

27 Nov 2022

Worship Sheet for Sunday 27 November Watching and waiting Advent Sunday

Hope may be in short supply these days. Having begun to emerge from covid, many are now reeling from huge increases in the cost of living at the individual level and indeed collectively with massive pressures facing the world as a whole. Without ignoring the difficulties Paul (and Isaiah) remind us that God is with us in the struggles and in our waiting but that we need to be alert – and sometimes active as we hope.

Call: In the times when we tremble The Light is with us
In the times when we fail to hear The Light is with us
In the times when we dare not look The Light is with us
In our worship, in our lives Let us prepare for the Light to come among us.

Pray God, out of the cold and the dark, the wind and the rain, we are swept into the warmth of your embrace. From the stresses and strains and the to-ing and fro-ing, we are cradled in your calm. As we seek refuge in your house, may we know your presence nursing us back to health, restoring our soul, calming our fears. And, more than that-may we know you stirring us gently to expectation and hope, planting in us a warmth that will carry us through the coldest day and a light that will see us through the darkest night. Advent God, meet us here today. May we know the power and presence, comfort and encouragement of your Son's love embracing, forgiving, energising us that we may both love you and others for your sake. Amen.

Reading 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Thought Over the past two or three years, we have faced the greatest threats outside wartime. Covid and its consequences were awful – and esp devastating for some. And now circumstances have conspired to send food and energy costs spiralling and cost of living generally, up greatly. All that has a knock effect on how we view life – it seems to be one knock after another and all this is on top of the pressures that inevitably we have to face in the normal run of things. Hope? It's not exactly top of the agenda – and for many there doesn't seem to be an end of the woes. Paul writes to Corinthians about the blessings they have as they wait for Jesus' return. It's not as though everything was sweetness and light for them. It wasn't and I suspect some of them would have wondered if Paul had them mixed up with some other group who might be enjoying an easier time of things. But he hadn't. Paul wanted to remind them (and us) that Jesus' promises could be relied on, that there was absolute certainty that they could hope in Christ – not just for heaven but to sustain them through life. But that didn't mean that their (or our) problems disappear. Instead, he focuses on the importance of appreciating that Jesus is with us IN and THROUGH the trials and challenges. He wants us to remain watchful and alert, perhaps we need to use the eye of faith to see how God is at work in our midst and even in the tough times giving us the blessings of his love and hope. Jesus was never one to run away from trouble or people in need – and nor should we. Let's be watchful as we wait for Jesus to work out his purposes for us and the world – but in a truly active and hopeful way

Praise CH4 277 Hark the glad sound, the Saviour comes.

Pray God, in this advent season of hope and expectation, may we carry your hope into lives chilled by unrelenting darkness, may we encourage others to expect good things-and then ensure, by what we do, that they are not disappointed. There is so much darkness in our world, so many folk for whom hope has long been extinguished. The darkness of war and injustice, of oppression and want; the darkness of fear and rejection, of violence and hate; the darkness of loss and loneliness, of longing and need. So much darkness and so little hope. Lift up those eyes, O God, that are downcast, rekindle hope that has all but died. Do a new thing, O God. Confound our expectations and surprise us with joy, the joy of those who know that the God of Advent comes to change the world. Help us to earth our hopes in the practical reality of living – so that they are not simply up in the air lofty ideas, but they impact up the way that we think, speak and act towards our neighbours; so that they are shown in our giving, our random acts of kindness, our praying, our preparation for Christmas and beyond. Help us not to regard waiting as a waste of time, but to be so filled by your love and blessing that we put our waiting time to the best possible use for your kingdom. In our prayer walk this week we remember those who live or work in Museum St and Chapel Place. SILENCE. Advent God, come among us with your answers, your long term hope and love in Jesus. Amen.

Blessing May the Lord bless you. Amen.

Notices

- Christmas Craft session for families with younger children on Friday this week in the hall with Shona 10-12. If you can help please speak to Aileen Scott or phone her on

- Drop in for Coffee and Cake in the Church Hall next Saturday between 10-1pm. There won't be the same space as previously so please don't all arrive at 10am! Entry by donation to avoid cash handling. Christmas Gift Envelopes may be returned then too.

To assist those unable to access material via the internet we have established a phone line where people can phone in to hear the mini service or sermon.

01674 902624.

To hear the mini service people just need to dial in and wait. To hear the sermon, after dialling you need to press 1 then #. In either case there is a few seconds delay while the message loads so tell folk not to hang up! If folk press 1 for the sermon before the intro finishes the system doesn't pick up on it and it defaults to the mini service. The message now says wait until after the tone before pressing 1 but give it a few seconds after that and do press # after pressing 1.

Sermon, prayers and news (or links to them) will be uploaded to our website www.oldandstandrews.com and the Old and St Andrew's Facebook page. Feel free to copy this and pass it on to Church members or friends who might not use the web or social media

Please do still phone so that taking details for government requirements doesn't cause a delay on entry. We are now allowed to sing (subject to Angus being in level 1) though face coverings are still required.

If you are thinking of coming please phone Thelma Robb 672263 or Willie Sinclair during the week prior to a particular Sunday on 675671 so that we have contact details for trace and protect.

Please continue to pray for one another and support where you can and remember that the congregation is united in love wherever we are and however we are worshipping.

Stay safe! May the Lord bless you!

Ian

Rev Dr Ian A McLean