

Mickleover and Dean Street Methodist Churches Service Sheet for Sunday 29th November 2020

Worship this Sunday will be on Zoom at 10am, preacher Richard Horth

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use if you are unable to join zoom. If you are well enough why not spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Advent Liturgy 2020 - Light in the Darkness

Based on material from Diocese of Sheffield
<https://www.lightsforchrist.uk>

Introduction

This Advent, the night sky will offer something special. If you look to the southwestern horizon on a clear evening, soon after sunset, you should see two bright lights: the planets Jupiter and Saturn. Each evening, they will move slightly closer. Just before Christmas, Jupiter will pass in front of Saturn: what astronomers call a 'Great Conjunction'. On the longest, darkest night of the year, the two will seem to merge into a single light that shines with truly exceptional brightness.

Advent 1 – Distance

At this darkest time of year, and as we think of our experiences during this most difficult of years, we reflect on our calling to be Lights for Christ

'Keep your distance'

No closer than 2 metres, or 1 metre with face covering,

No handshakes or hugs.

I feel isolated, bewildered, lost without the human contact I long for.

Where are you God when I need you most?

Genesis 28: 12,13a,15

¹² He (Jacob) had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ There above it stood the Lord, and he said: 'I am the Lord...¹⁵ I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.'

Prayer

O Lord you are with us wherever we are, you have promised never to leave us.

You reach out to us in our aloneness.

Reveal yourself to us in dreams and visions, in your word and in the stillness.

May our encounters with you draw us closer to you, strengthening and inspiring us, so that we can reach out to other people across the distance that separates us, bringing your light into their lives.

Watch over us so that we may watch over others with love. Amen.

God is with you, me, us.

Sing (tune and chorus StF 706)

Longing for light, we wait in darkness

Longing for touch, we live apart

Your presence here gives light to our lives

Make us a light for Christ

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Hymn StF 32 Meet and right it is to sing

Prayer

Father, we thank you for this fellowship in which we join together in spirit. We celebrate that you are our loving Father and acknowledge you as the centre our lives.

Thank you for the precious gifts you give to us. Our life and health, the world in which we live, the joy of friendship, but above all your great love for us shown to us in Jesus Christ.

As this period of Advent begins, help us to hear the message anew and to be open to new learning and understanding about your truth.

Show us how to continue to focus our lives around Jesus and his call.

Forgive us that we sometimes are slow to hear and act on your call. For times when we forget or take your gifts for granted. As you forgive us, also strengthen us as we seek to be your disciples. In this time of worship, open our hearts and minds to the promptings of your Spirit.

Help us to focus on your love and truth and with those in our heart unite us with you and one another.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn SoF 43 Bind us together

Readings Isaiah 64:1-9
Mark 13:24-37

Reflection

The Covid19 pandemic prevents us meeting, together or seeing and hugging our families. We hope that medical science will help us through. There is light at the end of the tunnel in vaccines and treatments. We live in hope.

We hear of Isaiah's hope for a more visible sign of God's presence. Still we marvel that God loves us so much that he gave his Son to live among us. Yet many never recognised him. The Pharisees asked him for a sign to prove who he was when his very presence was the personification of God's love.

We sometimes too look for him as we expect him to be and so might miss his presence and his call. Our Mark reading tells how Jesus prepared people to be ready for when he comes again. We are encouraged to be watchful and to live our lives in readiness for his coming again.

We look for his presence now. He gives us hope and calls us love to one another.

Amen

Hymn StF 175 Light of the world

Prayers of Intercession

God of hope, we pray for our future, your world, our community, our church, for ourselves and for those we love.

L: God of hope

R: Help us walk in your light

God of justice, open our eyes to exploitation and oppression. Show us how to live justly in this complex world.

Open the minds of the leaders of nations and show them that justice is the wise way that leads to peace.

L: God of hope

R: Help us walk in your light

God of peace, open our eyes to selfishness and greed. Show us how to live with tolerance and understanding.

L: God of hope

R: Help us walk in your light

God of hope, open our eyes to see you at work in our world. Show us what you are calling us to do. Open our minds and make us ready for your coming and open our hearts to the saving love of your Son

L: God of hope

R: Help us walk in your light

God, in Christ you came to show us your ways of justice, peace and love. You came to bring us hope for ourselves and for the world, for now and for ever.

We make our prayers in our Saviour's name and in confidence of the hope he brings. **Amen**

Hymn StF 167 Colours of day

God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Grace

To join the Zoom service by telephone dial 0203 481 5237 and use meeting details below