

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT HOME
9TH AUGUST 2020 AT 10.30AM
United in worship through God's Spirit

We pray with Psalm 77

Your ways God are holy. There is no god greater than You. You are the God who performs miracles; you display your awesome power among all people.

And with Psalm 37

Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains. Your justice like the ocean depths, you care for people and animals alike AMEN

Let's sing together

Praise my soul the king of heaven,
To His feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like thee His praise should sing?
Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise the everlasting King!

Praise Him for His grace and favour
To our fathers in distress;
Praise Him, still the same forever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him!
Glorious in His faithfulness.

Father-like, He tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him, Praise Him
Widely as His mercy flows.

Angels in the height, adore Him;
Ye behold Him face to face;
Sun and moon, bow down before Him,
Dwellers all in time and space.
Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise with us the God of grace!

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First Bible Reading - Luke 5 vs 16 -
**“Jesus often withdrew to a quiet places
to pray”**

Retreats - I have been on several retreats both when I was training for ministry and also since. Retreats are times when we take ourselves away from the usual environment and apart from our usual routines, friends, occupations and pre-occupations, and pressures - not in order to escape but to try and focus more on the reality of

life and of God in our life. There was one occasion when I visited London Colney in St Albans. I remember that it was during a particularly difficult time in my life and one evening I felt drawn into the little old chapel. It was virtually in darkness except for one candle, completely silent and empty apart from myself. I walked forward and knelt at the altar rail, I don't know that I said a particular prayer, or that my thoughts were focused, but I do remember kneeling and physically feeling burdened and sad. I knelt in silence, and then I began to feel what I would say was God's energy (Grace), it felt as though I was being physically washed from the top of my head to my toes. I didn't want to move....it was so peaceful. It was an experience which I can easily and vividly recall, an experience which these words inadequately describe.

It wasn't until after that I remember the words of Jesus "come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11 vs 28). I realised that is exactly what I had done, taken time out in the chapel to be with the Lord.

If we had known we were going to be 'on retreat' for 146 days (maybe a new name for 'lockdown') I wonder how we would have felt. I also wonder whether, during this enforced 'retreat', we've needed to dig deep into our own past experiences - *perhaps the times when we've 'got through' something we never thought we ever would have; or times which we've 'coped' in a way we thought was impossible before the event* - to help us through now.

This is about the Ultimate Divine Energy flowing through the universe, lifting, holding, encouraging, supporting, leading, cheering us on, unburdening, forgiving, sustaining, carrying. Personally for us it's about the Ultimate Divine Energy flowing to, through and for us, available every day. People speak about the benefits of contemplation - it is about building the habit of intentionally pausing (retreating) to open our minds and hearts to receive this Energy which is God, and praising afterward when we realise how we've been upheld and led through.

Psalm 139 says

You have searched me, LORD,
and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying down;

you are familiar with all my ways.
Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD,
know it completely. You hem me in behind
and before, and you lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go
from your Spirit? Where can I flee from
your presence? If I go up to the
heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in
the depths, you are there. If I rise on the
wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side
of the sea, even there your hand will guide
me, your right hand will hold me fast.

"WHEN
YOU SAW
ONLY ONE SET OF
Footprints
IT WAS
THEN THAT
I CARRIED
YOU"

OUR PRAYERS FOR OTHERS & OURSELVES

As we pray what is our expectation? Firstly let's
remember that we are talking to God of the
Israelites, God of King David, God of the disciples,
God who healed in Jesus, and who worked
through His Holy Spirit.

We use this hymn as a framework for our prayers

BEAUTY FOR BROKENNESS, hope for despair,
Lord, in Your suffering world this is our prayer:
Bread for the children, Justice, joy, peace;
Sunrise to sunset, Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives, Cures for their ills,
Work for the craftsman, Trade for their skills;
Land for the dispossessed, Rights for the weak,
Voices to plead the cause Of those who can't speak.

*God of the poor, Friend of the weak,
Give us compassion we pray:
Melt our cold hearts, Let tears fall like rain;
Come, change our love from a spark to a flame.*

Refuge from cruel wars, Havens from fear,
Cities for sanctuary, Freedoms to share;
Peace to the killing-fields, Scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness, His cross for the pain.

Chorus

Rest for the ravaged earth, Oceans and streams
Plundered and poisoned Our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness, Carelessness, greed;
Make us content with The things that we need.

Chorus

Lighten our darkness, Breathe on this flame
Until Your justice Burns brightly again
Until the nations learn of Your ways,
Seek Your salvation and bring You their praise.

Chorus

© Graham Kendrick 1993) **AMEN**

Our Offering

Lord we ask you to bless the gifts we have given
and those we lay aside. We pray that others will
be blessed through them. AMEN

Guide Me O thou great redeemer
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me now and ever more,
Feed me now and ever more.

Open Thou the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield,
Be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee,
I will ever give to Thee.

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A BLESSING

Father, help me to live this day to the full
Being true to You, in every way
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I speak to.
Spirit help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ
in all I do and say AMEN