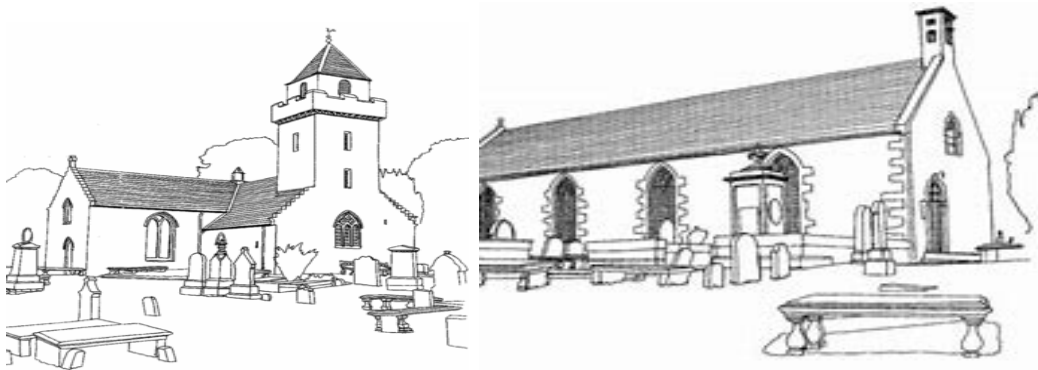


28th November 2021

First Sunday in Advent



Cawdor Church linked with Croy and Dalcross Church

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all: **And also with you**

Welcome

"Our Advent Candle today reflects Hope", the first in our advent series of candles which will be lit each Sunday, we begin with Hope today, then turning to Peace, then Love, then Joy, then of course on Christmas Day to Christ, the lighting of the middle white candle of such joy, and peace of love and hope...

Advent is the time when we should reflect, above all, on light coming into the world, a light most fully understood in the person of Jesus Christ, the 'light of the world.'

Opening words

"Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long."

The First Advent candle is for Hope



A period of silence to ask God to join us in our worship



Psalm 121

¹ I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? ² My help comes from the LORD, THE Maker of heaven and earth. ³ He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber; ⁴ indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. ⁵ The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand; ⁶ the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. ⁷ The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life; ⁸ the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore Amen.

161-“O God, our help in ages past”

1. O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.
2. Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.
3. Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.
4. A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.
5. Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the op'ning day.
6. O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.



Prayer

O God, the time is right, for you have called us together to gather in your name to worship you today. You have called some to churches, others to Cathedrals, where there are more than three in your name have gathered while there are some you have called to stay at home, to be safe and remain indoors, while there are some are worshipping you walking their dogs, climbing a hill, sailing a boat, walking on a beach, watching a service from a computer. You have called many, and some have taken up the calling, come and follow me, some are deaf to your voice, while others cannot see, and Lord there are some who do not wish to know. Lord for those of us who have heard, and are happy to be part of your worshipping team, we're are here together as a family, brothers and sisters. We may not be in the same room or building we may be reading services or listening to recordings, we are all though taking part in our own personal way...for we are one in you made whole together. Loving God thank you for the blessing of having you call, and for being able to come and worship in the way we know how to and are able too. Bless our time together, nourish those of us who are in need and give strength to those who are weak. Caring God forgive our actions and words of the past, and lead us forward in your forgiving name from yesterday to today, and further to tomorrow when it comes...in your holy blessed name accept our prayers, our lives and all that we have done, and help each of us to make your light shine brighter. In Jesus name hold us close Amen

The passage I am about to read is a sad one, for we hear Jesus again and again referring to his death. As the disciples listened, did they understand and if we were there would we be any different to the disciples who were called to the table of love, and followed Jesus...yet would we be any different to Peter, then regret our actions....?

Luke 22:14-23

¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. ¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."^[a] ²¹ But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. ²² The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!" ²³ They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

553-*"Just as I am, without one plea"*

1 Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

2 Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

3 Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

4 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
 wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
 because thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Reflection

My goodness we have reached Advent meaning we are waiting for the "coming" or "arrival." As Christians, we celebrate the four weeks leading up to Christ's arrival on Christmas morning. During this season, churches will be celebrating long set traditions of sacred songs, scripture readings, and candle lighting. In doing so, we prepare our hearts and make room to receive Jesus.

This term "advent" is not simply referring to the birth of Jesus as an innocent baby, but also the celebration of the second coming of Christ. When Jesus returns, it will not be as a humble child but as a conquering King. While most share stories of rags to riches, God sent his son from riches to rags and became one of us;

Last year was a very different time for us all. We waited for the coming, the arrival of a new dawn, where we could shake off lockdown, the Covid virus and get back to being with family and friends and a sense of normality. Where we could shake hands, give loved one's hugs and not hide behind a mask. Like many of you, I also missed all the Christmas pomp and ceremony which we traditionally take part in...and last year, Christmas felt very flat...what was there to celebrate...? For on 26th December we were heading back into lockdown darkness felt it was covering us again. What were we doing, hoping that all would be well, praying for the world, especially for those who felt the pains of loss and grief which was so real to them...As Christians we have the peace and comfort of Jesus for in him whatever takes place, we hopefully believe everything will be okay. Last year we had more to hold onto than a vaccination which we thankfully had, we had the light of the world upon us...and while we may have felt down due to not being with family and able to do all the normal Christmas festivities we are so use to doing, we still had something to give thanks for.....a CHILD. Don't we have much to say thank you for even back then in 2020. Yes, this year we are still under restrictions which we must adhere to, yet we have much to give thanks and today let's do this.

While I was on holiday last week, my family and I gathered to have Christmas, I know a month and a week early. Several family members won't be here to

celebrate the birth of Christ and we won't be together as a family on 25th December. So, we decided to have Christmas early. The Christmas tree was put up, turkey cooked, carols were heard via youtube, we even listened to the Queens Speech of 2020, and 1957...we had a double wammy with that. We gave each-other gifts, and sat down at a decorated table to enjoy a blessed meal. As we sat, opening crackers and laughing, eating the odd quality street sweetie or three, we reminisced about last year, and what we were all doing. We talked of those who are no longer with us who we love and were always around the Christmas table...But you know, there was an over whelming feeling of thanksgiving...this is what we were doing giving thanks and appreciating each-other.

Today as we come together at home or here in church we are giving thanks to God. Thank you for our lives, for our family, for each-other. Thank you, God, for being there as the dark clouds of the pandemic hovered over us...thank you for the sunlight and sunshine of the seasons, for the cold bite in the air in the winter and for being able to look out and see a new day form, and then at night close the curtains where we give thanks for the fullness of the past day.

Today as we prepare to take communion, whether you do or not, we can still say thank you together...for our Lord Jesus Christ is with us through the Holy Spirit, he is surrounding us with his love and for sure he has never left us. For through the Holy Spirit, we are not on our own.

Today is about giving thanks, remembering what He does for us, and asking our Lord to help us move forward in his name to shine his light.

Please join me in saying the Statement of Faith which you have printed in your order of service...this statement was authorised for use in worship and teaching by the General Assembly in 1992 and the Guild of Croy and Cawdor Churches read out only a few weeks ago as we gathered for a dedication service...

If you are able to stand, please do, and let our voices be heard as one as we read together

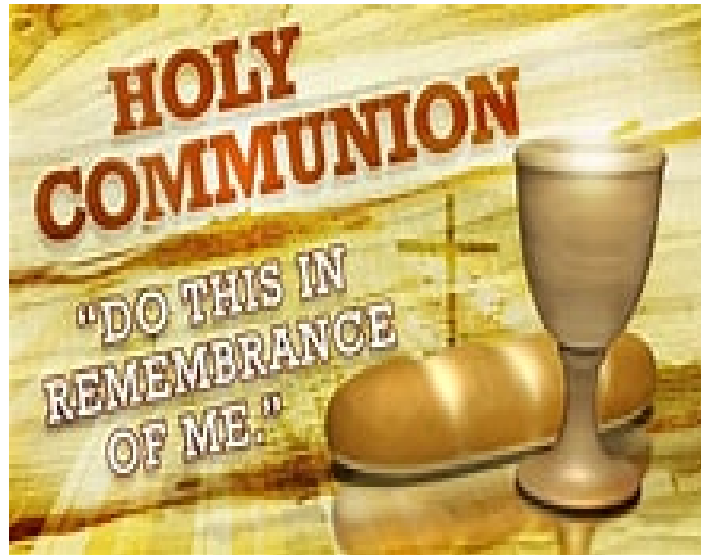
A Statement of Christian Faith

We believe in one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is love. We praise God the Father: Who created the universe and keeps it in being. He has made us his sons and daughters to share his joy, living together in justice and peace, caring for his world and for each other. We proclaim Jesus Christ, God the Son: born of Mary, by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became one of us, sharing our life

and our death. He made known God's compassion and mercy, giving hope and declaring forgiveness of sin, offering healing and wholeness to all. By his death on the cross and by his resurrection, he has triumphed over evil. Jesus is Lord of life and of all creation. We trust God the Holy Spirit: who unites us to Christ and gives life to the Church; who brings us to repentance and assures us of forgiveness. The Spirit guides us in our understanding of the Bible, renews us in the sacraments, and calls us to serve God in the world. We rejoice in the gift of eternal life: We have sure and certain hope of resurrection through Christ, and we look for his coming again to judge the world. Then all things will be made new; and creation will rejoice in worshipping the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Spirit, one God, blessed for ever. Amen.

The candle of Hope flickers away a reminder of the light coming into the world, a light most fully understood in the person of Jesus Christ, the light of the world.





Holy Communion

Please remain seated as we sing our communion hymn...during this time you will receive the elements for our Holy meal. If you have not brought bread, we have some here and wine. We will eat and drink together...when the time is correct.

543-"Lording for light, we wait in darkness"

Verse 1

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Chorus

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

Verse 2

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice. **Chorus**

Verse 3

Longing for food, many are hungry.
 Longing for water, many still thirst.
 Make us your bread, broken for others,
 shared until all are fed. **Chorus**

Verse 4

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
 Longing for warmth, many are cold.
 Make us your building, sheltering others,
 walls made of living stone. **Chorus**

Verse 5

Many the gifts, many the people,
 many the hearts that yearn to belong.
 Let us be servants to one another,
 making your kingdom come. **Chorus**

As we gather at this table where we give thanks, and dreams are made, where we remember which has taken place and think of what is to come...we gather as brothers and sisters one in our Lord. As the disciples sat together, we also sit wondering what is to come, what will be next, and how will we deal with it...and we have the added knowledge of what was about to take place after the meal Jesus served, for the disciples didn't seem to understand the reasoning and purpose of this gathering. We do, and we know that what we should do, we remember Our Lord, and to ask for his forgiveness....for a new covenant has been made.

Communion Responses

Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Let us pray...

We thank you for this time together where we gather from near and far. We give thanks for the past week, and for what will come, for each blessing is received from heaven above. While trials and tribulations come and go, we always have our Lord at our side. We pray for the souls of the migrants who drowned as they crossed the dark cold waters to find a new life...we pray for their families and through the heartache of loss may they feel your holy presence of peace. We pray for all who grieve and for the lives whom we knew and now live on in our hearts.

Today Lord we have been called, we may think we are different to our neighbours and that we have nothing in common...we are individuals yet are one in you. We thank you for seeing each of us as equals and that no one is greater or better than the other. Your love is equally shared, and your call is to us all, not one person or a few...

Lord, you call us as we are, from wherever we are, to come and be in solidarity with you, you who lives and loves all. Blessed are those, Jesus said, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled and so we pray let us come to the table expectant. Eager, open to tasting the rich blessing of heaven both from unexpected places, and people and experiences. In this meal, we remember the life, death and resurrection. So come Holy Spirit, breath of God, renewer of life, settle on these gifts and all who gather here, that we might be transformed in our remembrance of your radical love, your eternal embrace, and your grace that makes all things new. For the sake of our shared lives, the life of this land on which we live, and the lives of those yet to come nourish us and renew our hope that soon Christ may rise again among us. We come today, where our voices are joined as one, as the angels sing along, and we say,

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Amen.



On the night he would be arrested, Jesus gathered his friends and companions. In the midst of a tense and dangerous time, they found each other at a table, connecting over the story of God-enfleshed among them. And as they did so, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to God, broke the bread and shared it with his disciples saying, Take and eat, this is my body which is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. When the supper was over, he also took the cup, gave thanks to God and shared it with his disciples saying, Drink from this all of you, this is the cup of the new covenant, Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.



Let us Pray

And so, we pray, may we bow our heads Infront of our Lord, Come Holy Spirit and descend upon these gifts which we have been given by God and make them holy where when we eat together and drink the grape, we are one in remembrance of Our Jesus Christ, who lives and remains with us and his love is constant and abundant...In Jesus name accept our frail lives as your children of God and forgive us of our sins Amen.

Jesus, Lamb of God **have mercy on us,**

Jesus, bearer of our sins, **have mercy on us,**

Jesus, redeemer of the world **grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

God's holy gifts for God's holy people. Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Please eat the bread which has been broken for you together...

Drink the grape together as one Jesus

Taize music played -Eat this bread

A blessing Prayer after Communion

In darkness and in light, in trouble and in joy, help us, heavenly Father, to trust your love, to serve your purpose, and to praise your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen



315-“Once in royal David city”

1/ Once in Royal David's city
 Stood a lowly cattle shed.
 Where a mother laid her baby
 In a manger for His bed.
 Mary was that mother mild,
 Jesus Christ that little child.

2/ He came down to earth from Heaven,
 Who is God and Lord of all.
 And his shelter was a stable,
 And his cradle was a stall.
 With the poor and mean and lowly,
 Lived on earth our Saviour Holy.

3/ And our eyes at last shall see Him
Through His own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in Heaven above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

4/ Not in that poor, lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him; but in Heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high,
When, like stars, His children crowned
All in white, shall wait around

Benediction

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen





I call you by your name

Come to me for I shall give you rest...

