

## Sheffield URCS - Team Ministry worship for individuals or families

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 10:30 am - First Sunday in Advent

### Introduction

Advent is a time of expectant waiting and today we are encouraged to explore how courage, resilience and patience are a difficult, yet crucial, part of the Christian experience. In our reflection, which is based on the work on the Manor, we see the expectancy, hope and frustrations of those hoping to reach their goals and to make a difference to their community.

### Call to worship

As we enter Advent, we come before God in praise and thanksgiving,  
Rejoicing that in Jesus we have a friend who shares our present troubles  
And gives us the tangible hope of brighter tomorrows.  
The Lord will comfort, and the Lord will save,  
So come let us gather in His name and worship, Christ the Lord.

### Lighting the Candle

Gathered virtually today, we light a candle of hope, knowing that in dark times there is always a light that can be lit. Let us, people in dusk and dawn, light the light of vigilance, knowing that God is always calling us to justice, mercy and humility – at this time of year, and all times of the year.

### Hymn R&S 96

Great is Thy faithfulness, " O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

*Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"*

*Morning by morning new mercies I see;*

*All I have needed Thy hand hath provided - Great is Thy faithfulness, " Lord, unto me!*

### Prayer of Approach, Thanksgivings and Confession

God, your name is Love, and in your great love you have called us into community with each other. With you and in you and because of you, we are nurtured in love. Yours is the name that lasts for ever. Your love reaches into all corners, confirming those who wait for you – that they wait in the name of Great Love.

Heavenly Father we come to worship you. We come with awe to adore you and praise your Holy Name. We are filled with praise for your mighty power and your great creation, every part of which you love and care for.

We come in amazement at the special gracious love you show to our human race. Lord, so mighty, the total universe is held in your hands and yet you gave yourself in Jesus Christ to live with us and to die for so that we might be saved from our sinful ways.

Loving Lord we worship you.

In great joy we thank you for the great privileges you have given us. There is no part of human life that isn't a gift from you. You have given us uniquely, not just a body but a mind and a soul. The mind has ability to discover and explore the world that is our home and a soul that allows humans to appreciate your loving greatness and respond to all that you are.

Lord, perfect goodness, perfect love, we are humbled before you; as we try live lives according to your will and work for the coming of the Kingdom, when heaven and earth can be one. We fail so miserably by forgetting our neighbour, being so proud of our achievements that we despise those around us. We ask forgiveness and that we may once more be joined in your plan for our world. Lord we dare ask this because Jesus' death and resurrection brought us salvation and true forgiveness. We bring our prayers in the name of Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, Amen

## Scripture Readings



**Isaiah 64:1 -9** – we are the clay, you are the potter, take hold of us

**Psalms 80:1-7** – a prayer to Israel's shepherd for restoration

**1 Corinthians 1:3-9** – God is faithful and through Jesus we are called into fellowship

### **Reflection - *The Manor Church and Community Project* – by Simon Loveitt**

In 2013 ecumenical initiative with the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Church saw the appointment of a Church Related Community Worker (Minister) in 2014, to lead on the project and to be part of the transformation of the community in the area of south east Sheffield known as the Manor.

Predominantly residential, the Manor is comprised of a large, low-rise council estate, which has been the focus of major regeneration to provide good quality housing, both rented & owner-occupied. Large areas of the estate were demolished, and in some cases rebuilt with private funding, from the late 1990s.

The area is well served by schools, medical centres, dental surgeries, shopping areas, community resources (nursery, training centre, advice centres etc.). Good public transport is provided by frequent bus services to all areas and the Supertram runs along City Road at Manor Top providing links to Crystal Peak Shopping Centre, Sheffield City Centre and Meadowhall shopping centre.

The Churches on the Manor Estate include St Swithun's Anglican Church, St Theresa's Roman Catholic Church, William Temple LEP (Anglican / Methodist). Around the periphery are St Oswald's Roman Catholic and St Aidan's Anglican Church. St Theresa's Roman Catholic Church has a primary school and nursery provision.

There has been a long history of the church and community working together and the relationships are good and positive ones. For example, during the Easter and summer holidays in 2012 and 2013, there was a children's club run on church premises where the Church provided the venue free of charge and MASKK (Manor After Schools Kids Klub) provide the staff.

The vision was to work ecumenically, and in partnership with others who share our aims, to be agents of God's transformation in the lives both of individuals and the community in the Manor area of Sheffield. The vision was based on our strong belief that the Church is called to be an agent of social change and a vehicle for establishing God's Kingdom. **(Micah 6:8)**

The proposal to create an ecumenical project to provide support and encouragement for local families and children on the Manor Estate in their faith and life journeys and to build their confidence to engage with church, schools and community. This area of work was identified as a key priority by the local churches in consultation with other relevant community agencies.

In 2015 Manor Church and Community Project Charity was formed. In 2016 William Temple Church was leased from the Anglican Church to be renamed Temple Park Centre. In 2018 Veolia Environmental Trust funded new windows, heating and LED lighting. That was the start of the work which was needed to the building.

It was agreed that there was much more work to be done to transform the Temple Park Centre into a modern, multi-use hub for services and a place to meet at the centre of the Manor Community. Following a number of unsuccessful bids, the climate began to change and the following funds were acquired.

Viridor Credits funded the car park, access paths, ramps and steps, entrance and the reception. Veolia Environmental Trust funded new toilet block, accessible toilet, and flat roof replacement. The Biffa Award funded meeting rooms with holding walls for flexi use, stage conversion to meeting room, corridor at a separate hall from other areas and the redecorating of the building. Now that the refurbishment work is complete there are plans to increase the services available to the local community and offer it for hire for dance classes and private functions as well as expand family play times.

This work has been an example of God holding this community in love and as clay the community has been moulded to share in the love of Christ. This project is the light of all those who have worked to build bridges, bring faith and hope. The building will provide a sanctuary and will be a light to show and share God's love in and with the community.

Reverend Debora Marschner stated that: "Building community is something we as churches are good at, and providing a safe space for conversation, training and parenting, as well as enabling people to make friends and break cycles of social isolation are all part of our vision.

"We also believe that we may have a role to play in bringing together those who have lived on the Manor for generations and those who have only recently moved in the area. As a continuous presence on the Manor estate, and through the trust we have built over many years, Manor Church and Community Project could be instrumental in building bridges and creating opportunities and encounters that model good community cohesion.

"We'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has supported the project with funding, their time and also their prayers. Without you none of this would have been possible. We have created a Centre which will be a huge benefit to the local community for a long time to come."

### **Music for Reflection - from the Taize community**

Wait for the Lord whose Day is near.  
Wait for the Lord, keep watch; take heart!

Wait for the Lord whose Day is near.  
Wait for the Lord, keep watch; take heart!

Wait for the Lord whose Day is near.  
Wait for the Lord, keep watch; take heart!

### **Prayers of Intercessions**

Lord, perfect goodness, perfect love, we are humbled before you; as we try live lives according to your will and work for the coming of the Kingdom, when heaven and earth can be one. We thank you for the work on the Manor and for all those who have contributed to seeing your love transform areas of the community.

In the season of Advent and in anticipation of Christ's coming, we pray.  
For our world, we give thanks for the beauty and we say sorry for the damage we have caused.

We praise you God of time. Lord Jesus, Our hearts cry out to you today for a world which needs your love more than ever. In our present time of pandemic and restrictions, we come to you for understanding of our life, for strength to face the challenges and the courage to live out your love. Meet us in this time of need and be our hope and peace. In places where there is conflict, war and turmoil may your peace rule.

We pray for the Church in the world today. We think of Christians who are persecuted and as we your Church: awaiting your coming to transform the world, give courage. We pray for Governments across the world as they consider key issues which affect our lives debt, climate change, human rights and poverty. To all who lead us: those who make plans that shape our lives and our communities, give courage

To all who support us: those who are there when we need them, give courage

To all who are in need: those who are in prison, the sick and those in hospital with COVID -19, the poor and the hungry, the lost, the lonely, those who are isolated and those in despair, we pray give courage.

Again and again we did not carry through what you asked of us. Forgive us. Help us to see clearly what you are asking us to do. Help us to follow you, listening always to your voice in our lives. We can then reflect your love and become more perfect in your eyes. As we conclude this time, still our minds, may we know the joy which Jesus brings and may we be strengthened by Christ's assurance of his presence with us.

We lift up and conclude our prayers with the prayer Jesus taught his disciples.

**Our Father ...**

### **Hymn R&S 573**

God is working his purpose out, as year succeeds to year,  
God is working his purpose out, and the time is drawing near;  
Nearer and nearer draws the time the time that shall surely be  
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea?

What can we do to work God's work, to prosper and increase  
The love of God in all the earth, the reign of the Prince of peace?  
What can we do to hasten the time, the time that shall surely be,  
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea?

All we can do is nothing worth unless God blesses the deed;  
Vainly we hope for the harvest-tide till God gives life to the seed;  
Yet nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,  
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.

### **Blessings**

We have been called into God's presence, to be renewed in the name of the one who is love.  
Even in the darkest night, even when there is only one small candle lit,  
Your power and your love restore us.  
Let your light shine on us, so that we may be warmed and strengthened,  
And let your light shine in us, a light for all around to see.  
God bless and keep you...always. **Amen**