



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 25th May 2025

compiled by Alison Morgan - Local Preacher

From our homes let us pray together:

May peace beyond all understanding, which has its source in Father, Son and Spirit, be with us as we still our souls and join our hearts as one.

May the gentle whisper of the God of grace speak to us through our worship, the reading and understanding of scripture, and be the message of our lives. Amen

Hymn: 404 Mission Praise

1] Let all the world in every corner sing,

'My God and King!'

The heavens are not too high;

His praise may thither fly;

The earth is not too low;

His praises there may grow.

Let all the world in every corner sing,

'My God and King!'

2] Let all the world in every corner sing,

'My God and King!'

The church with psalms must shout,

No door can keep them out;

But, above all, the heart

Must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing,

'My God and King!'

George Herbert (1593-1633)

Let us pray

May the nations praise you;

May all the nations praise you!

You rule your people with justice and wisdom,

Bless them with a grace and peace and bring a harvest where your seed is sown.

May the nations praise you;

May all the nations praise you!

From generation to generation you've led your people to the waters of life

And to fruitfulness where your love is shown.

May the nations praise you;

May all the nations praise you!

Whenever self obscures the needs of others,

Forgive us
Whenever we forget who is our neighbour,
Forgive us
Whenever we pass by on the other side,
Forgive us.
Whenever we forget to say 'Well done!'
Forgive us.
Whenever we forget the path we tread,
Forgive us.
For all those times we bring sorrow to your heart,
Draw us back into your forgiving arms and teach us, once again, your way.

God of the moment
We thank you for all your blessings.
In the ebb and flow of daily life,
You shed light upon the way,
Reveal the path that we should walk
And guide our hearts and souls in praise.

God of the moment
We thank you for all your blessings.
In the ebb and flow of daily life,
No darkness bars our way;
Your glory shines in the hearts as we walk
Where you lead us every day.

The Lord's Prayer

John 14: 23-29

Jesus replied 'Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. You heard me say I am going away and I am coming back to you. If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens so that when it does happen you will believe'.

Acts 16: 9-15

During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, 'come over to Macedonia and help us.' After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.
From Troas, we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. From there we travelled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshipper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptised, she invited us to her home. 'If you consider me a believer in the Lord, she said, 'come and stay at my house.' And she persuaded us.

Reflection

Both readings mention 'the home'.

Home: It's a word that comes with a lot of stuff. In a literal sense.

We put our stuff, our physical belongings, in our homes, the things we need, the things we treasure and all the stuff in between.

Home is a word that comes with a lot of stuff metaphorically as well. To feel 'at home' is to feel at ease, comfortable, to be safe and secure. Home is where we have a private life and a family life, a place where we live alongside those who love us. Home is a place, a sanctuary that we retreat to for peace and to get used to new things.

We can be homesick, or homeless, we can lose our home, or long to go home. We can put all our hopes into building a home somewhere. Or we can reject that whole idea and claim that 'home is where the heart is' or 'wherever I lay my hat that's my home'.

We were told to stay at home to save lives when Covid was prevalent, and home became a work place.

When the war in Ukraine started, we opened our homes to strangers who fled their country to save their lives. Houses can become homes. Homes can also become just houses and even prisons, horrible things can happen behind closed doors, like loneliness, violence and coercive control. Homes can be hard places where we face our deepest needs and experience some of the hardest things in life.

Home, as I said, carries a lot of stuff.

In our Gospel reading, Jesus makes the statement about God making a home with people. Someone asks him how God will be revealed in the world and Jesus' response is to say, by making a home with people.

It's a strange choice of image. Here is Jesus talking to his friends the night before he is arrested, knowing that the authorities are out to get him trying to get them to understand what is about to happen. The first image of God he reaches for is that of a home-maker. Not a fighter or a powerful ruler. Not a friend or a support or a comforter. Perhaps it was the experience of being in Jerusalem, a religious home, that sparked his imagination.

God makes a home with us. God doesn't just live among us; God makes a home among us. God doesn't just prepare a place for us in heaven; God makes a home among us while we are living daily life in the here and now.

Whatever home means to you at the moment, God is right there. God promises to build a home with us with all the love and commitment that takes and with all the joy and the comfort and safety that brings. As we face into our deepest needs and experience some of the hardest things in life, God is right there.

If something new comes into our homes, God is right there too. When we are being most honestly and truly ourselves, God is still building a home with us, like the people who enjoy spending time with us and love us just as we are. God builds and makes with us, the places we treasure, the places that hold our treasures, the places where we do the most ordinary of daily things, the places we call home.

For the peace which comes from above, let us pray to the Lord.

Grant peace to the world, peace among nations and races, peace in the hearts of all people. Bless those who hold authority and incline their wills to seek peace and to maintain it.

We pray that the Lord may be with us and make his home in our homes. Keep us in love and respect for all those who are near to us in family, work or friendship. Give to all who are in their homes, reading this At Home Service, the blessing of peace and harmony.

Have mercy on all who suffer where peace is broken, on the victims of war and violence and grant that love shall prevail and drive away anger.

We pray for those who have passed through death from the troubles of this world. Receive them into the peace of eternal life where their Lord has gone before.

May our prayer be heard through Christ who give us his peace. Amen

Hymn: 882 Mission Praise

1] Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like,
No cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking,
And give us we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord
At the break of the day.

2] Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled
At the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours,
And give us, we pray
Your strength in our hearts, Lord,
At the noon of the day.

3] Lord of all kindliness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome,
Your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing,
And give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord,
At the eve of the day.

4] Lord of all gentles, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment,
Whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping,
And give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord,
At the end of the day.

Jan Struther (1901-1953)

Blessing

May the Lord Bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen