

## **Service at Home - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October :**

### **One World Week prepared by Pat Fry**

Whist from this year on, One World Week is merging with Global Education Week in November, the Methodist church is continuing to think about One World issues on the Sunday nearest United Nations Day, 24<sup>th</sup> October. During September there were several reflections on what we can learn from other cultures in United Reformed Church daily devotions, and I will include some of those thoughts in our reflections today.

**Prayer:** As I try to engage in worship and learning more of your ways, remind me that even though I may be on my own, in worship I am joining with a worldwide fellowship[ of people of many nations who seek to follow you. Amen

**Hymn 75** From all that dwell below the skies  
no YouTube found with the tune and words we sing

From all that dwell below the skies  
Let the Creator's praise arise:  
Alleluia Alleluia !  
Let the Redeemer's name be sung  
in every land by every tongue :  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia  
Alleluia, Alleluia!

Eternal are thy mercies Lord:  
Eternal truth attends thy Word:  
Alleluia Alleluia !  
Your praise shall sound from shore to shore,  
till suns shall rise and set no more:  
Alleluia.....  
Isaac Watts 1674-1748

### **Prayer of thanks**

As we think about one world, we remember that even in our everyday speech we draw from other cultures. Did you wear pyjamas, last night? That's a word from India;

Are you wearing shoes? that's a German word. Did you switch on your electric kettle?, Electric

is a word from Ancient Greek...

And if you think through what you ate and drank yesterday, people of many countries played a part in providing your meals: God our Father, thank you for the wonderful variety within your world. Thank you for the different foods we enjoy. For the wonderful variety of music, and dance, and different art and stories we can enjoy. Thank you for the wonderful variety of people in your world. Help us to accept and value one another's gifts, and appreciate that we each have our part to play for the common good. Amen

We join with Christians throughout the world in saying the prayer Jesus taught us. Please use whichever form or language you prefer.

### **Reading Acts2 : 44-49**

#### **Reflection**

Writing about his experiences in Fiji, Dr Simon Cross recorded a conversation: "We Fijians know what it is to suffer, we make sacrifices to ensure that everyone around us has enough."

"My father was a fisherman, when he would land his catch he would first give fish to all the other people in the village., we were left with the smallest fish. But when we needed help, all the people in the village stopped what they were doing and came to help us .The regular distribution of fish ensured that everyone was there to help us when the need arose."\*

This resonated with things I had read about the South African concept of Ubuntu. Ubuntu is a Nguni Bantu word meaning " Humanity", often explained as " I am who I am, because we are". There is a similar word in Zulu. Such thinking leads to a focus on the needs of the community rather than the desire of the individual.

The American constitution was the first to enshrine the principle of "the pursuit of happiness" as a human right. Due to American influence that is also written in to the

constitutions of Japan and South Korea. But the high-minded principle behind it, seeking wellbeing for each person, can degenerate into self-interest: "My happiness at the expense of others; my happiness regardless of who gets hurt," the drive to compete rather than to co-operate.

In contrast the constitutions of Ecuador and Bolivia include a phrase from the Quechua people of the Andes, translated into Spanish as "Buen Vivir," a concept of a society that is community-centric, culturally sensitive and ecologically sound. \*\*

And that echoes some of the ideas in the Book of Leviticus, establishing principles for caring and responsible community life, where the needy are cared for, land is held in trust from the Creator, debts have a limited life, and even the land is guaranteed rest periods. Hold those thoughts in mind as you read the Psalm, for this is the kind of happiness the Psalmist describes.

#### Reading: Psalm 1

How do we relate all of this to living in our very different culture? What relevance does it have to those of you, who like me, find themselves living alone, some distance away from family.

We live in a society where doors have to be shut because of the risk of theft. At United the collecting box for Remembrance poppies now has to be chained to a pillar because one year it was stolen. Being a city centre church, much as we want to be open and welcoming, we have to take precautions: on one occasion several years ago the offering at the end of a funeral was stolen by someone claiming to be meeting a disabled mourner.

It may be in very small ways that we contribute to the common good: in how we shop, how we travel, how we vote, how we listen to others, how we pray.

This need for community was brought home to me while walking in the Blue Mountains in Australia, in what had felt like a very private time.

#### Poem Paradise Lost – or Found?

Silent we stood, awestruck  
alone in the deep forest  
delighting in the dappled shade  
as the green canopy filtered sunlight.

Around us tall straight eucalyptus trunks,  
flaking bark adding a touch of ginger.  
among tree ferns'  
emerald fountains.

resting on a tree,,  
a rare ruofus fantail  
spread his chocolate and cream feathers

A thousand shades of green and brown,  
nature's gentlest palette.

The soft drumming of cicadas.  
accompanied the bellbirds' glockenspiel choir

Was Eden such as this,  
a place of perfect beauty?

Unwelcome,  
chattering bushwalkers broke the spell.  
Friendly, they warned us.

"Beware leeches!,  
"Keep moving!"  
"Watch your feet!"

Jerked back to harsh reality,  
alert to danger,  
no longer seeing the beauty around us,  
we looked down as we walked.

Even in a place of seeming perfect beauty,  
life is not without inherent dangers,  
life is not free from problems.

Paradise lost to us?  
Or something deeper found?

Danger opened our minds  
to welcome the strangers' kindness,

and in concern for others  
to pass on their warning.

Beauty may lead us to wonder,  
to worship the Creator,  
and approach the gate of heaven.

But if we would step inside  
we must learn another lesson.

The Creator's life-blood is love,  
and community  
the heartbeat of heaven.

**Reading** Revelation 21:v1-8

### **Reflection**

As Christians we have a vision, a hope in the kingdom God plans, hope for a world where all who choose to can live in peace, their needs met, their hopes fulfilled in the loving presence of God. But we are called to work with God towards the realisation of something of what we hope for in the present world.

I have found this passage from Vaclav Havel, former Czech President, inspirational.

### **Hope**

Deep in ourselves we carry hope;  
if that is not the case, there is no hope.  
Hope is a quality of the soul, and does not depend on what happens in the world.  
Hope is not to foretell or foresee.  
It is a directedness of the mind,  
a directedness of the heart anchored beyond the horizon.  
Hope in this deep and powerful meaning is not the same as happiness because all goes well or readiness to devote yourself to that which has success.  
Hope is to work for something because it is good and not only because it has a chance to succeed.  
Hope is not the same as optimism  
neither is it the conviction that something will end well.  
Rather it is the certainty that something is meaningful,  
irrespective of the outcome, the result.....

**Hymn 687** One human family God has made  
<https://youtu.be/QnBjppHddkI>

One human family God has made,  
and all for each to care.  
One world to be the home of all,  
with all its wealth to share.  
One Christ to manifest on earth  
God's ultimate design,  
One Church to know the mystery  
of broken bread and wine.

One race, one world –yet torn apart  
we scorn the way of love .  
But still ahead the Christ leads on  
and calls the Church to move  
from love of power to power of love,  
to give the word to all –  
to trust the love that conquered death  
outside the city wall.

And are we brave enough to join  
in that great company? -  
The cost no less than all we have  
and all we hope to be -  
the bitter cup of human sin  
to drink with Him who died,  
and take his love outside the wall  
to all the crucified.

Claim Him who claims us for his own,  
to share his pain and grief,  
to bear the scars that stamp us his,  
the hall mark of belief.  
As partners of the living Christ,  
who risk the path he trod,  
with wondering love we find we share  
the timeless joy of God.

Rosemary Wakelin b.1942 |

### **Prayer**

For our prayers, I invite you to join with millions of fellow Christians in a prayer published as part of Pope Francis new encyclical, "Laudate Deum", Praise God

All-powerful 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 upon 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.

O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten  
of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

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 the hearts of those who look only for  
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  
recognize that we are profoundly united with  
every creature as we journey towards your  
infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for  
justice, love and peace.\*\*\*

### **Blessing**

As we go in Christ  
Let us handle Christ's name with love,  
not as a hammer for hammering  
but as bread for sharing

Let us speak Christ's name in praise  
not as a battle cry  
but as a love song

Let us carry Christ's name with care  
not as a sword  
but as a cross

Now may we always hold fast  
to the hope that comes from God.

May the Holy Spirit give us  
peace, joy and love to share  
as we seek to walk in the way  
of Jesus our Saviour. Amen  
Christian Aid, adapted

### **Hymn of Blessing 411**

(originally from South America)

[https://youtu.be/A\\_7xVzliVvY](https://youtu.be/A_7xVzliVvY)

May the God of hope go with us every day  
Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.  
May the God of justice speed us on our way,  
bringing light and hope to every land and race.

*Praying, let us work for peace,  
singing share our joy with all.  
Working for a world that's new,  
faithful when we hear Christ's call*

God will be our shepherd as we go our way  
and will not forsake us if we go astray;  
Even when the load of life is hard to bear we  
must not forget that God is always there.

*Praying let us work for peace,  
singing share our joy with all.  
Working for a world that's new,  
faithful when we hear Christ's call*

*CCLi 30794*

Acknowledgements:

\*Revd. Andy Braunston, United Reformed  
Church Daily Devotions

\*\*Dr. Simon Cross, United Reformed Church  
Daily Devotions

\*\*\* circulated via URC daily devotions

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