

**North Leith Parish Church**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

**Second Sunday in Advent**



*Endless Road*

Click the link below to listen to the Welcome, Call to Worship and Prayer of Approach

[Welcome and Intimations](#)

**Call to Worship**

*based on Psalm 85*

The Lord speaks peace to his people,  
We turn our hearts to the Lord.  
The Lord saves his faithful people,  
The glory of the Lord lives in our land.  
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,  
Goodness will look down from the sky,  
Truth will go before him  
and will make a path for his steps.

**Prayer of Approach ending with the Lord's Prayer**

Lord God,  
You are our creator and our comfort,  
You are our safety and security,  
for your power is without limit and  
your love for us is steadfast.

You are a strong and gentle shepherd  
Who gathers us together,  
You lift us in your arms and hold us there,  
rewarding us with hope and wisdom,  
Setting us down when we are ready to move.

*Still us now in your presence Lord,  
Keep us open and present to you  
and to your voice.*

Lord God, your way leads us to peace,  
You have spoken to your people through the ages  
in the voices of your prophets,  
You sent your servant John the Baptist  
to preach in the desert  
and to call people to repentance,

Lord of Mercy,  
We confess that we too often trust in our own strength and vision,  
We forget the shortness of our days,  
We forget that we are human and you are God,  
We make promises we don't always keep  
and our best intentions come undone,  
We forget the urgency of your call to follow your way  
and wander.

*We are sorry Lord.  
Forgive us and restore us.*

Make us and all things new,  
In the wilderness of our hearts  
help us too to prepare a way and  
a clear path for your Son to walk and to live.

In grateful thanks for your care for us, we say together the words 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.**

[Hymn 273 O come, O come, Emmanuel](#)



### **Christian Aid Talk**

*We were unable to support Christian Aid as a congregation in May as we usually do so it was thought appropriate that the charity should be the Christmas Appeal for 2020. The main focus of Christian Aid's work this Christmas is to be Ethiopia.*

*Ethiopia is a large country in north-east Africa with a population of 110 million; 63% are Christian and 34% Muslim.*

*In Ethiopia, people living in poverty are on the frontline of the climate crisis. Locusts are swarming, encouraged by the long droughts and heavy rains. The insects – not seen on this scale in Ethiopia for two decades – have been causing problems in the country since last summer.*

*Desert locusts eat their own body weight daily. A small swarm eats the same amount of food as 35,000 people in just one day. Almost 4 million hectares of crops – equivalent to half the size of Scotland – have been eaten by the locust swarms across Ethiopia this year.*

*Women like Borgodo Tsobe, a widow and mother of five, witnessed plagues of locusts larger than ever before. 'The locusts suddenly came out of nowhere and ate every green plant in their path. They left us nothing useful,' she said. Borgodo's crops were so quickly destroyed that she didn't know if anything would grow again.*

*Christian Aid has provided locust prevention training to 130 local volunteers in South Omo. The volunteers learned how to become familiar with the locust life cycle and how to use*

*pesticides and sprayers effectively and safely. Together, they have sprayed pesticide over 2,500 hectares of crop and grazing lands in order to control the locust infestation and save their new crops.*

*Borgodo feels confident about the future. 'We will not be panicked as previous time. We know what to do if the locusts return.'*

*Thanks to the Scottish Government's Humanitarian Emergency Fund, Christian Aid were able to act quickly to protect any existing crops and plant new seeds for the next harvest. They distributed over 41 tonnes of maize seed to 3,416 families and pastoral farmers. However the extreme weather means that the threat of more locusts remains high.*

*In recent weeks ethnic violence has erupted in the north, threatening the lives and livelihoods of people there but also putting in jeopardy improvements across the entire country.*

### **Will you support our Christmas Appeal?**

**Love never fails. Even when crisis threatens, love builds hope.**

**Love builds hope in some of the world's toughest places.**

**Love builds resilience in some of the world's fiercest climates.**

**In the face of disease, drought and darkness, hope remains.**

**Jimmy Hudson**

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**



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

**All: 'Christmas is coming!',  
the church is glad to sing,**

**and let the advent candles  
brightly burn in a ring.**

The second for the prophets,  
Who said that Christ would come  
With good news for the many  
And angry words for some

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

### **Scriptures**

*Click the links below to listen*

[2 Peter 3:8-15a](#)

[St Mark 1:1-8](#)



*Click the link below to listen*

### **Reflection**

*Recognising Voices*

Katherine Taylor

*Click the link below to listen*

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Lord God, we give thanks today that you are faithful to your people and that you stay with us in trouble. Thank you for all who have cared for us in the past months through the provision of food and warmth, comfort and hope. We thank you for those who have honestly spoken truth to us and have pointed us to Jesus, helping us to follow him more closely. Thank you for all true and trusted friends.

You speak peace to your people Lord, and we wait and pray for peace, in our own lives, in our own communities and in the world. May the voices and actions of peacemakers influence and encourage us all. We pray for those who work for peace in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria.

Lord, we pray to you for the healing of planet, Help us to hear and act on the voices who cry out for urgent change. We pray for all whose lives are affected by climate change through flood or drought. We pray for those who have no homes, and for refugees, and for those who work to care for them. We pray for the work of the UN Refugee Agency. We pray for the people of Ethiopia for the protection of crops from locusts, for peace in their land and for the work of Christian Aid in the world.

Lord, we pray for the church as she waits and watches for the joy and hope of Jesus birth. Lead us to be ready to listen and look for signs of your work. We pray for protection for those who are persecuted because of their faith in you. We pray for our own congregation and your church in Leith. Bring us together Lord and, prepare us and equip us to reach out to our local communities.

Lord, we pray for our leaders, in all the difficult decisions they must make. Keep them close to good advice and open to unexpected voices of truth. We pray for agreement for the common good in negotiations over Brexit. We pray for all with responsibility for the delivery of coronavirus vaccinations and thank you for the hope which the vaccines bring. We pray for those who are sick with the virus in the world and for those who care for them. We pray for those who suffer or grieve due to accident in our own country, whether at work, at home or on the road and for all who rescue and care for them.

We pray for ourselves and those dear to us, those who grieve, are sick, in mind, body or spirit, those waiting too long for medical treatment and for those for whom there seems to be no treatment as yet, for the lonely and the anxious.

Lord of All  
Bring hope to your world today  
We ask in Jesus' name,  
Amen

*Click the link below to listen*

**Hymn CH4 473 'Thy kingdom come!' 1-3 and 5**

*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*

**Every Valley shall be exalted**

**from Handel's Messiah**

## **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.

Thanks to our readers today, Eileen and Kedison and to our organist Iain, 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 Gift Service**

Next Sunday we shall be collecting Christmas Gifts for the Citadel Youth Centre. Presents (toys etc) should be for children of age 3 and over, and toiletries for teenagers aged 13 and upwards; leaving the present unwrapped helps to ensure the gift is best targeted to the individual young person.

### **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, the box on the way out of the church or send to the church office. 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).

### **Pictures**

Hofheinz-Doring, Margret, 1910-1994, [Endless Road](#), [John the Baptist](#) and [Love and Faithfulness Meet](#), from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville.