holy is his name!**

## **Prayer of Approach**

Lord God

You call us,

Showing us your favour and your love,

You promise to be with your people for ever,

We are scattered, but you join us through the Holy Spirit with each other,  
with those we love who have gone before us to live with you in heaven  
and with all the saints there and on earth.

We are in holy company and we sing our praise to you in our hearts.

Lord, your spirit moves freely and you live in all places,

Nothing is too wonderful for you and your imagination knows no bounds,

Your angel touched the life of Mary and she sang a new song  
of joy and praise and love and hope for all people.

You make new ways for us too and we praise you.

Lord, we confess our sins to you now.

We are sorry when we forget you in our days,

When we block our ears to your voice and disregard others,

We are sorry when we stay silent when we should speak out against injustice

Lord we are sorry,

Forgive us.

In grateful thanks for your care for us, for your mercy and your love we say together the  
words which Jesus taught us to say in whichever words are most familiar to us.

**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.**

*Click the link below to listen*

[First Reading Isaiah 9:2, 6-7](#)

*Reader Tim Bell*

*Click the link below to listen*

[Hymn 331 Unto us a boy is born](#)

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**



*Click the link below to listen*

[Hymn 282 Christmas is coming the Church is glad to sing](#)

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**

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

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

The fourth is for the Virgin,  
who mothered God's own Son  
and sang how God's justice  
was meant for everyone

## Second Reading Luke 1:26-38

### The Birth of Jesus Foretold

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called <sup>[a]</sup> the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."

<sup>38</sup> "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

*Click the link below to listen*

[Hymn 285 The Angel Gabriel](#)

## Third Reading Luke 2:1-7



## The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while <sup>[a]</sup> Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.

<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

*Click the link below to listen*

[Anthem - Lullaby my Jesus](#)

### Fourth Reading Luke 2:8-16

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

*Click the link below to listen*

[Hymn 305 In the Bleak Midwinter](#)

*Click the link below to listen*

[Reflection](#)

*Mary's Message*



*The Annunciation*

*Katherine Taylor*

**Fifth Reading Matthew 2:1-12**

The Magi Visit the Messiah

<sup>2</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi<sup>[a]</sup> from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

<sup>6</sup> ““But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel.’<sup>[b]</sup>”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

*Click the link below to listen*

[Hymn 316 Love came down at Christmas](#)

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Lord God, Thank you for your faithful love which never ends. Thank you that we may see this love in the beauty of the world around us in the changing colours of the sky and the wonder of the stars in the night sky. Thank you for the skill of scientists and the imagination of artists, the inspiration of music and the joy of human action and adventure. Thank you for the belonging and connection which love brings us.

Lord God, we pray for the church in the world and in our country. Help us to unite and to be visible and faithful followers of Jesus, living with courage and determination, trusting that you hold us steady and calm our fears.

Lord God, we pray for those in need in the world, those who lack enough food, clean water, shelter, education, healthcare, peace or safety. We pray for the work of Christian Aid and the new life it seeks to build in places of want and conflict. We pray with Mary that the lowly may be lifted up. Lead us to work for this too.

Lord God, we pray for those who are sick with the coronavirus, their families and those who care for them. We pray for all whose treatment has been delayed and who suffer in waiting. We pray for tired and stretched medical staff who care for all in hospitals, care homes, in hospices and at home. May all know your healing and your strength.

Lord God, Bless our governments in Holyrood and Westminster. Fill them with wisdom and understanding in all the complexity of the decisions they need to make for our lives today.

Lord God, we pray for those who are homeless this Christmas. We pray for the work of those who care for them, welcoming them with food, a place to rest, company and care. Encourage and strengthen those who work for the Bethany Christian Trust and surround those they care for with hope and a safe place to belong. We pray for the work of the Bethany Care Shelter and Care Van.

Lord God, We pray for all who are struggling, for families who can't afford presents, those who will be alone on Christmas Day, families who are separated and where relationships are difficult and broken. We pray for families separated at this time due to restrictions.

Although we can't see each other in person, Lord, help us to show our love in different ways. We pray that this Christmas will still be a time of joy, love, community, hope and new beginnings.

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer,

We ask in Jesus' name,

Amen.

*Click the link below to listen*

**Sixth Reading [John 1:1-12](#)**

*Reader Shirley Hopkins*

*Click the link below to listen*

[Hymn 301 Hark the Herald Angels Sing](#)

*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*

Libera, In Dulci Jubilo  
<https://youtu.be/F3ufIMbmQ2A>

## **INTIMATIONS**

### **Sunday Services**

Services continue at 11am each Sunday. All are welcome. If you are going to attend, please contact the church office by the Friday before to allow us to manage numbers and please arrive by 10:55 at the latest.

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

Thank you to our readers Tim Bell and Shirley Hopkins.

### **Church Open for Prayer**

The church building is open for us all on Tuesday and Friday mornings from 10am until 12 noon, except for Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

### **Christmas Appeal**

The appeal, for Christian Aid's work in Ethiopia, is open 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.

## **Pictures**

[The Annunciation, Saget, Father George, Annunciation to Mary](#), from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

With thanks to Shirley Hopkins for her photographs for the Bible lessons