

**Winchester, Eastleigh and Romsey Circuit**  
**SERVICE AT HOME: Sunday 6 August 2023**  
**Ordinary 18**

Prepared by Revd Peter Rayson

You will need to prepare in advance for the prayers of intercession. If you are using the service on line, have the home page of an on-line news service ready (e.g. [www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news)). If you are using the service on paper, have a newspaper, have it to hand or listen to the news and make a note of the headlines before you begin worship.

**Read and pray the following excerpt from Psalm 139 (vv 1-3, 23-24, NRSV) as a call to worship:**

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
You search out my path and my lying down  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.  
See if there is any wicked way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

**Listen, read, pray, or sing along to StF 107**

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

I sing the almighty power of God,  
that made the mountains rise,  
that spread the flowing seas abroad,  
and built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained  
the sun to rule the day;  
the moon shines full at his command,  
and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord,  
that filled the earth with food;  
he formed the creatures with his word,  
and then pronounced them good.

Lord, how your wonders are displayed  
where'er I turn mine eye,  
if I survey the ground I tread,  
or gaze upon the sky!

God's hand is my perpetual guard,  
he guides me with his eye;  
why should I then forget the Lord,  
whose love is ever nigh?

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

**A prayer of St Francis of Assisi:**

You are holy, Lord,  
the only God,  
and Your deeds are wonderful.  
You are strong.  
You are great.  
You are the Most High.  
You are Almighty.  
You, Holy Father  
are King of heaven and earth.  
You are Three and One,  
Lord God, all Good.  
You are Good,  
all Good, supreme Good,  
Lord God, living and true.  
You are love.  
You are wisdom.  
You are humility.  
You are endurance.  
You are rest.  
You are peace.  
You are joy and gladness.  
You are justice and moderation.  
You are all our riches,  
and You suffice for us.  
You are beauty.  
You are gentleness.  
You are our protector.  
You are our guardian and defender.  
You are our courage.  
You are our haven and our hope.  
You are our faith,  
our great consolation.  
You are our eternal life,  
Great and Wonderful Lord,  
God Almighty,  
Merciful Saviour.

Amen.

**Today's reading is Genesis 32:22-31**

**Reflection**

As I was contemplating a reflection on this passage, I found myself drawn to one written by Charles Wesley. As you might expect, this is in the form of a hymn. In his hymn, Charles takes the Old Testament theme of Jacob's encounter with the unknown God and, through the lens of the New Testament, morphs it into a reflection on the encounter to which we are all invited; an encounter with the living Christ. Read carefully each of Charles' verses and reflect on the unfolding revelation of God and how, through this revelation, God's true nature revealed in Christ.

**Come, O thou Traveller unknown (StF 461)**

Come, O thou Traveller unknown,  
whom still I hold, but cannot see!  
My company before is gone,  
and I am left alone with thee;  
with thee all night I mean to stay,  
and wrestle till the break of day.

I need not tell thee who I am,  
my misery and sin declare;  
thyself hast called me by my name;  
look on thy hands, and read it there:  
but who, I ask thee, who art thou?  
Tell me thy name, and tell me now.

In vain thou strugglest to get free;  
never will unloose my hold!  
Art thou the Man that died for me?  
The secret of thy love unfold:  
wrestling, I will not let thee go,  
till I thy name, thy nature know.

Wilt thou not yet to me reveal  
thy new, unutterable name?  
Tell me, I still beseech thee, tell;  
to know it now resolved I am:  
wrestling, I will not let thee go,  
till I thy name, thy nature know.

What though my shrinking flesh complain,  
and murmur to contend so long?  
I rise superior to my pain,

when I am weak, then I am strong;  
and when my all of strength shall fail,  
I shall with the God-Man prevail.

Yield to me now; for I am weak,  
but confident in self-despair;  
speak to my heart, in blessings speak,  
be conquered by my instant prayer;  
speak, or thou never hence shalt move,  
and tell me if thy name is Love.

'Tis Love! 'Tis Love! Thou diedst for me!  
I hear thy whisper in my heart;  
the morning breaks, the shadows flee,  
pure, universal love thou art;  
to me, to all, thy mercies move:  
thy nature and thy name is Love.

My prayer has power with God; the grace  
unspeakable I now receive;  
through faith I see thee face to face,  
I see thee face to face, and live!  
In vain I have not wept and strove:  
thy nature and thy name is Love.

I know thee, Saviour, who thou art,  
Jesus, the feeble sinner's friend;  
nor wilt thou with the night depart,  
but stay and love me to the end;  
thy mercies never shall remove:  
thy nature and thy name is Love.

The Sun of Righteousness on me  
has risen with healing in his wings;  
withered my nature's strength, from thee  
my soul its life and succour brings;  
my help is all laid up above:  
thy nature and thy name is Love.

Contented now upon my thigh  
I halt, till life's short journey end;  
all helplessness, all weakness, I  
on thee alone for strength depend;  
nor have I power from thee to move:  
thy nature and thy name is Love.

Lame as I am, I take the prey,  
hell, earth, and sin with ease o'ercome;

I leap for joy, pursue my way,  
and as a bounding hart fly home,  
through all eternity to prove  
thy nature and thy name is Love.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

As you continue to reflect on this revelation,

**listen, read, pray, or sing along to StF 158**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBQ-ql7Xbv8>

Lord, you sometimes speak in wonders,  
unmistakable and clear,  
mighty signs that show your presence,  
overcoming doubt and fear.  
O Lord, you sometimes speak in wonders.

Lord, you sometimes speak in whispers,  
still and small and scarcely heard;  
only those who want to listen  
catch the all-important word.  
O Lord, you sometimes speak in whispers.

Lord, you sometimes speak in silence,  
through our loud and noisy day;  
we can know and trust you better  
when we quietly wait and pray.  
O Lord, you sometimes speak in silence.

Lord, you often speak in Scripture,  
words that summon from the page,  
shown and taught us by your Spirit  
with fresh light for every age.  
O Lord, you often speak in Scripture.

Lord, you always speak in Jesus,  
always new yet still the same:  
teach us now more of our Saviour,  
make our lives display his Name.  
O Lord, you always speak in Jesus.

Christopher Idle (b. 1938)

### **Prayers of intercession.**

Take your news source and pray individually for each item on it. If you struggle to know what to pray, remember the words of St Paul, "The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words"

(Romans 26:8 NRSV)

After each prayer, say, sing or listen to this chant from Taizé,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iYPPaqOaNo>

O Lord, hear my prayer; when I call answer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer; come and listen to me.

(© 1982, Les Presses de Taizé)

Finish this time of prayer by saying The Lord's Prayer

### **The Lord's Prayer:**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

### **Listen, read, pray, or sing along to StF 485**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofp6rdAgRrY>

When we are living, we are in the Lord,  
and when we're dying, we are in the Lord;  
for in our living and in our dying  
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Each day allows us to decide for good,  
loving and serving as we know we should;  
in thankful giving, in hopeful living,  
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Sometimes we sorrow, other times, embrace,  
sometimes we question everything we face;  
yet in our yearning is deeper learning:  
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Till earth is over may we always know  
love never fails us: God has made it so.  
Hard times will prove us, never remove us;  
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Pues si vivimos, para El vivimos,  
y si morimos, para El morimos;  
sea que vivamos a que moramos  
somos del Senor, somos del Senor.

**Final Prayer:**

Now may the God of peace, who brought back from  
the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the  
sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make  
you complete in everything good so that you may  
do his will, as he works among us that which is  
pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom  
be the glory forever.

Amen.

(Hebrews 13:20-21 NRSV)

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