

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SIGHTHILL

28 November 2021

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

CALL TO WORSHIP

God of all light, Creator,
Light of the World,
we approach You
with joy in community,
with gratitude for love,
and with prayerful stillness
revealing the love and light
at the heart of all creation.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

The candles at Advent as Christmas draws near; their strong and unfaltering flames we hold dear. And each has a message God's promise reminds, in sending our Saviour, whose life to us binds.

Note: Adapted advent worship materials of the Office of Theology and Worship Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

First Sunday in Advent: Hope (28/11/2021)

The first of the candles brings Hope with its light, through times of despair or whatever our plight. When reaching to touch its most delicate ray, the faithful and trusting through him find the way. Light of darkness, Hope is to come, for God will send his Son. Hope everlasting when he shall come down, the long awaited One.

We light this candle in hope. Light the first candle. Hear God's promise of hope from Isaiah 2:2-4:

In days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate

for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Let us pray:

Faithful God, out of war's chaos, you bring the order of peace. Renew us in hope, that we may work toward Christ's advent of peace among all nations. God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come.

OPENING HYMN: LONGING FOR LIGHT, WE WAIT IN DARKNESS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kt3Qc04uIOM>

PRAYER

Loving God we are in awe and give grateful thanks for all the good things in life. We know we don't always get things right. When we lose focus and direction, set us back on the right path of love.

When we feel cross, and bitter words leave our lips, remind us of the abundance of your love when we feel overwhelmed by daily tasks, show us the power of stillness; empower us with inner, quiet strength. When we turn from you, turn us gently back so that our focus is on you, on love, on light, on the goodness at the heart of all creation.

In our worship, O God, and in our daily lives, you meet us and hold us. You, the king of all the universe, make your home among us. God, so often we fail to recognise you, yet you stick with us.

And so we thank you for your presence— when we have known it and when we have not, when we have recognised you and when we did not.

God give us the wisdom and the expectancy to see you showing up in our lives, in our homes, our schools, our work, at the gym, the grocery store, the coffee shop.

Keep on showing up, O God, until we get it— that you are the God who is with us and who goes before us, the God who meets us here in worship. We worship and adore you, God with us now. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BIBLE READINGS: LUKE 21:25-36

REFLECTION

2-PART PRAYERS FOR OTHERS (ON WORLD AID'S DAY AND FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF PEOPLE WHO DIED THIS WEEK IN THE CHANNEL)

Today, on World AIDS Sunday, we pray especially for all infected or affected by HIV and AIDS, for children and young people, for adults and old people, for those who seek to provide spiritual care or health care, for those who allocate resources, for those who can shape policy, for our Church of Scotland.

Loving God, our loving parent, Let love abound in our praying and in our actions, let Your kingdom come, let Your will be done, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

We also join others in Scotland and beyond to say a prayer which is part of the statement the Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, Convener of the Church of Scotland's Faith Impact Forum, released on Wednesday, following the tragic loss of life this week in the channel.

Lord Jesus, the coming King, We join with Christians across the UK, Europe and around the world in their lament and prayers to remember those who have died on their journey from terror, war and poverty in the hope of seeking sanctuary."

God of family, we bring before you the parents who are weeping and lamenting, who are waiting for their children, whose trace is lost in the sea, in the desert, on railway tracks, in shipping containers and uncertainty: men, women and children who had escaped from the war zones, the famine and poverty of this world, with the hope for a better, safer life.

God of life, we bring before you our lament for the dead, stranded at the borders of safety, who died fleeing through deserts, over mountains and seas. We call to you and join in the cry of all those who sought justice and a better life for themselves and their children and perished in the process.

God of justice, we bring before you political leaders, advisers and decision-makers who hold the fate of others in their hands. Make them aware of the causes of migration and flight. Keep their consciences alive so that refugees are offered protection and dignity. Let them agree rules of residence that are based on human rights and guided by solidarity and compassion.

God of peace, give us the strength to be witnesses of the suffering of the world and fill us with the fire of your spirit to renew our efforts to serve those in need and give us the grace to welcome, learn and share our lives with people who come to live in our communities. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG: MAKE WAY,
MAKE WAY FOR THE KING OF KINGS**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLLgTyWidlw>

Make way make way for Christ the King
In splendour arrives
Fling wide the gates and welcome Him
Into your lives

Chorus

**Make way (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
Make way (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
For the King of kings (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
Make way (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
Make way ((MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
And let His kingdom in (ALL)**

He comes the broken hearts to heal
The prisoners to free
The deaf shall hear the lame shall dance
The blind shall see

We call you now to worship Him
As Lord of all
To have no gods before Him
Their thrones must fall

CCLI Song # 121074, Graham Kendrick© 1986,
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BENEDICTION AND AMEN

**Leader: God of the watching ones,
the waiting ones, the slow and
the suffering ones, the angels in
heaven, the child in the womb,**

**All: Give us Your blessing,
Your good word for our souls,
that we might rest and rise
in the kindness of Your
company, Amen**

AFTER THE SERVICE – LONGING FOR LIGHT
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLLgTyWidlw>