

St Columba, Corby  
Order of Service –28<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Song – Your love is amazing**

**YOUR LOVE IS AMAZING,  
Steady and unchanging;  
Your love is a mountain,  
Firm beneath my feet.  
Your love is a mystery,  
How You gently lift me;  
When I am surrounded,  
Your love carries me.**

*Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Your love makes me sing.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Your love makes me sing.*

**Your love is surprising,  
I can feel it rising,  
All the joy that's growing  
Deep inside of me.  
Every time I see You,  
All Your goodness shines through,  
And I can feel this God song  
Rising up in me.**

*Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Your love makes me sing.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Your love makes me sing.*

**YOUR LOVE IS AMAZING,  
Steady and unchanging;  
Your love is a mountain,  
Firm beneath my feet.  
Your love is a mystery,  
How You gently lift me;  
When I am surrounded,**

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*Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Your love makes me sing.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah, Your love makes me sing.  
(repeat)*

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## **Welcome**

Good Morning and welcome to our service of Holy Communion for Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021, the first Sunday of Advent.

Lord, may we prepare for your coming among us as we worship together.

May we have open hearts and minds to receive from you.

May our hearts be prepared for your coming this Advent and Christmas time.

May our hearts be ever prepared for your second coming in great glory.

**Amen**

## **Invitation to Confession**

When the Lord comes  
he will bring to light  
things now hidden in darkness,  
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.  
In that light we confess our sins.

**Amen.**

## **Prayer of Confession**

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into the peace of your kingdom.

Lord have mercy

**Lord have mercy**

You came in word and sacrament to strengthen us in holiness.

Christ have mercy

**Christ have mercy**

You will come in glory

with salvation for your people.  
Lord have mercy

**Lord have mercy**

**Prayer of Absolution**

God our heavenly judge  
declares you innocent,  
not by your own righteousness,  
but by that of Jesus Christ,  
who came to the earth  
to save you from your sin.

**Amen.**

God so loved the world  
that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ  
to save us from our sins,  
to be our advocate in heaven,  
and to bring us to eternal life.  
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,  
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments  
and to live in love and peace with all.

**Lighting of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent Candle**

God of Abraham and Sarah, and all the patriarchs of old, you are our Father too. Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of David.  
**Help us, in preparing to celebrate his birth, to make our hearts ready for your Holy Spirit to make his home among us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world. Amen.**

Let's sing together -

**Song – There is a Higher Throne**

**THERE IS A HIGHER THRONE  
Than all this world has known,  
Where faithful ones from every tongue  
Will one day come.  
Before the Son we'll stand,**

Made faultless through the Lamb;  
Believing hearts find promised grace: Salvation comes.

*Hear heaven's voices sing,  
Their thunderous anthem rings  
Through emerald courts  
and sapphire skies, their praises rise.  
All glory, wisdom, power,  
Strength, thanks and honour are  
To God, our King  
who reigns on high,  
Forever more.*

And there we'll find our home,  
Our life before the throne;  
We'll honour Him in perfect song  
Where we belong.  
He'll wipe each tear-stained eye,  
As thirst and hunger die;  
The Lamb becomes our Shepherd King:  
We'll reign with Him.

*Hear heaven's voices sing,  
Their thunderous anthem rings  
Through emerald courts  
and sapphire skies, their praises rise.  
All glory, wisdom, power,  
Strength, thanks and honour are  
To God, our King who reigns on high,  
Forever more.*

*(Repeat)*

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**Collect for 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Almighty God,  
Give us grace to cast away  
the works of darkness  
and to put on the armour of light  
now in the times of this mortal life  
in which your son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility that on the last day  
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the  
dead we may rise to the life immortal  
through him who is alive  
and reigns with you

in the unity of the Holy Spirit  
one God, now and forever  
**Amen.**

Our Bible reading this week is from the Gospel of Luke

**A reading from Luke 21:25-36**

“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

“Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

Reading taken from the New International Version

**Sermon by The Revd Ian Pullinger**

I wonder what Advent Sunday means to you?  
As a child it meant Sunday School presentations,  
and I had a collection of books with stickers like this one saying:  
“Presented to Ian Pullinger...Advent 1973”.

The presentation happened on Advent Sunday because it was the beginning of a new church year, so we looked back on the old year to see who had the best attendance record!

Looking back at Advent rather misses the point, it is the time in the year when we look forward, and that is what I want us to do this morning.

I will be making six points beginning with the letters of the word ADVENT, so hopefully you will be able to remember something of what I say!

To begin A is for ARRIVAL, because in Advent we look forward to celebrating the first arrival of Christ as a baby in Bethlehem, and we look forward, probably with less excitement and less planning, to the second arrival of Christ, as described in our reading this morning.

It is important that we keep this future, second, arrival of Christ in our minds, not just on Advent Sunday but all through the year, because, unless we die before Christ returns, we will witness the events described by Luke.

Luke's description in v27 is, perhaps, understated: "At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

We should not allow this understatement to mask the magnitude of this event, which is such a contrast to the first arrival, when Jesus was born in obscurity and with the minimum of fuss, I know there was a choir of angels, but they didn't go on a world tour only singing to the shepherds!

This is an event that everyone will see, wherever they are and whatever they are doing, they will know that the Lord is coming.

That certain knowledge will inevitably bring a response from people, and this introduces us to our next letter D, and two words, because there will be two responses to the Lord's coming. Some people will DELIGHT at the thought that their waiting is over and they will very soon be with the Lord they love.

But other people will DESPAIR when they see this sight in the clouds. The reading makes this very clear with words like anguish, perplexity, faint from terror, and apprehensive. This is not good news if you don't know Jesus,

and the worst of it is, it will be too late to put things right.

The time to put things right between you and God, is now, while we are still waiting for his second arrival, and if you put things right with God now then despair will be replaced by delight when Christ comes.

Which brings us to V for VISION, because this is the most amazing vision, and I don't say that in the sense that it is dream, this will be a real event in the real world, no more believing by faith, there will be evidence that no-one can deny.

It will be amazing to see the Lord return, and to be present during the preliminaries to that moment, when there will be signs in the sun, moon and stars; even though the nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea; and people will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world; and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

These are just the preliminaries, Christ's return will be far greater than any of these signs in the sun, moon, stars and sea; it will be the most amazing vision ever.

Which brings me to our next letter E for EARTH shattering, because, while this is not made clear in the verses we heard from Luke this morning, the world as we know it will come to an end and be replaced by the glorious new heaven and new earth, first predicted by Isaiah and later described by John in the Book of Revelation.

The first thing to say about the Earth, shattering, is that those who delight in the Lord's return, who know the Lord and have loved and served him in this life, won't be bothered because they won't be able to take their eyes off of Jesus, they will "lift up their heads, because their redemption is drawing near."

Those who have not known the Lord, who despair at his return, will hang their heads in shame; those who have always put the things of this world before the Lord, will see this world crumble at their feet; those who have placed their security in home, work, possessions, or bank balance, will find that none of these have any value when the Son of Man comes with power and great glory.

I should add at this point that there is nothing wrong with these things in themselves, it is not money that is the root of evil but the love of money, and so it is with homes or jobs or possessions. If we love them we cannot also love the Lord, but if we love the Lord, we can rejoice in his provision of all these things as well.

The second thing to say about the Earth shattering is that, just because the earth will, one day, come to an end, does not mean we don't have to care for the world, and all the people of the world, until that day.

To repeat what I said a few weeks ago, we must worry about the effects of climate change, and until the Lord returns, and the Earth shatters, we have a God given responsibility to care for the world.

Which brings me to N for NO ESCAPE, because as we read: "it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth". There will be no hiding place from the Lord's return, although the worst effects of it will only be experienced by those who do not know and love the Lord.

I think many people in the modern world won't accept this, most likely they don't believe in Jesus, and so never consider the possibility of his return, but even if they do, they think of it as some kind of Escape Room, and if they are clever enough they will find the way out and all will be well, or, like the people of St Kilda, they will be able to ask to be taken away from suffering to a new life; but these options won't be available.

This is not popular teaching, but we are no more able to pick and choose which words of Jesus we believe, than we are able to choose which commandments we would like to follow.

We must accept that Jesus went from speaking these words in the Temple in Jerusalem, to the cross outside the city wall; and did that to take away our sinfulness. When we accept this, we can "escape" the judgment that follows the Lord's return, because we will be raised up to the new heaven and new earth that has been prepared for us.

The only alternative is to reject what Christ has done for us, which means to faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, when Christ returns. There will be no escape from the judgment that follows his return, no



place to enjoy the benefits of that return, without the faith and love that come before.

Which brings me to the final letter T for TIME. Luke does not mention the words of Jesus that we find in Matthew and Mark that “no-one knows the about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father”.

So, if anyone claims to know when the Lord is going to return, have nothing to do with them, they are claiming knowledge that belongs only to God the Father.

Luke shares some comments about time that might help us, not to tell us when Christ will return, but to accept that we need to be ready.

Jesus says: “When these things begin to take place” meaning the signs in the sun, moon and stars, for example, we should “stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” So, if we have not seen these things then there is still time to put ourselves right with God.

This point is confirmed in the parable of the fig tree, when Jesus says how people know which season of the year it is by looking at the state of the tree. So we should realise that, although these have been difficult times, we have not yet seen these cosmic signs in the sky, so there is still time.

Then Jesus says one of his most difficult sayings: “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.”

If we take this at face value then the time has passed, because all those in the generation that heard Jesus speaking have passed away.

Some think that Jesus must have been referring to the destruction of the Temple in 70AD, an event which did happen in the lifetime of the disciples, and which seems to be in mind earlier in Luke 21.

But that does not make sense of the signs in the sun, moon and stars, never mind the fact that the Christ did not return then.

A better explanation is that the generation Jesus had in mind was not the one listening to him, but the one that would witness the signs, in other words, once the signs start there will not be much time before the Lord returns.

Which brings us to the final verses of this passage and my final point. Jesus says: 'Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap.' The danger is that we allow ourselves to be lulled into a belief that, because Jesus has not returned, he is not going to return, at least not now.

And then when he does we will be too busy with the things of the world to notice the signs, and, instead of being "always on the watch" we will find the day of the Lord closing on us suddenly like a trap.

So, while I can't tell you when these events will happen, when the Son of Man will come in a cloud with power and great glory, I can assure you that it will happen one day so we need to be ready, and we need to do all we can to make ready everyone we know.

This is why Advent Sunday is so important, giving us an opportunity to look forward to this day when we see the second ARRIVAL of the Lord; when some people will DELIGHT and others DESPAIR; how the amazing VISION that Luke describes will become a reality; how these events will be truly EARTH shattering as the world as we know it comes to an end, and is replaced by a new heaven and earth; that there will be NO ESCAPE from the Lord's return, other than the escape from judgment through faith in Jesus; and that while there is still TIME, we don't know how much, so we need to be ready, and to make ready as many other people as we can.

### Song – Lift up your heads

**LIFT UP YOUR HEADS**  
**to the coming King;**  
**Bow before Him**  
**and adore Him, sing....**  
**To His majesty, let your praises be**  
**Pure and holy, giving glory**  
**To the King of kings.**

*(Repeat)*

Steven Fry.

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## **The Creed**

Let's take a moment to think about our faith and about what we believe. We say together the Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit  
and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified  
under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,**

**who with the Father and the Son  
is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.**

### **Prayers by David Bavin**

Heavenly father we pray for your world. It seems that all we ever hear about is bad news.

This week, Lord we have heard the awful news of people dying in the English Channel. Lord we know of the politics, on both sides, that surround the issues behind this event but Lord we know that 27 people have died and many others risk death. We pray for those that mourn those who died, that they will be comforted. We ask for guidance Lord on how to solve this problem, and for the meeting this weekend looking into this. We ask that those seeking a solution may be mindful that they are dealing with real people and that their motivations will be guided by real concerns rather than motivated by nationalistic intentions and self-serving. We pray for those who do exploit the situation for their own greed that they may have a change of heart. We pray for protection and hope for those who feel that this is the only course of actions that they can take.

Heavenly Father we continue to pray for those affected by Covid. We pray for healing for those who have Covid. We pray for those lives have been changed because of covid and whatever those individual needs are. We pray for those who treat Covid and those who work to prevent its spread. Lord we know of new variations of this disease we pray that these may be over come before they have a chance to damage people.

We also pray for those who are in need of healing from other non-covid causes. Lord in a moment of silence we name those in our hearts. Lord we ask that you place your healing hand upon them.

Lord we also ask your healing hand to be with those who are mourning at this time and again bring before you in silence, the family and friends of those we know who are mourning at this time. Lord grant peace and comfort upon those who mourn.

We pray finally for ourselves; Lord guide us this week in all that we do. Lord in all we do may we seek to do your will and glorify your holy name.  
Amen

### **Song – Blessed Assurance**

**BLESSÈD ASSURANCE, Jesus is mine:  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God;  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.**

***This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.***

**Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture burst on my sight;  
Angels descending bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.**

***This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.***

**Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Saviour am happy and blessed;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.**

***This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long.***

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**Sharing of the Peace**

**In the tender mercy of our God,  
the dayspring from on high  
shall break upon us.  
to give light to those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**The Peace of the Lord be always with you**

*(said to the minister)* **And also with you**

*(said to one another)* **And also with you**

**If you are with anyone, please do share the peace together.**

**The Eucharistic Prayer**

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right,  
it is our duty and our joy,  
at all times and in all places  
to give you thanks and praise,  
holy Father, heavenly King,  
almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ,  
your Son our Lord.

For when he humbled himself to come among us in human flesh, he fulfilled the plan you formed before the foundation of the world to open for us the way of salvation.

Confident that your promise will be fulfilled, we now watch for the day when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.

And so we join our voices  
with angels and archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven,  
to proclaim your glory,  
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth  
are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,  
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
and as we follow his example  
and obey his command,  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us his body and his blood;

Who, in the same night  
that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat;  
this is my body  
which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,  
we remember his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross;  
we proclaim his mighty resurrection  
and glorious ascension;  
we look for the coming  
of your kingdom,  
and with this bread  
and this cup  
we make the memorial  
of Christ your Son our Lord.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

Accept through him,  
our great high priest,  
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,  
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty,  
renew us by your Spirit,  
inspire us with your love  
and unite us in the  
body of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.



Through him, and with him, and in him,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
with all who stand before you  
in earth and heaven,  
we worship you,  
Father almighty,  
in songs of  
everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour  
and glory and power  
be yours for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

As our saviour taught us so we pray.

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen**

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many,  
we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith.  
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you.

Eat in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.

***The Minister receives the bread and wine after saying these words:***

The body of Christ  
keep you in eternal life  
Amen.

The blood of Christ  
keep you in eternal life  
Amen.

***After which the congregation  
receive the bread and wine in silence.***

**Song – Remembrance (Communion Song)**

Oh, how could it be  
That my God would welcome me  
Into this mystery?  
Say, "take this bread, take this wine"  
Now the simple made divine  
For any to receive

By Your mercy we come to Your table  
By Your grace You are making us faithful

Lord, we remember You  
And remembrance leads us to worship  
And as we worship You  
Our worship leads to communion  
We respond to Your invitation  
We remember You

See His body, His blood  
Know that He has overcome  
Every trial we will face  
None too lost to be saved

None too broken or ashamed  
All are welcome in this place

By Your mercy we come to Your table  
By Your grace You are making us faithful

Lord, we remember You  
And remembrance leads us to worship  
And as we worship You  
Our worship leads to communion  
We respond to Your invitation  
We remember You

Dying, You destroyed our death  
Rising, You restored our life  
Lord Jesus, come in glory  
Lord Jesus, come in glory

Dying, You destroyed our death  
Rising, You restored our life  
Lord Jesus, come in glory  
Lord Jesus, come in glory  
Lord Jesus, come in glory  
Jesus come

By Your mercy we come to Your table  
By Your grace You are making us faithful

Lord, we remember You  
And remembrance leads us to worship  
And as we worship You  
Our worship leads to communion  
We respond to Your invitation  
We respond to Your invitation  
We remember You

### **After Communion Prayer**

O Lord our God,  
make us watchful and keep us faithful

as we await the coming  
of your Son our Lord;  
that, when he shall appear,  
he may not find us sleeping in sin  
but active in his service  
and joyful in his praise;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**AMEN.**

We say together:

**Almighty God,  
We thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory.  
AMEN.**

**Song – There's a sound on the wind**

**THERE'S A SOUND ON THE WIND like a victory song,  
Listen now, let it rest on your soul.  
It's a song that I learned  
from a heavenly King,  
It's the song of a battle royal.**

**There's a loud shout of victory  
that leaps from our hearts  
As we wait for our conquering King.  
There's a triumph resounding  
from dark ages past  
To the victory song we now sing.**

***Come on heaven's children,  
The city is in sight.  
There will be no sadness  
On the other side.***

**There'll be crowns for the conquerors and white robes to wear,**

**There will be no more sorrow or pain.  
And the battles of earth  
shall be lost in the sight  
of the glorious Lamb that was slain.**

**Now the King of the ages  
approaches the earth,  
He will burst through  
the gates of the sky,  
And all men shall bow down  
to His beautiful name.  
We shall rise with a shout,  
we shall fly!**

***Come on heaven's children,  
The city is in sight.  
There will be no sadness  
On the other side.***

**Now the King of the ages  
approaches the earth,  
He will burst through  
the gates of the sky,  
And all men shall bow down  
to His beautiful name  
We shall rise with a shout,  
we shall fly!**

**Blessing**

Christ the Sun of Righteousness  
shine upon you, scatter the darkness from before your path,  
and make you ready to meet Him when He comes in glory;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
**AMEN.**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen**