

Worship at Home – 7th September 2025 (23rd in Ordinary Time)
A short act of worship for use in people's homes prepared by Helen Watson.

Introduction

Hello, my name is Helen Watson and I'm a Methodist Local Preacher in the Berkshire and Hampshire Borders Circuit. It's good to be with you today!

This is the start of 'Creation Time', four weeks dedicated to prayer for creation and for sustainable lifestyles. This year the theme is 'Peace with Creation'.

Call to worship (Psalm 117)

All you nations, praise the Lord. All you people on earth, praise him.
Great is his love for us. The LORD is faithful forever. Praise the Lord

Hymn – STF 100 – All things bright and beautiful Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

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| 1 | <i>All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.</i>
Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
he made their glowing colours,
he made their tiny wings:
<i>Refrain</i> | 2 | <i>The purple heathered mountain,
the river running by,
the sunset, and the morning
that brightens up the sky:
Refrain</i> |
| | | 3 | <i>The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden,
he made them every one:
Refrain</i> |
| | 4 | | <i>He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God almighty,
who has made all things well:
Refrain</i> |

Opening prayers

Lord, we come to worship you,
the one who cares for us more deeply than we can understand.
Give us the confidence to care deeply for others, as you care for us.

We give you thanks, most gracious God,
for the beauty of earth and sky and sea;
for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers;
for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers.
We praise you for these good gifts,
and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity.
We give you thanks, most gracious God,
For the love of family and friends;
For the richness of human relationships;
For the sight and sounds of the people around us.
Forgive us when we forget these good things and act as if it is only us who matters.
Forgive us when we avoid the truth, when we behave foolishly and in ignorance.
Forgive us when we are unkind.

We give you thanks, loving and forgiving Lord, that when we come to you with sorrowful hearts, you are always waiting to forgive and to forget.

Grant that we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation, to the honour and glory of your Name. **Amen**

You may now wish to say The Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Bible reading – Isaiah 32:14 – 18

¹⁴ The royal palace will be left empty.

The noisy city will be deserted.

The fort and lookout tower will become

a dry and empty desert forever.

Donkeys will enjoy being there.

Flocks will eat there.

¹⁵ That will continue until the Holy Spirit

is poured out on us from heaven.

Then the desert will be turned into rich farm lands.

The rich farm lands will seem like a forest.

¹⁶ In the desert, the Lord will make sure people do what is right.

In the rich farm lands he will make sure they treat one another fairly.

¹⁷ Doing what is right will bring peace and rest.

When my people do that, they will stay calm

and trust in the Lord forever.

¹⁸ They will live in a peaceful land.

Their homes will be secure.

They will enjoy peace and quiet.

Reflection on the reading

Isaiah started badly but he finished well – with Spirit!

He's describing Israel as a place where human greed led to injustice and war, a place where the people needed to start behaving with justice, to respect to each other and the world in which they lived. They needed to turn back to God. It sounds a desolate place, but at the end of Isaiah's passage there is hope!

How does this relate to us now? When we look around at our world we see war, famine and injustice day by day, sometimes locally and sometimes in global situations. If you're like me, you want to help, but it's difficult to know what to do. If you're like me, you feel helpless.

This means that our attitude to God is more likely as not to be helpless and hopeless. Where is he and what can he do to bring peace and healing to the world?

It seems at first as if the problems of the world and of creation are too big for us and they need solutions well beyond our abilities. Where is God and what can he do, we ask? But Jesus reminds us that with God, all things are possible. So, with God's help, there are things that we can do. We can restore our relationship with God and our relations with those around us. God brings hope, kindness and peace, and so can we. We can speak out against injustice and support those who are taking action. And we can pray, as we are doing now, and as Isaiah did, for God's Spirit to show his great love and inspiration. So that every living thing in this world may be fruitful, calm and peaceful.

There are things we can do. We can play our part.

In the town where I live there are two organisations working to make the town a better place. Firstly, there is a group which go round the footpaths picking up litter. It's amazing how much they find! And secondly, the 'Bloomers' have placed hanging baskets and other flower containers around the streets. Now the town is filled with colourful blooms which bring joy to everyone. Small things, but important.

May the Spirit be poured upon us now so we can work together for peace with Creation. **Amen**

Hymn – STF 693 – Beauty for brokenness Graham Kendrick (born 1950)

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| 1 Beauty for brokenness,
hope for despair,
Lord, in your suffering world
this is our prayer.
Bread for the children,
justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset,
your kingdom increase! | 2 Shelter for fragile lives,
cures for their ills,
work for the craftsmen,
trade for their skills;
land for the dispossessed,
rights for the weak,
voices to plead the cause
of those who can't speak:
<i>God of the poor,
friend of the weak,
give us compassion we pray;
melt our cold hearts,
let tears fall like rain;
come, change our love
from a spark to a flame.</i> |
| 3 Refuge from cruel wars,
havens from fear,
cities for sanctuary,
freedoms to share.
Peace to the killing-fields,
scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness,
his cross for the pain. | |
| 4 Rest for the ravaged earth,
oceans and streams
plundered and poisoned -
our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness,
carelessness, greed;
make us content with
the things that we need.
<i>Chorus</i> | 5 Lighten our darkness,
breathe on this flame
until your justice burns
brightly again;
until the nations
learn of your ways,
seek your salvation
and bring you their praise.
<i>Chorus</i> |

Prayers for the world, others and ourselves

Let us pray.

O Lord, our God, help us to call you in the communion of your Church with one heart and one soul, according to your will.

We pray for your created world. You created the universe and all that lives there. The earth is filled with your creations. You make the grass, plants, and fruit-bearing trees grow, you feed the birds of the sky, you care for all your creatures on Earth. Out of your love you created human beings, give us the strength to faithfully till and work to keep your created world according to your will.

We pray for humanity, for every community, and every person in it. Grant that we may treat our fellow human beings with respect: that we may accept all in their diversity, that we may support and uphold the human dignity of our neighbours. Give us a grateful heart, that we may see ourselves as part of the great and rich whole of which you have created humanity. Grant us understanding, responsible thinking, and valuable work.

We pray for your Church, that she may be a messenger of life and an agent of your love throughout the world. Instil courage in the hearts of those who follow you, that we may dare to proclaim hope to those who live in fear, encouragement to those who doubt, comfort to those who despair. Give your Church the strength of unity to proclaim your Gospel in word and deed as part of the world in crisis.

We pray for the sick, the destitute, the oppressed and the vulnerable. We pray for our fellow human beings and for all fellow creatures affected by war, conflict, genocide, and ecocide. Serve justice to those who cry out to you, and to those who have no ability to cry out. Humble our hearts to relate to our fellow creatures in distress as true siblings. Give us the courage to act on behalf of those who silently endure injustice and guide our steps in the way of righteousness and long-lasting peace. Act in our world your life-giving will.

Great God, grant that the future of the world, of humanity, of the Church and of all people may be in your hands, and that we may live in true hope, justice, and peace for the sake of our living Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Hymn – STF 338 – There is a Redeemer Melody Green (fl.1982), v3 by Keith Green (1953-1982)

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| 1 There is a Redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
holy One.
<i>Thank You, O my Father,
 for giving us Your Son,
 and leaving Your Spirit
 till the work on earth is done.</i> | 2 Jesus my Redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
O for sinners slain:
<i>Chorus</i> |
| | 3 When I stand in glory
I will see His face,
and there I'll serve my King for ever
in that holy place.
<i>Chorus</i> |

Blessing

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you and with those you love today, tomorrow and forever. **Amen**

Bible readings from [New International Reader's Version \(NIRV\)](#)

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