

Sunday 21st June 2020

Opening Prayer

God of all, we come to you just as we are – happy, sad, busy, bored, lonely, or fed up with people. We thank you that you welcome us just as we are and are always with us, even when we don't realise. We come to worship you and praise you, faithful God.

Hymn: 467 I need thee every hour

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B9HbPskX5c>

I need thee every hour,
most gracious Lord;
no tender voice like thine
can peace afford:
I need thee, O I need thee,
every hour I need thee;
O bless me now, my Saviour;
I come to thee.

I need thee every hour;
stay thou near by;
temptations lose their power
when thou art nigh:

I need thee every hour,
in joy or pain;
come quickly and abide,
or life is vain:

I need thee every hour;
teach me thy will,
and thy rich promises
in me fulfil:

Annie Sherwood Hawks (1835-1918)

We pray together

Beautiful God, we praise and worship you – your loving kindness and mercy is without end. Your faithfulness to us is unending. We praise you for your eternal love.

We recognise before you, and thank you, for where your image is clear in us – where we radiate you in the way that we live. We recognise too where we mar that image – with selfishness, unkindness, a lack of love. We say sorry in a moment of quiet and ask your forgiveness.

We thank you that you say to us each, 'my child your sins are forgiven, go in peace and sin no more'.

We thank you that you give us your Spirit to help us know you and be closer to you.

We thank you that when we come to you, you don't wait for us to be clever enough, good enough, or perfect enough – but you accept us as we are in complete Love.

We thank you for people who have shown us what your love is like, remembering with thanks those who have died who have shown us what your love is like.

We bring our prayers in Jesus name. Amen.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament: Psalm 86

Today's Gospel Reading: Luke 22: 39 - 46

Time to Reflect

Recently a friend told me that he was grateful for the 'gift of desperation' because it was what made him reach out for help.

This echoes for me in the Psalms, where there is nothing the Psalmist won't bring to God – fear, panic, anger, despair, jealousy, injustices, pain. From the lowest depths, the Psalmist cries out to God – for what else are the depths for, but to give us the 'gift of desperation' which makes us reach out to God?

Jesus too gives us this example with his heart-wrenching prayer in Gethsemane. Jesus brings it all – the pain, the anguish, the loneliness – to God, just as it is.

However this time is for us, the examples of the Psalmist and of Jesus, encourage us to bring it all to God – just as we are. If there is fear, panic and anguish, bring it to God, let it push you to reach out to God and to good people for help.

If there is desperation, loneliness, despair, let those be the things that have us pouring our hearts out to God, reaching out to the One who is our Creator, Sustainer, Upholder.

If there is joy, gratitude, praise – bring that too! The Psalmist brings it all, Jesus brings it all – so can we – confident, without fear, knowing we are beloved.

Things to consider:

- 1) When are you likely to pray the most?
- 2) Do you find it hard to bring difficult emotions to God? How might today's bible passages inspire you?
- 3) Consider writing your own Psalm to God – sharing how you are – the wonderful things, the joys, the difficulties and the struggles.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer – please make your own prayers for specific people, places and situations in the spaces.

Eternal God, we come to pray as your co-workers and co-carers in your world. We know you already care and are already there in the places and with the people for whom we pray.

In a moment of silence we pray for people suffering, in pain, depression or anxiety. We pray for all those who work to alleviate suffering.

We pray for communities struggling in poverty, overcrowding and hunger, for people feeling disconnected and for those who are working together to bring comfort, food and help.

We pray for governments and those in power around the world, for wisdom and the desire to put the wellbeing of their people first and to work together with other countries in peace.

We bring all our prayers, in trust and confidence, in the precious name of Jesus. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer
Our Father

Hymn: Listen to 41 Blessed be your name

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnWKehtOXu8>

Blessed be your name
in the land that is plentiful,
where your streams of abundance flow,
blessed be your name.
And blessed be your name
when I'm found in the desert place,
though I walk through the wilderness,
blessed be your name.

Every blessing you pour out
I'll turn back to praise.

And when the darkness closes in, Lord,
still I will say:

*Blessed be the name of the Lord,
blessed be your name.
Blessed be the name of the Lord,
blessed be your glorious name.*

Blessed be your name
when the sun's shining down on me,
when the world's 'all as it should be,'
blessed be your name.
And blessed be your name
on the road marked with suffering,
though there's pain in the offering,
blessed be your name.

Every blessing you pour out
I'll turn back to praise.
And when the darkness closes in, Lord,
still I will say:

Blessed be the name of the Lord ...

You give and take away,
you give and take away.
My heart will choose to say,
'Lord, blessed be your name.'

Blessed be the name of the Lord ...

Matt Redman (b. 1974) and Beth Redman

A prayer of blessing

May Immanuel God be with us, bless us with the deep heart-knowledge that God is with us, and as we share the reality of ourselves with God, may we know ourselves held and beloved. Amen

Original Materials by Ruth Yorke

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