

SUNDAY
13th December 2020
Advent 3
Gaudete
Charity Number
SC010781

The Scottish Episcopal Church

St John's, Arpafellie: St Andrew's, Fortrose: St Regulus, Cromarty

The Black Isle Family of Congregations

The Rev'd Canon (Father) Mel Langille
Tha Eaglais Easbuigeach na h-Alba / The Scottish Episcopal Church
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EVERYONE WHO IS BAPTISED is welcome to share with us in Communion this morning. There is no need to be a member of the Episcopal Church. Please feel free to celebrate with us.

If you are not baptised or would prefer, you are welcome to come forward and receive a blessing (simply come forward with hands together and head bowed as a sign to the priest).



LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

May our hearts be filled with God's love towards all people as we consider the life of sacrifice and encouragement of John the Baptist.

Last Sunday we lit the Candles of **Hope** and **Peace**. Today is the Third Sunday of Advent (also known as Gaudete Sunday) and we light the **Candle of JOY** and remember John the Baptist.

In those days, Matthew tells us, John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."'

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever.

Your prophet John the Baptist was witness to the truth as a burning and shining light.

May we your servants rejoice in his light, and so be led to witness to him who is the Lord of our coming kingdom, Jesus our Saviour and King of the ages.

O Lord Jesus, your servant John the Baptist called people to prepare for your coming by caring for one another. Give us willing hearts to reach out to all people in need with your love and compassion. Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus! Come Soon!

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THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Collect

God of power and mercy, you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son. Remove those things which hinder love of you, that when he comes, he may find us waiting in awe and wonder for him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

+ First Reading : Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

PSALM 126

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses of the Negev. Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD - cont.

+ Second Reading : 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.

Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

This is the word of the Lord.

+ The Holy Gospel : John 1:6-8,19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

He himself was not the light,
but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

PRAYER REQUESTS

That we may all keep a holy Advent! For grace to be Jesus' hands, feet, voice, eyes & heart in the world...that we all may LIVE and BE the GOOD NEWS.

OUR WORLD

For patience in the face of this Pandemic. For all places where Covid 19 and other diseases are on the rise. For all in leadership in health care and government and for the Spirit's. For all suffering with Covid 19, for all our healthcare workers, for all working for a cure, for all shop workers, lorry drivers, all we are depending on for our safety, health and protection and all living in fear of it. For healing and peace among all nations. For an end to terrorism and hatred in all its forms. For our fellow Christians and all who are persecuted for their faith.

OUR COMMUNION

Pray for the peace and unity of the Church. Pray our brothers and sisters of the Falkland Islands : Bishop Timothy Thornton.

OUR DIOCESE

For all our brothers & sisters in the Porvoo Communion of Churches. For Tony C, Lisa C, Pat E, Ross J, Tim H, Claire N, Colin P, their families and all who are studying for Ordination or Readership...for their instructors & all who support them. For Mark, our Bishop. For our brothers & sisters of St Margaret's, Aberlour. For Inverness Street Pastors. For our sister Dioceses (Quebec, Canada & Tuam, Killala and Achonry, Ireland).

OUR CHURCH & COMMUNITY FAMILY & FRIENDS

For God's blessing on our "virtual" AGM on Wednesday evening. For Alison Garraway & family on the passing of Mary. For Ann Danson and family on the passing of her father, Len and for the peaceful repose of his soul. For our three congregations, those who are able to join us in public worship and those joining us in spirit from home. Pray for all undergoing tests, awaiting results and undergoing treatment. Pray for Robbie and all living with OCD, Asperger's, Autism and other conditions that make Covid restrictions particularly difficult. For Janet S as she studies for ordination. For those whose relationships / marriages are struggling. Pray for our Granny in Guatemala: Santos De La Cruz Mendez. Pray for our Sunday Club in St Regulus'. For our Teen Gatherings. For James and his work in Biblical translation in Nigeria. For all we know to be in need of our prayers.

A DAILY PRAYER for the WEEK

The Lord God said: 'I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong.'

— *Lord our God, come to save us.*

Lord God, you made us and sustain us with your love: help us to recognize that you are in our midst.

— *Lord our God, come to save us.*

You are close to each one of us: open our hearts to love you and find you in our brothers and sisters.

— *Lord our God, come to save us.*

We pray for those who find their lives a burden too heavy to bear: Lord, be their strength and their hope.

— *Lord our God, come to save us.*

You are Life, and the enemy of death: rescue us and all the faithful departed from eternal darkness.

— *Lord our God, come to save us.*

Conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

AS THE CHURCH DEPLOYED - LET US UNITE IN PRAYER FROM OUR HOMES

Dear All,

First of all, THANK YOU TO EVERYONE who has contributed so generously to the Reverse Advent Calendar mission. And thank you to Heather and Craig for ferrying everything in to the Blythwood Centre.

We have now arrived at Gaudete Sunday...the pink Sunday...the one that reminds us, A: that we are half way there. And B: to rejoice in the Lord...even in challenging times...remembering we are never alone. Not a bad message this time of year. Especially in the midst of this pandemic weirdness we are all making our way through. We can give hearty thanks this week that one of the vaccines is being administered. Thanks God for those who developed it and pray for those administering it and those receiving it. Light at the end of the tunnel?

Christmas is fast approaching. Sadly, this year we will be going without our Crib Service at St John's and Midnight Mass at St Andrew's on the Eve. But we will be celebrating on the morning of the 25th **I propose that all three of our Black Isle Churches celebrate at 10:30am on Christmas Morning.** Bishop Mark will preside in St John's, Rev Christine in St Regulus' and I will be in St Andrew's. All at the same hour will connect us spiritually. Because it is Christmas, it will be important for us to plan ahead and make known our desire to be present. I believe Ramsay will be saying more on this.

In the meantime, I have been Piping to Cheer each evening at 7pm since the start of Advent. Piping 5 minutes worth of Christmas and Advent tunes on my from step. I have encouraged other pipers, drummers, musicians and singers to do the same...to chase the darkness and weirdness away. Join in the Fun?

Much love to all.

Mel +

Christmas Day Services

Given that the three Churches will be holding Christmas Day Services, it does not mean we can have as many as we like in each church. The Laws, Advice and Guidelines laid down by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Episcopal Church must be strictly adhered to. Failure to comply could result in criminal proceedings and adverse publicity at worst or the churches being closed by the Bishop for non-compliance but at the heart of the matter is the well being and safety of our members. That is paramount.

Accordingly entry to any of the three services will need to be booked ahead. In order to comply with the 2 metre rule none of our three churches can exceed a number of twenty. This can be slightly amended with family groups sitting in the one group but, that apart, the 2 metre rule will apply, use of hand gel on entry will be mandatory as will the wearing of masks. There will be NO Carol singing.

I have attached a Word document to this weeks' newsletter - it can be completed online and emailed back to me. All forms should be with me no later than the 21st but will be allocated on a first come basis. I will send you confirmation which you will need to take with you. The stewards in each church will be appraised as to who will be attending and earlier in the week I will assist with seating plans in each church. The stewards will direct you to your allocated seats on the day.

Ramsay McGhee

Vestry Secretary

SUNDAY EUCHARIST

13 December : Gaudete Sunday

9:45am in St Regulus' with Fr Mel

9:45am in St John's with Fr Arthur

11:30am in St Andrew's with Fr Mel

(live streamed)

20 December : Advent 4

9:45am in St Regulus' with Jill & Simon

9:45am in St John's with Fr Mel

11:30am in St Andrew's with Fr Mel

(live streamed)

25 December : Christmas Day

1030am Eucharist

St John's, Arpafeelie with Bp Mark

St Regulus', Cromarty with Rev Christine

St Andrew's, Fortrose with Fr Mel

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe you are truly present in this Most Holy Sacrament
of your Body and Blood, and since I cannot, at this time, receive you in

Holy Communion, I pray you to come into my heart.

I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind.

Let nothing separate me from you. In whose Name I pray.

Amen.

Or - Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, cleanse me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within Thy wounds hide me.

Never let me be separated from Thee.

From the malicious enemy, defend me.

At the hour of death, call me.

And bid me come to Thee.

That with Thy saints I may praise Thee,

forever and ever. Amen.

Christmas Gifts



Come and see the collection of hand made and local produce gifts on display in the Charity shop on Wednesday

Linda and Margaret are doing the usual Xmas gifts for funds.

They are happy to deliver on the Black Isle and orders can be by phone or email.
lindamcouper@btinternet.com or m.pern@btinternet.com

As everyone knows, the quality of the produce is of the highest quality so please support Linda and Margaret.

The Charity Shop will be open on Wednesday's only for the four weeks running into Christmas – the gifts will be available in the shop or can be ordered in the shop.



Charity Shop

The Charity shop in Academy Street, Fortrose will be opened this Wednesday's between 10.00 and 13.00 for the final time before Christmas. It will reopen in the New Year.

Prices this week will be greatly reduced so come along for a bargain.

Only two people will be allowed into the shop at any one time and face masks will require to be worn. Hand sanitiser will be available at the entrance and at the counter.

Highland Foodbank

Heather has received the following letter from the team at Highland Foodbank

Dear Heather,

We would like to thank the Black Isle Episcopal Churches for their continued support of Foodbank, particularly during these difficult times, donating a total of 451kgs of food since September alone! These donations will enable us to meet the on-going need within communities across the Highlands.

We're living in very strange times with more and more people being referred to our food banks across Highland. Just the other week Stan and Jess were referred.....they had received an unusually high telephone bill which they were able to pay, but it left them with no reserves for food that week. The only contact they have recently had with friends and family has been through telephone conversations.

Thank you for your part in helping people like Stan and Jess.

Blessings,

Lorna

**CROMARTY SUNDAY CLUB, THE WEST
CHURCH & ST REGULUS BRING YOU THE**

CROMARTY

ADVENT WINDOW

TRAIL

Look out for a new
Advent window each
day, following the
Christmas story around
Cromarty as we lead up
to Christmas

**FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK at
Cromarty Advent
Window Trail**

**1ST DECEMBER
2020 - 3RD
JANUARY 2021**



OUR CHARITY SHOP
in Saint Andrew's Hall :
Wednesdays & Saturdays,
10am -1pm.



**SATURDAY COFFEE
MORNINGS AND CHARITY
SHOP BOTH CANCELLED
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

The Books and cards normally on sale at the back of St Andrew's are not available during the present restrictions.



Please help local people in Crisis

Tins of ham

Tins of corned beef

Tins of mince/stew

Tins of Potato

Tins of custard

Soap powder (small)

Washing up liquid (small)

Shaving foam/razors

TINNED VEGETABLES

The food bank team are always very appreciative of our donations, but at the moment they have excess pasta, tinned soup and tinned beans, so won't be accepting more of these at present.

The items on our list are still things that they need more of, also individually wrapped toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, sugar and toilet roll.

Thanks for all your ongoing generosity.

Highland Foodbank

Thought for today

"A few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?"

"Nothing!" Scrooge replied

Charles Dickens

St John's Arpafeelie

Sunday 13th December - 09.45



Diocesan Prayer Cycle -

Porvoo Cycle -

Notices

Visitor Details

Should you have any visitors attending your church you need to get their details for the Track and Trace list. You need to get their Name, Phone Number, and note the date of their visit and email this, **ALONG** with the regular congregation's names who were in attendance, every Sunday after the service to Ramsay.

This allows Ramsay to be the point of contact for the Track and Trace system for The Charge should any member be unfortunate enough to get the disease.

For those attending church during the Covid outbreak we have an information sheet for you to assess your personal risk with an explanation attached. This is used within the NHS and other Churches. We **DO NOT** want to know your personal score but would ask that you confirm either by email or in writing that you have received and read the form. Spare copies will be available in church for visitors etc.

Stewards and Co-ordinators need to ensure that details of everyone who attended the service are passed to the Vestry Secretary by email by each Sunday night. This needs to be undertaken to meet the Track and Trace section of the legislation.

PLEASE NOTE
NORTH KESSOCK CAROLS
Friday 18th December at 7pm
in the Car Park at the North Kessock Hall
A DRIVE IN EVENT
JOIN US IF YOU ARE ABLE

Church Rotas

St Andrew's

Readers & Intercessors

Sides-men

A nn McGhee /

Servers

Sacristan

Flowers

Teas

Cleaning

St John's