

# **St Mary's Scottish Episcopal Church, Dunblane**



**A Service of the Word  
on the first Sunday in Advent**

## ***A warm welcome to St Mary's***

**Advent** is a season of expectation and preparation as the Church gets ready to celebrate the coming (*adventus*) of Christ at Christmas and also looks ahead to his final coming at the end of time. We listen to the messages of prophets like Isaiah and to the teaching of John the Baptist calling us to be vigilant and expectant in our waiting. Church decorations are simple and sparse and purple is the traditional colour. As Advent falls at the darkest time of the year in the northern hemisphere, the natural symbols of darkness and light are particularly effective. Services are marked by the lighting of candles on an Advent wreath, a custom which spread to Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century. There are several traditions about the meaning or theme of each candle. At St Mary's they represent Peace, Hope, Joy and Love. The rose-coloured candle is lit on the third Sunday, known as Gaudate Sunday from the Latin word meaning 'to rejoice'. The white candle at the centre of the wreath represents the light of Christ. During Advent we express our longing for Christ to come and flood our world with the light of his love, but at the same time we remember that we Christians are already people of the light. We are called to bring light into the dark corners of the world where there is injustice and suffering.

The Service of the Word is authorised for use under Canon 22 by the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church 2015.

The liturgy used in this service is taken from the first part of the 1982 Eucharist authorised for use under Canon 22 on behalf of the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

This liturgy contains the changes permitted by the College of Bishops in 2010 to make its language more gender inclusive.

Authorised for use under Canon 22 on behalf of the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church. + Richard, Bishop of Edinburgh, Primus, June 1996.

## PREPARATION

### *Welcome*

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### *Lighting the Advent Candle*

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,  
the prophets said you would bring peace  
and save your people in trouble.  
Give peace in our hearts at Christmas  
and show all the world God's love. Amen.**

### *Opening hymn*

*We stay seated, silently reading the words and listening to the tune*

Wake, O wake! With tidings thrilling  
the watchmen all the air are filling,  
arise, Jerusalem, arise!  
Midnight strikes! No more delaying,  
'The hour has come!' we hear them saying,  
where are ye all, ye virgins wise?  
The Bridegroom comes in sight,  
raise high your torches bright!  
Alleluia! The wedding song swells loud and strong:  
go forth and join the festal throng.

Zion hears the watchmen shouting,  
her heart leaps up with joy undoubting,  
she stands and waits with eager eyes;  
see her Friend from heaven descending,  
adorned with truth and grace unending!  
Her light burns clear, her star doth rise.  
Now come, thou precious Crown,  
Lord Jesu, God's own Son!  
Alleluia! Let us prepare to follow there,  
where in thy supper we may share.

Every soul in thee rejoices,  
from earth and from angelic voices  
be glory given to thee alone!  
Now the gates of pearl receive us,  
thy presence never more shall leave us,  
we stand with angels round thy throne.  
Earth cannot give below  
the bliss thou dost bestow.  
Alleluia! Grant us to raise, to length of days,  
the triumph-chorus of thy praise.

*Philipp Nicolai, trans. F. C. Burkitt*

### ***Confession and Absolution***

God is love and we are God's children,  
There is no room for fear in love.  
We love because God loved us first.  
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

**God our Father, we confess to you  
and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed,  
and in what we have failed to do.  
We are truly sorry.  
Forgive us our sins,  
and deliver us from the power of evil.  
For the sake of your Son who died for us,  
Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

God, who is both power and love,  
forgive you and free you from your sins,  
heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit  
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### ***Kyrie***

**God be gracious to us and bless us,  
and make your face shine upon us  
Lord, have mercy.**

*Organ:* Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison.

**Your word is a lantern to our feet  
and a light to our path.**

**Christ, have mercy.**

*Oragn:* Christe Eleison, Christe Eleison, Christe Eleison.

**Remember your compassion and love  
for they are everlasting.**

**Lord, have mercy.**

*Organ:* Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison.

### ***Collect***

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility, that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

### ***Readings***

Isaiah 64.1-9, Mark 13.24-37

### ***Address***

### ***Hymn for Reflection***

Creator of the starry height,  
thy people's everlasting light,  
Jesu, redeemer of us all,  
hear thou thy servants when they call.

Thou, sorrowing at the helpless cry  
of all creation doomed to die,  
didst come to save our fallen race  
by healing gifts of heavenly grace.

When earth was near its evening hour,  
thou didst, in love's redeeming power,  
like bridegroom from his chamber, come  
forth from a virgin-mother's womb.

At thy great name, exalted now,  
all knees in lowly homage bow;  
all things in heaven and earth adore,  
and own thee King for evermore.

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,  
our judge in that tremendous day,  
ward off, while yet we dwell below,  
the weapons of our crafty foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,  
and God the Spirit, Three in One,  
praise, honour, might, and glory be  
from age to age eternally. Amen.

*Trans. J. M. Neale*

### ***Affirmation of Faith***

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in God the Son?

**We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and 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 again  
to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**We 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**

*Prayers are offered for the world, for those who suffer and those in need,  
and for the Church.*

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Do not bring us  
to the time of trial  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## **CONCLUSION**

### ***Final Hymn***

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,  
once for favoured sinners slain;  
thousand thousand saints attending  
swell the triumph of his train:

Alleluia!  
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him  
robed in dreadful majesty;  
those who set at naught and sold him,  
pierced and nailed him to the Tree,  
deeply wailing,  
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion  
still his dazzling body bears,  
cause of endless exultation  
to his ransomed worshippers:  
with what rapture,  
gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, Amen, let all adore thee,  
high on thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory,  
claim the kingdom for thine own:  
Alleluia!  
Thou shalt reign and thou alone.

*Charles Wesley and John Cennick*

### ***Blessing***

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

### ***Dismissal***

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**