

Ayr St Columba Church Sunday 6 December 2020



*Second Sunday
in Advent*

Finding the sacred

At the core is mystery: we ponder
existence and consciousness, search for
that gravity of love that holds us

together when apt to fall apart. We ask,
did God create us or did we create God?
It seems like a joint enterprise, as lovers
brimful of wonder, contemplating each other.

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We have sought sun at solstice, measured
seasons by moon and stars; have slipped
into water with our gods, known a blessing;
have made fires, sensed what it is to be set alight.
Though rooted in earth's dust – mingled with
the stuff of galaxies – we know we will return
to dust; yet we hold the *ruah*, are inspirited.

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Stories ground us: tinctures of wisdom,
myth and metaphor, ancient but ever-new;
they abound in scripture, are stencilled

on hearts. We weave them into ritual:
patterns shared in sacrament, in prayer,
in stillness; and in the grace of music,
movement and art. The quest is for truth.

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When it comes to a theory of everything
each atom in us seeks those thinnest places,
instances where the very air resonates,
would have us on our knees in reverence,
at peace with one another, in accord with nature,
cosmos; in touch with all that makes life glorious,
tenuously flowing into and out of eternity.

Christine De Luca

Organ Voluntary

The Bible, God's Word for life, is placed in the pulpit by the Beadle.

Welcome & Announcements

Preparatory Silence

Call to Worship

Hymn 472 Come, thou long-expected Jesus *(t Stuttgart)*

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a King,
born to reign in us for ever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Call to Prayer

Prayers of Adoration, Confession, Absolution and Supplication

Lesson St Mark 1: 1 – 8

Hymn 274 Comfort, comfort now my people *(t Genevan 42)*

Comfort, comfort now my people;
speak of peace -- so says your God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness,
burdened by a heavy load.
To Jerusalem proclaim:
God shall take away your shame.
Now get ready to recover;
guilt and suffering are over.

Hear the herald's proclamation
in the desert far and near,
calling all to true repentance,
telling that the Lord is near.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
For your God prepare a way.
Let the valleys rise to greet him
and the hills bow down to meet him.

Straighten out what has been crooked,
make the roughest places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
live as fits God's holy reign.
Soon the glory of the Lord
shall on earth be shed abroad.
All the world shall surely see it,
God is ready to decree it.

Isaiah 40: 1-5 adapted Johannes Olearius (1611-1684)

revised John L. Bell (b.1949)

Reflection

Solo

Prayers of Thanksgiving, Intercession, Commemoration of the Faithful Departed and
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 291 When out of poverty is born

(t Kingsfold)

When out of poverty is born
a dream that will not die,
and landless, weary folk find strength
to stand with heads held high,
it's then we learn from those who wait
to greet the promised day,
'The Lord is coming; don't lose heart.
Be blest; prepare the way!'

When people wander far from God,
forget to share their bread,
they find their wealth an empty thing,
their spirits are not fed.
For only just and tender love
the hungry soul will stay.
And so God's prophets echo still
'Be blest; prepare the way!'

When God took flesh and came to earth,
the world turned upside down,
and in the strength of woman's faith
the Word of Life was born.
She knew that God would raise the low,
it pleased her to obey.
Rejoice with Mary in the call,
'Be blest; prepare the way!'

Kathryn Galloway (b.1952)

BENEDICTION

Postlude