

## **Service for Sunday 10 December 2023 – 2<sup>nd</sup> in Advent – World Human Rights Day**

### **Preparing to hear God's Word**

#### **Call to Worship**

Welcome

Lighting candles and Advent wreath

**VOICE** - Last Sunday we should have lit the first candle in our Advent Wreath, the candle of hope. We light it now as we remember that Christ will come again to fulfil all of God's promises to us.

***(a person lights the candle of hope)***

**VOICE** - The second candle of Advent is the Candle of Peace. It is sometimes called the Bethlehem Candle to remind us of the place in which preparations were made to receive and cradle the Christ child.

**VOICE** - Peace is a gift that we must be prepared for. God gives us the gift of peace when we turn to him in faith.

**VOICE** - The prophet Isaiah calls Christ "the Prince of Peace." Through John the Baptist and all the other prophets, God asks us to prepare our hearts so that he may come in.

**VOICE** - Our hope is in God, and in his son Jesus Christ. Our peace is found in him. We light this candle today to remind us that he brings peace to all who trust in him.

#### **Light the Second Candle**

**Leader** - LET US PRAY - Loving God, thank you for the peace you give us through Jesus. Help us prepare our hearts to receive Him. Bless our worship. Guide us in all that we say and do. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.

Psalm 12:1-5

[Psalms 12:1-5 NRSV](#)

- (1) Help, O LORD, for there is no longer anyone who is godly; the faithful have disappeared from humankind.
- (2) They utter lies to each other; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.
- (3) May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that makes great boasts,
- (4) those who say, "With our tongues we will prevail; our lips are our own—who is our master?"
- (5) "Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan, I will now rise up," says the LORD; "I will place them in the safety for which they long."

**Hymn** Hail to the Lord's anointed

Prayers of Approach, Adoration and Confession

Lord God, we come before you to praise and thank you,  
to admit our sinfulness,  
to hear your word and be inspired for action.

We give you thanks for all you have given us,  
for this world of fruitfulness and beauty,  
for the things we need for life,  
for the wonderful people around us.

Above all, we thank you for giving us your Son Jesus Christ,  
for his love for us,  
for his teaching,  
for his death for our sins,  
for his rising in glory,  
for the coming of his Holy Spirit..

And now we give you thanks  
because in his coming the day of our deliverance has dawned;  
and through him you will make all things new,  
as he comes in power and triumph to judge the world.

All praise and glory be to you, our Father God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

(When I say, Lord, have mercy, or Christ, have mercy, please repeat it after me.)

When the Lord comes,  
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,  
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.  
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations  
into the peace of your kingdom:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

You come in word and sacrament  
to strengthen us in holiness:  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

You will come in glory  
with salvation for your people:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

## Assurance of Pardon

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.  
To all who turn to him he says: 'Your sins are forgiven.'  
He also says: 'Follow me.'

## Hearing God's Word

### Theme Introduction

Today is the second Sunday of Advent, so our hymns and prayers will reflect the themes of expectation, preparation and repentance that are appropriate to the time. Today is also the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and it is celebrated all over the world as World Human Rights Today.

## Collect for the Day

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power  
and come among us,  
and with great might succour us;  
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness  
we are grievously hindered  
in running the race that is set before us,  
your bountiful grace and mercy  
may speedily help and deliver us;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honour and glory, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

**Reading from Scripture**      1 John 4:7-21    *Pat Gray*

**Hymn**                      Love divine, all loves excelling

**Canticle**                      Magnificat                      *Margaret Dimmick*

**Reading from Scripture**      Luke 4:16-21    *Sarah Viney*

**Hymn**                      God's spirit is in my heart

## Sermon

## Responding to God's Word

**Hymn**                      Come, thou long expected Jesus

## Affirmation of Faith

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

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

At the end of each section:

Maranatha:

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

In joyful expectation of his coming to our aid  
we pray to Jesus.

Come to your Church as Lord and judge.  
We pray for the mission and work of this Church,  
of the whole United Reformed Church,  
and of St Barnabas and our other neighbour Churches.  
Help us to live in the light of your coming  
and give us a longing for your kingdom.  
Maranatha:  
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Come to your world as King of the nations.  
We pray for the innocent people of Palestine and Israel,  
suffering under the relentless attacks of those who claim to lead them.  
We pray in hope that you will somehow bring the miracle of peace,  
to proclaim release for the captives  
and relief for those who now live in danger and fear.  
We pray for the people of Ukraine and all the places  
which are suffering under conflict.  
We give thanks for our human rights that have been declared,  
and we ask that they may be enjoyed fully  
by all people in all countries.  
Before you rulers will stand in silence.

Maranatha:

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Come to the suffering as Saviour and comforter.  
We pray for those who are sick or suffering,  
particularly Warren, Paula, Michael and Janikka.  
Break into our lives,  
where we struggle with sickness and distress,  
and set us free to serve you for ever.

Maranatha:

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Come to us as shepherd and guardian of our souls.  
We remember all those who have cared for us,  
or been our friends or family,  
who are now in your nearer presence.  
Give us with all the faithful departed  
a share in your victory over evil and death.

Maranatha:

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Come from heaven, Lord Jesus, with power and great glory.  
Lift us up to meet you,  
that with all your saints and angels  
we may live and reign with you in your new creation.

Maranatha:

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

***Silence is kept.***

Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay;  
give new courage to your people,  
who trust in your love.  
By your coming, raise us to share in the joy of your kingdom  
on earth as in heaven,  
where you live and reign with the Father and the Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

### **The Offering**

Lord, as we remember your generous gift of Jesus  
and prepare to celebrate his coming,  
we offer you these gifts in his name,  
for the good of his Church and his Kingdom.

**Amen.**

**Hymn**            Make way, make way for Christ the King

The Blessing

May God himself, the God of peace,  
make us perfect and holy,  
and keep us safe and blameless, in spirit, soul and body,  
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all, now and always.

**Amen.**