

## St James' Piccadilly ALL NIGHT VIGIL 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2021 on the eve of COP26

### A Song of Praise

#### ***From Psalm 104***

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
O Lord my God, Thou art very great.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
Thou art clothed with honour and majesty.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
The waters stand upon the mountains.  
Marvellous are Thy works, O Lord.  
The waters flow between the hills.  
Marvellous are Thy works, O Lord.  
In wisdom hast Thou made all things.  
Glory to Thee, O Lord, who hast created all!

***Rachmaninoff's All night Vespers. The second movement*** sets this text. The solo voice personalizes the song of praise, while the choral voices depict the two realms – the earthly and the heavenly.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA86CWckU\\_0&list=OLAK5uy\\_kVOkjXwlr-BxmpY3kqxq2Tu3vUVlicye8&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA86CWckU_0&list=OLAK5uy_kVOkjXwlr-BxmpY3kqxq2Tu3vUVlicye8&index=2)

#### ***Prayer***

We thank you, God, for abundance;  
for seeds and raindrops, for grains of sand and infinite galaxies,  
for seagulls, plankton and shoals of mackerel,  
for wriggling worms and golden dandelions.  
We thank you, God, for your world and for our part in it.  
Help us to love creation as you love it,  
to draw us into the wildness and wonder of your Holy Spirit  
today and every day.

### In Light and Air

*Diane Pacitti - Creation Altar*

A church can act as a dark hutch on the mind  
closing against the infinite, the unknown;  
huddling against the other beings who bind  
the world in God, seeing humankind alone.

But when one roof crashed down, the church walls framed  
a sky-space of blue and random cloud.

Stone-suffocated soil once more could claim  
to be creation altar, bursting loud

with wilderness plants, an altar which was lit  
by flame-shaped buds, by dandelion suns;  
There was communion, not through human rite  
but through the interactions which are spun

by root and rain, by fire from distant space;  
a web of being busying through light-time.  
Within that shattered rubble there was grace:  
the visitation of a finch, the climb

of spiralling leafing green. Here hour by hour  
bees claimed their pollen-bread; moths browsed and supped;  
and drenched in rain, the priestly-purple flower  
of mallow raised to the light its petalled cup.

**Music: Anna Thorvaldsdottir - 'In the light of Air' from 'Existence'**

This piece by the Icelandic composer was influenced by the vast spaciousness of the Icelandic landscape and the sense of light and air that it bathes in.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n35KZ9G1pvM>

**Prayer**

Let the earth and the water, the air and the fruits be sweet, my God.  
Let the homes and marts, the forests and fields be full, my God.  
Let our promises and hopes, our deeds and words be true, my God.  
Let our lives and hearts of all people be one, my God.

*Rabindranath Tagore (adapted)*

**Heaven includes Earth and Earth includes Heaven**

When I know that the world around me is both the hiding place and the revelation of God, I can no longer make a significant distinction between the natural and the supernatural, between the holy and the profane. Everything I see and know is indeed one “*uni-verse*,” revolving around one coherent centre. This Divine Presence always seeks connection and communion, not separation or division. The finite manifests the infinite, and the physical is the doorway to the spiritual. If we can accept this foundational principle we call “incarnation,” then all we need is right here and right now—in *this* world. *This* is the way to *that!* Heaven includes earth and earth includes heaven. *Richard Rohr*

***John Tavener: Song of the angel***

The composer writes “When seen as things truly are, the earth is a mirror of the Eternal World and it is possible in this world to live in Eternity's sunrise. God does not exist as a separate Being in the world; God is reflected in the world, giving it form and structure.”

The piece sets one word – ‘Alleluia’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0QZrEq1U8E>

**Prayer** O God, may Creation be our cathedral. May we recognise the daily cosmic events above us and around us and beneath us every minute of our lives, in the sky and the oceans, the earth and under the earth, all visible symbols of the reality of God, and as channels for God's grace. May we learn to recognise all the wonders of your self-revelation and respond with awe, gratitude and love.

## **The seer and the seen**

The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me; my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one love. — Meister Eckhart.

*Wendell Berry - I go among trees and sit still.*

I go among trees and sit still.  
All my stirring becomes quiet  
Around me like circles on water.  
My tasks lie in their places  
Where I left them, asleep like cattle...

Then what I am afraid of comes.  
I live for a while in its sight.  
What I fear in it leaves it,  
And the fear of it leaves me.  
It sings, and I hear its song.

### **Music:**

Schubert string quintet in C major, Adagio, composed 2 months before his death

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

**The piece is 14 minutes - ? STOP on 4.57 on you tube or fade on speaker**

### **Prayer:**

Move us O God  
to take our turn as the giver,  
so that all may find food and shelter and care and nourishment.  
Open our hearts to hear the cries of those who weep,  
so that what we have received from you in abundance  
may be passed on to all.  
Help us, O God who is love  
and Love who is God  
to love even in our own faltering way.

**Amen**

## **Things are not sacred or profane – only sacred or desecrated.**

There are not sacred and profane things, places, and moments. There are only sacred and *desecrated* things, places, and moments—and it is *we alone* who desecrate them by our lack of insight and reverence. It is one sacred universe, and we are all a part of it. In terms of a spiritual vision, we really cannot get any better or simpler than that.

**Richard Rohr**

### ***Peter Maxwell Davies's piece 'Return to Stromness'***

was composed for Orkney community's protest against a proposed opencast uranium mine that would have scarred and poisoned land and sea. In its haunting simplicity, the piece stands out from Maxwell Davies's more familiar thorny, dissonant, violent music. Its deep rooted-ness in the land, sea and soundscapes of Orkney and its expression of love, lament and insistent strength offer powerful inspiration for the struggle of the powerless against the powerful and was happily victorious on this occasion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpJB-XXE9Xg>

**Prayer.** O God, we ask forgiveness of the earth and the seas for all our trespasses against them, for our violence and poisoning of their abundance and beauty, for marring your incarnate body. If we desire to honour and cherish your gifts, may we be ready to speak and act more vigorously in their defence. May we learn to look with Christ's eyes, listen with Christ's ears, speak with Christ's voice, knowing that we belong within and have responsibilities for your creation. Amen.

## **Earth as Sacred Community**

### ***Reading from 'Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community' by Thomas Berry***

As humans, we are born of the Earth, nourished by Earth, healed by Earth. The natural world tells us: I will feed you, I will clothe you, I will heal you; I offer you a communion with the divine; I offer you gifts you can exchange with one another. I offer you flowers whereby you can express your reverence for the divine and your love for each other. In the vastness of the sea, in the snow-covered mountains, in the rivers flowing through the valleys, in the serenity of the landscape, and in the foreboding of the great storms that sweep across the land, in all these experiences I offer you for inspiration in your music, your art, your dance.

### ***Song from Dies Natalis by Gerald Finzi, Words by Thomas Traherne Wonder***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5rUclus1N4>

How like an angel came I down!  
How bright are all things here!  
When first among His works I did appear  
O how their glory me did crown!  
The world resembled His Eternity

In which my soul did walk;  
And every thing that I did see  
Did with me talk.

The skies in their magnificence  
The lovely, lively air,  
O how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair!  
The stars did entertain my sense;  
And all the works of God, so bright and pure,  
So rich and great, did seem,  
As if they ever must endure  
In my esteem.

A native health and innocence  
Within my bones did grow,  
And while my God did all His Glories show,  
I felt a vigour in my sense  
That was all Spirit. I within did flow  
With seas of life, like wine;  
I nothing in the world did know  
But 'twas Divine.

***Prayer for our earth adapted from Laudato Si***

Oh God you are present in the whole universe  
And in the smallest of your creatures.  
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists,  
Pour out on us the power of your love  
that we may protect life and beauty.  
Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no-one.  
Bring healing to our lives  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.  
Touch our hearts when we look for our gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being present within and around us each day.

## **Time and Eternity**

Sabbath poem - *Wendell Berry*

How long does it take to make the woods?  
As long as it takes to make the world.  
The woods is present as the world is, the presence  
of all its past, and of all its time to come.

It is always finished, it is always being made, the act of its making forever greater than the act of its destruction. It is a part of eternity, for its end and beginning belong to the end and beginning of all things, the beginning lost in the end, the end in the beginning.

What is the way to the woods, how do you go there?  
By climbing up through the six days' field,  
kept in all the body's years, the body's  
sorrow, weariness, and joy. By passing through  
the narrow gate on the far side of that field  
where the pasture grass of the body's life gives way  
to the high, original standing of the trees.  
By coming into the shadow, the shadow  
of the grace of the strait way's ending,  
the shadow of the mercy of light.

Why must the gate be narrow?  
Because you cannot pass beyond it burdened.  
To come in among these trees you must leave behind  
the six days' world, all of it, all of its plans and hopes.  
You must come without weapon or tool, alone,  
expecting nothing, remembering nothing,  
into the ease of sight, the brotherhood [*fraternity*] of eye and leaf.

***“For God, time absolutely does not exist.” So Beethoven wrote in his notebook at the time of writing his String Quartet, Opus 132 in A minor***

The 3rd movement of this late quartet is written as a song of thanksgiving to God. Commentators have noted that the piece was rooted in the biographical fact of Beethoven's recovery from an illness, but perhaps in metaphysical metaphor as well. There is the sense of a vibration of the soul as it aspires upward toward heaven, of illumination born of a struggle with darkness. At each return of the hymn-like music it becomes more sensitive, more vulnerable. At its third and final appearance Beethoven writes in the score above the material which weaves through the intoned hymn melody “with the most intimate feeling.” The movement builds to a climax of extraordinary intensity, filled with love and recognition of the sublime. Its denouement leads to an almost complete stillness, with only the merest suggestion of a vibration within, a sense of peace.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8TeeYZVe6Q> (15 minutes. Fade early??)

**Prayer** O mysterious God of infinity and eternity and of here and now, your energy permeates the Universe, binding all that exists in profound kinship, weaving a sacred web of relation. Deepen our awareness of this interconnection, this interbeing; help us realise that sense of timeless peace and silence in which you dwell.

## **Glory and Joy are without end.**

Parting Words - Rabindranath Tagore

When I go from hence  
let this be my parting word,  
that what I have seen is unsurpassable.

I have tasted of the hidden honey of this lotus  
that expands on the ocean of light,  
and thus am I blessed  
---let this be my parting word.

In this playhouse of infinite forms  
I have had my play  
and here have I caught sight of him that is formless.

My whole body and my limbs  
have thrilled with his touch who is beyond touch;  
and if the end comes here, let it come  
---let this be my parting word.

The title of ***Olivier Messiaen's Turangalila Symphony*** was drawn from two Sanskrit words, which he described thus: 'Lila' literally means play – but play in the sense of the divine action upon the cosmos, the play of creation, destruction, reconstruction, the play of life and death. 'Lila' is also love. 'Turanga' is the time that runs like a galloping horse, the time that flows like sand in an hourglass. 'Turanga' is movement and rhythm. 'Turangalila' therefore means all at once love song, hymn to joy, time, movement, rhythm, life and death. Messiaen wrote at the end of the piece "glory and joy are without end".

### **7<sup>th</sup> movement**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TIFJdIM\\_40&list=OLAK5uy\\_I8SPadA8RRQ6FJH\\_OxLCVPZ2v49ApmHCHc&index=7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TIFJdIM_40&list=OLAK5uy_I8SPadA8RRQ6FJH_OxLCVPZ2v49ApmHCHc&index=7)

**Prayer.** O God, who has filled the world with beauty, open our eyes to perceive your glory in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may be joyful participators in your divine action on the cosmos, acting always in accord with the resonances your wisdom, truth, love and energies.

## **This is God's House**

Turn to the animals and let them teach you; the birds of the air will tell you the truth. Listen to the plants of Earth and learn from them; let the fish become your teachers. In God's hand is the soul of every living thing; in God's hand is the breath of all humankind.  
— Job 12:7-8, 10

Do not try to serve  
the whole world

or do anything grandiose.  
Instead, create  
a clearing  
in the dense forest  
of your life  
and wait there patiently,  
until the song  
that is yours alone to sing  
falls into your open cupped hands  
and you recognize and greet it.  
Only then will you know  
how to give yourself  
to the world  
so worthy of rescue.”

*Martha Postlethwaite*

### **Anton Bruckner - Locus Iste: 'This is God's House'**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17RtsaZ6lws>

### **Hawaiian Blessing**

Let us give thanks for the world around us. Thanks for all the creatures, stones and plants  
Let us learn their lessons and seek their truths, So that their path might be ours, And we  
might live in harmony, a better life. May the Earth continue to live, May the heavens above  
continue to live, May the rains continue to dampen the land, May the wet forests continue to  
grow, Then the flowers shall bloom. And we people shall live again.

### **Love of nature and the Earth**

Vaughan Williams's mother famously told him "The Bible says that God made the world  
in six days. Your Great Uncle Charles (Darwin) thinks it took longer: but we need not  
worry about it, for it is equally wonderful either way."

The Lark Ascending, which Vaughan Williams completed in 1919, is infused with his  
love of nature and tender nostalgia for a world that no longer existed, a feeling now  
perhaps heightened by the fact that the song of the lark itself, heard in the flourishes of  
the solo violin, is now a rare thing, the bird's population in decline and much of its  
natural habitat irrevocably spoiled. Vaughan Williams prefaced his score with these  
lines from George Meredith's poem of the same name:

He rises and begins to round,  
He drops the silver chain of sound,  
Of many links without a break,  
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.  
For singing till his heaven fills,  
'Tis love of earth that he instils,  
And ever winging up and up,  
Our valley is his golden cup



And he the wine which overflows  
to lift us with him as he goes.

### **Play opening section of The Lark Ascending Vaughan Williams**

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

(16 minutes, stop at 6.22?)

#### **Prayer:**

Earth teach me freedom as the lark who sings and soars.

Earth teach me limitation as the ant who crawls along the ground.

Earth teach me joy as the bee delighting in the nectar of life.

Earth teach me about the regeneration of life as the seed rises after being scattered and buried.

Earth teach me to know the Author of Life as I daily gaze in wonder

At the marvellous mysterious substance of all creation.

### **The individual at one with the Universe**

In meditation I can experience my solidarity with the Universe, with the remotest star in outer space and with the minutest particle in the atom. I can experience my solidarity with every living thing, with the earth, with the flowers and the trees, with the birds and squirrels, with every human being. I can get beyond all these outer forms of things in time and space and discover the Ground from which they all spring. I can know the origin and the source, beyond being and non-being, the One without a second. *Bede Griffiths*

#### **Music:** Toshio Hosokawa *Lullaby for Itsuki*.

The composer wrote that while we hear the individual note we appreciate at the same time the process of how the notes are born and how they die. So the sound landscape is a continual '*becoming*' that is animated by itself. The Universe has to be at One with the individual.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGQRde\\_j894](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGQRde_j894)

**Prayer:** O God, help us to realise our intuition that we are but a part of the oneness of all life, that our identity is inextricably entwined with lives beyond our own. May we not forget that we depend upon trees, trees depend upon grasses, grasses depend upon animals, mountains depend upon oceans, the dolphin depends upon the farthest star. Physically and spiritually, we are all woven into the living processes of the earth. May our breathing, our acting, our thinking resonate with our shared world and our hearts constantly beat out the cosmic rhythm within us.

## Lament

**St. Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179):** “You understand so little of what is around you because you do not use what is within you.”

“It is a serious thing  
just to be alive,  
on this fresh morning,  
in this broken world.”

*Mary Oliver*

In the drama of **Bach’s St Matthew passion**, we hear Peter’s solitary heartache as he laments his betrayal of Jesus.

Have mercy,  
My God, for my tears sake;  
Look hither,  
Heart and eyes weep before thee  
Bitterly.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Zx1RnrQm4w>

### **Prayer:**

Eternal God, in our grief for how our species has desecrated your sacred gift of life, help us to know our need for change, bear the pain of change, feel the joy of change and undertake the journey of change, that we may heal the wounds we have inflicted on all that gives us life and learn to live in right relationship with your material body.

## Spirit and Matter are One.

The *spirit* nature of reality and the *material* nature of reality are one – and have been since the beginning. Before the Incarnation of God in Jesus, there was the Incarnation through light, water, land, sun, moon, stars, plants, trees, fruit, birds, serpents, cattle, fish - “every living thing, according to its kind” (Genesis 1). This is the “Cosmic Christ” through which God reveals the mystery of God’s purpose.

*Richard Rohr*

### ***John Clare - All nature has a feeling***

All nature has a feeling: woods, fields, brooks  
Are life eternal: and in silence they  
Speak happiness beyond the reach of books;  
There's nothing mortal in them; their decay  
Is the green life of change; to pass away  
And come again in blooms revived.  
Its birth was heaven, eternal is its stay,  
And with the sun and moon shall still abide  
Beneath their day and night and heaven wide.

**Music: Opening sonatina to Bach Cantata 106.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXMUpqSyJJo&t=34s>

Prayer: **The Voice of the Earth Speaking God's Presence**

Earth teach me stillness as the grasses are stilled with light.

Earth teach me humility as blossoms are humble with beginning.

Earth teach me caring as the mother bird nestles her young.

Earth teach me courage as the tree which stands straight alone.

**Amen**

## **As we journey towards your infinite light.**

**Primary Wonder – Denise Levertov**

Days pass when I forget the mystery.

Problems insoluble and problems offering

their own ignored solutions

jostle for my attention, they crowd its antechamber

along with a host of diversions, my courtiers, wearing

their coloured clothes; cap and bells.

And then

once more the quiet mystery

is present to me, the throng's clamour

recedes: the mystery

that there is anything, anything at all,

let alone cosmos, joy, memory, everything,

rather than void: and that, O Lord,

Creator, Hallowed One, You still,

hour by hour sustain it.

**Story: How to recognise daybreak - Hazel**

**Music: Morning raga Ravi Shankar**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n91Vhdrkss>

[\(18 minutes – fade ??\)](#)

Prayer:

O God, you are present in the whole Universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,

to be filled with awe and contemplation.

to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature  
as we journey towards your infinite light.

## **Parting Blessing**

Let us depart giving thanks for the good earth

***Blessed be God forever***

Let us go out in unity with all who seek to preserve the earth

***Blessed be God forever***

Let us go out in the sure conviction that a new communion with all Creation is possible

***Blessed be God forever***

May the blessing of God the Creator, Christ the Way,

and the Holy Spirit, sustainer of all life,

be with us and with all the creatures of the earth, now and always.

**Amen**

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