

Taizé Worship
A quiet reflective service of singing, prayer and silence.

INTRODUCTION and WELCOME Revd Canon Graham Hedger

Once again, during the ongoing pandemic of Covid-19 across the world, we gather together through the internet, to worship God, our Father.

This month we have ventured outdoors to record some of our material: a playground, the seaside, a church. Here are venues where we find renewal of health. So, with holy words, Taizé chants, silence and prayer, we explore how God 'identifies with and upholds the vulnerable'.

SCRIPTURE SENTENCE

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. *Romans 8:14; 1 John 4:13*

A GATHERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, Creator of all things; the heavens adore you. Let the whole earth worship you. Let all peoples proclaim you. Let all nations obey you. Let us serve you in love and in peace.

OPENING Prayer Revd Wendy Gourlay

Why are we gathered for worship?

Because together we will search for the signs of God's presence.

Why are we gathered for worship?

Because together we will listen for the murmurings of God's Spirit.

Why are we gathered for worship?

Because together we will be attuned to the pulse of God's love

And in our togetherness

May we be blessed.

THE BEATITUDES Matthew 5:3-10

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will see God.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CHANT 1: Bless the Lord my soul

p Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name. —

p Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

SCRIPTURE: 1Corinthians 1:26-31 (NRSV) Read by Mary Baker

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no-one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

We confess to you, O God,
that our lives and the world
are fragmented by sin.

Source of all, have mercy on us.

Saviour of all, have mercy on us.

Sustainer of all, have mercy on us.

The Saviour reaches out his hand
to announce a loving reconciliation.

Thanks be to God.

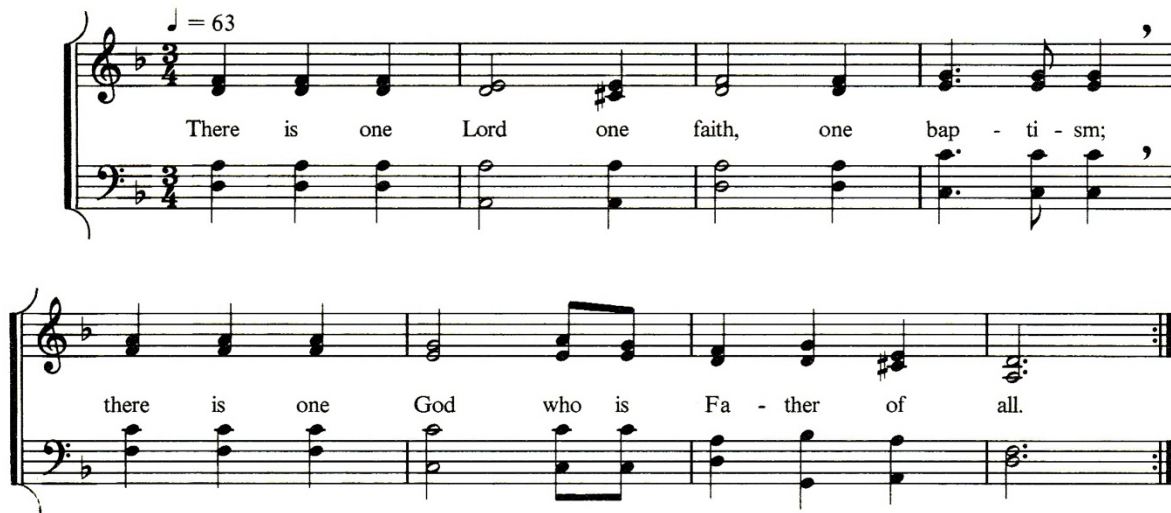
SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:1-5 (Good News Bible) Read by Jane Woodbury-Eggs

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, asking, "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?"

So Jesus called a child and made him stand in front of them, and said, "I assure that unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. The greatest in the Kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like this child. And whoever welcomes in my name one such child as this, welcomes me.

For the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHANT 2: There is one Lord



Meditation: God identifies with and upholds the vulnerable

An extract from 'How then shall we live?' written by Samuel Wells 2016

'Listen to children'. It's a slogan. It's a cliché that comes into play in ghastly circumstances when adults need to be reminded that children can be vulnerable to harm and that they seldom make up stories of genuine mistreatments. Listen to children. It's an easy phrase to repeat, and it keys into a popular psychological theme that all of us, need a good listening to.

One of my favourite children's books is called Not Now Bernard?

The infant Bernard tries in vain to tell his parents that there's a huge monster in the back yard, all ready to gobble him up. Young Bernard's parents simply respond, 'Not now, Bernard', so the bewildered Bernard goes back in the yard and, sure enough, the monster promptly gobbles him up. Then the monster enters the house and starts nibbling at Bernard's parents. But the parents give the monster the same treatment they'd given their son: 'Not now, Bernard'. The book ends with the monster in Bernard's bed, complaining that he doesn't want milk and a cookie at bedtime, 'But I'm a monster', he says. 'Not now, Bernard', says Bernard's mother. The moral of the story is clear: listen to children, or they will turn into monsters.

It's a good moral. But the gospel goes further than that.

Jesus' words go beyond the child psychiatrist or the family therapist or the provocative children's story-writer. Jesus isn't saying, 'Listen to children, because it's good for children to tell you what they're thinking and feeling, and it makes them feel loved and important'. Jesus is saying, 'Listen to children, because they know something you don't know, something you need to know, something that lies at the heart of the universe, something that lies at the heart of God'.

'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth', says Jesus, 'because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

Jesus is saying God is made known to children, in a way that God is not made known to adults, even the wise and intelligent. That's not because children are special; it's not because they're innocent; it's not because of some innate insight children have – it's because God has chosen to order creation this way. And so, if you want to know God, you're going to want to stay close to children. And listen to what they say. Not for their sake, but for yours.

Why has God chosen to order creation this way?

Because in Jesus' sight nothing is wasted, inferior, unimportant, of no account. Nothing is ignored. God doesn't just speak through children. God likes to speak through whatever and whoever is widely ignored. God has a heart for Bernard, not because he's a child, but because he's ignored. Ignoring an aspect of God's creation is an insult to God the Creator. Cherishing and listening to neglected parts of God's creation, especially in human form, is a vital dimension of the way we worship and come to know God.

Samuel Wells concludes his chapter asking Whom do you ignore? What do you ignore? What in your regular surroundings do you constantly overlook? Who in your circle or community do you regard as of no account? To whom do you consistently find yourself saying, 'Not Now Bernard'? What in yourself do you profoundly neglect? Listen up. You may have just discovered where God is revealing the secret of all things.

During the interlude please ponder the words of this meditation and offer to God the people and concerns of your heart.

INTERCESSIONS led by Chris Clarke

Brother God, your little ones come seeking you in your house –
peering round pillars of ancient strength,
listening to the sound of bell and organ,
scampering up and down the aisles,
finding their own routes round and round,
guided by your Spirit;
fascinated by the latch mechanisms of ancient doors,
experimenting with the echo of young voices,
in silent awe of beautiful colours
telling even more beautiful stories.

Jesus, who called little ones to be with you and
they heard your voice beyond the protestations of adults,
call again the little ones of this nation to the cradling of your love.
May they come wriggling, toddling,
straining at the leash, leaning forward from their wheeled transport,
giving ear to your call.
In our communities, Lord, let them hear of your mighty incarnation,
your baptism in the River Jordan,
your death on a cross for their salvation,
your bursting from the spiced tomb –
come, you little ones, come! **Amen**

HAPPY, YOU WHO ARE POOR

Happy, you who are poor in heart; **yours is the kingdom of God.**
Happy, you who are clear in heart; **you will see God.**
Happy, you who are gentle; **the future belongs to you.**
Happy, you who hunger for justice; **you will be filled.**
Happy, you who weep for the world; **you will laugh.**
Happy, you who are peacemakers; **you will be called God's children.**
Happy, are you when you are defamed or excluded; **leap for joy, your reward in heaven is great.**
Through Christ, our Lord, Amen

As our Saviour taught us so we pray

**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

CHANT 3 O Lord, hear my prayer



WE AFFIRM – OUR GOD IS THE GOD OF ALL HUMANS (Echoes St Patrick’s Creed)

Our God is the God of all humans, the God of heaven and earth, the God of seas and rivers, the God of the sun and moon, the God of the stars and planets, the God of the lofty mountains, the God of the lowly valleys.

God is above the heavens and is beneath the heavens.

Heaven and earth and sea and everything that is in them are God’s abode.

God inspires all things, gives life to all things, stands above all things.

God is the light-giver of the sun, the night and the stars.

It is God who makes wells in and land and islands in the sea, who places the stars in service of the galaxies.

God has a Son who is co-eternal and similar with himself; the Son is not younger than the Father, nor the Father older than the Son, and the Holy Spirit breathes in them.

And the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are inseparable. **Amen.**

CHANT 4: Sing to the Lord all my being

Sing to the Lord, all my be - ing, let
Lo - be den Herrn, mei - ne See - le, und

ev - 'ry - thing in me pro - claim God's sal - va - tion. Sing to the Lord, all my
al - les in mir sei - nen hei - li - gen Na - men! Lo - be den Herrn, mei - ne

be - ing, and re - mem - ber all of God's mar - vel - ous deeds!
See - le, und ver - giß nicht, was er dir Gu - tes ge - tan!

CLOSING PRAYER and BLESSING

Great Spirit, who broods over the world, restore the garment of our self-respect, and remake us in your beauty.

Renew in us the stillness of our being, the soundness of our bodies and the secret of our wholeness.

And the blessing

Taizé service texts have been resourced from:

The Rhythm of Life: Celtic Daily Prayer
© 1996 David Adam, SPCK

Liturgies from Lindisfarne,
© 2010 Ray Simpson, Published by Kevin Mayhew.

A Place at the table. Liturgies and Resources for Christ-centred Hospitality.
© 2008 Dilly Baker published by Canterbury Press

Meditation: How then shall we live? written by Samuel Wells
© Canterbury Press 2016

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