

# 28 Nov 2021

## Worship Sheet for Sunday 28 November Living Hope Advent Sunday

Hope may be in short supply with so many having faced the most challenging period of their lives and with still so many pressures at the individual level and indeed collectively facing the world as a whole. And notwithstanding vaccines, boosters and all sorts of promises made at COP26 in Glasgow. Both Jeremiah and Jesus in our two readings offer hope – but it is long term hope based on God’s faithfulness not unrealistic fly by night instant answers. Today we explore hope – hope that lasts, hope that begins now in the real world.

Call: From a branch sprouting: hope is coming. The heavens are shifting, hope is coming. A troubled world waits. hope is coming. Lord, we, your people, wait patiently, hanging on with Advent hope. Lord, we bring you ourselves, we bring you our worship.

Pray God of earth, sea and sky, of the vast array of space yet still our God, the God who loves each one of us, grant us the ongoing wonder at your dealings with us, akin to the excitement of the child opening the first door on their advent calendar. Amidst the darkness of doom and darkness, the world shrouded in hatred and selfishness break into our world, our lives with the hope of the good news of Jesus. Help us not to look for immediate solutions but rather the sustained long haul love that abides all things and holds us fast even in the darkest of times and places. Forgive us our rush to retreat to our own places of safety when all too many in the world struggle to survive. Forgive us when we turn blind eyes to issues that require our response. Forgive us when we give up even on you and begin to think there is no hope. Come, Lord, bring hope into our lives, our world, hope that is here to stay, that prompts us to live positively for you, for others, bringing promise to those who all but despair. This advent, bring us hope and enable us to be hope to the world. We pray in Jesus’ name and say together Our Father...

Reading Jeremiah 33:14-16 and Luke 21:25-36

Thought If we are honest then most of us will probably admit that we’ve been hit hard this year and last. Even if we haven’t lost loved ones or been ill ourselves (and let’s face it, some of us have) we’ve encountered more uncertainty, fear, restrictions and changes to our way of life than we’d ever have thought possible. In times past Presbyterian ministers got the reputation for their messages of doom and gloom. The gospel is literally – good news and we need to emphasise that however, the message of hope is proclaimed and lived out in a less than perfect world and it doesn’t do anyone any good to pretend otherwise. Advent is a reminder that Jesus came – came into a dark, broken and often loveless world. A world like ours. But he came to offer hope and promise and still does. But hope isn’t for instant answers, troubles immediately solved. God’s hope is for the long term – over lifetimes, even generations as hearts and minds are changed, as God’s plans for love, joy, peace and justice replace selfishness and greed. This is good news and we can be a part of it. Not overnight fixes but lives and communities transformed over decades, over generations. We can begin today, tomorrow – and some challenges are most urgent – but more important than rash statements of intent is our readiness to cooperate with God in his plans for transforming humanity into loving, gracious, forgiving, self-giving people who strive to love God and love their neighbour. Hope mustn’t just be talk, we are to live the hope, in practice, as we trust in the Living hope, Jesus.

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

Pray Advent God, bringing hope and expectation into a world crying out for justice, honesty, healing and restoration, we bring our prayers to you. Save us from short-term thinking and planning that doesn’t take account of the full ramifications but is driven by what is currently popular, by what will get a good headline. Help us to see the world differently, to see the signs around us and to read them well, to be honest about what is happening and why, and to seek solutions and choices that bring long-term benefits for all. When the world is crying out may we hear the groans that climate change stirs, may we hear the anguish of those whose homes and livelihoods, whose present and future are threatened by its effects, and recommit ourselves to action. When words are cheap, and real commit is costly, may we hold our policy makers to account, ensuring that they share a vision that seeks the well-being of the planet, and the place of all creatures upon it. In a time of darkness for many people threatened by rising costs even as their wages stagnate, where choices from scant resources have to be made: food or heat or clothes, or paying the council tax; we pray for all those who live with the stress this brings: unable to plan for the long-term because today has more than enough worry. In the season of Advent hope may we uphold all who strive to bring wellbeing to others. Encourage us to be your kingdom workers, bringing hope and joy, compassion and care. In our prayer walk we remember those in Redfield Road and Crescent. 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

- The Christmas Steeple News should be available very shortly.
- Final service at Brechin Cathedral this afternoon (Sunday) at 3pm.
- 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.
- The Montrose Churches are providing volunteers for the parkrun on Sat 11<sup>th</sup> December. It's held at Broomfield each Saturday at 9.30am. While quite a few church folk are involved regularly it would be good if a few who previously haven't been involved were to assist. If you can help please speak to John Cargill or the Minister this Sunday (or email [imclean@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:imclean@churchofscotland.org.uk) ).

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](http://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*