

## W@H 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026

### Introduction

Hello, my name is Helen Watson and I'm a Methodist Local Preacher in the Berkshire and Hampshire Borders Circuit. It's lovely to welcome you to worship today, in the third week in Lent

### Call to Worship<sup>2</sup>

Almighty God, whose arms are open to all,  
we gather to meet you and hear your word for us today;  
for you know us, all we have done and all that we are.  
You offer us 'living water', all that we need for our lives today.

**Amen**

### Hymn                      STF57                      Let all the world in every corner sing, my God and King

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)

Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words Edition, number 57

### Prayer<sup>2</sup> and Lords Prayer

God, all-seeing, all-knowing, and everywhere-present,  
we bow in humble adoration of your perfect wisdom.  
Jesus, love of the Father made flesh to dwell among us,  
we come to adore your divinity wrapped in humanity.  
Holy Spirit, messenger, comforter and counsellor,  
imparting Christ's teaching to our waiting, thirsting hearts;  
be present with us now

Thank you, Lord, for meeting us in our place of need.  
When we are burdened by worldly cares, you come to us  
and tell us of a world beyond our worries and toil,  
where barriers of convention are cast aside and we are all one in you.  
We thank you, Father, that the kingdom of heaven is in the midst of us,  
and that here you shape our characters in the likeness of Christ, to bear better witness in  
the world around us

We confess, O Lord,  
that we see ourselves blinkered by the toil of everyday life;

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dragged down by the past and what it has made us.

We confess that we are slow to recognise your presence – the shaft of light that shines upon our darkness and shifts our perspective on who we are and who we might become.

Thirsting, we ask you to refresh the dry landscapes of our lives and unburden us of the weight of past deeds, so we may begin again.

O Lord, you forgive us on so many levels:

for being bound by unconfessed sins; for caring too much about our physical wants and needs; for ignoring the drought in our spirits.

Thank you for your forgiveness, when we open ourselves to your presence and pledge to do better.

**Amen.**

We say together 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 today 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.**

### **Reading      John 4: 5 – 15<sup>1</sup>**

Here Jesus is travelling from Judea to Galilee.

He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar. It was near the piece of land Jacob had given his son Joseph.

Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from the journey. So he sat down by the well. It was about noon.

A woman from Samaria came to get some water. Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew. I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" She said this because Jews don't have anything to do with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "You do not know what God's gift is. And you do not know who is asking you for a drink. If you did, you would have asked him. He would have given you living water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you don't have anything to get water with. The well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"

Jesus answered, "All who drink this water will be thirsty again.

But anyone who drinks the water I give them will never be thirsty. In fact, the water I give them will become a spring of water in them. It will flow up into eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water. Then I will never be thirsty

### **Reflection<sup>2</sup>**

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The land where Jesus lived is described today as ‘water-stressed’ and sharing water among Middle Eastern peoples has become a major problem. In Jesus’ day, villages owned their own wells, but there were access issues in a different way – travelling distances to draw water from a deep well was a heavy job. Water drawn from unseen places is a powerful symbol of the spirit of life: its hidden depths, the relationships between those who drink it and whether it should be seen as a commodity or a gift.

In John 4, Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well. She comes for water, but Jesus offers ‘living water’ – a source that will never run dry. The contrast is striking: the well is a place of repetitive effort and is governed by traditions; the living water is internal, overflowing and free. She no longer needs to return to the same place, bound by shame or history. Worship, too, is reimagined: it’s no longer tied to a mountain or temple but opened to the Spirit and truth. The Samaritan woman’s transformation is radical. She leaves behind her water jar – a symbol of scarcity – and becomes a messenger of abundance. Like the disciples who left their fishing nets, she steps into a new identity, overflowing with purpose and joy. Her story reminds us that abundance is not about having more. It’s about being filled with the life of God and sharing it freely

In the introduction to his study guide Gospel of John, David Ford writes: “[God] is full of grace and truth, and from his abundance, we have all received grace. His purpose is to offer us life, and John’s Gospel aims to draw readers into this boundless, everlasting love: the love between Jesus and his Father, the very love that brought the universe into existence. I believe the purpose of John’s Gospel is to draw readers and listeners into that superabundant love of God, which is new and everlasting life

**Amen**

**Hymn STF248      I heard the voice of Jesus say, ‘Come unto me and rest’**

1

I heard the voice of Jesus say :  
‘Come unto me and rest ;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast.’

I came to Jesus as I was,  
weary and worn and sad,  
I found in him a resting-place,  
and he has made me glad.

2 I heard the voice of Jesus say :  
‘Behold, I freely give  
the living water ; thirsty one,  
stoop down and drink and live.’

I came to Jesus, and I drank

Horatius N. Bonar (1808–1889)

of that life-giving stream ;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul  
revived,  
and now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say :  
‘I am this dark world's Light ;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,  
and all your day be bright.’  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun ;  
and in that light of life I'll walk,  
till travelling days are done.

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STF 249

### **Prayers of Intercession<sup>2</sup>**

God of wisdom,

We bring to you today our prayers for the world and those who live in it. Hear our prayers and bring your healing and your peace to our world.

God of mercy, we pray for those who thirst for justice. We hold before you those who work in the courts and the whole legal system. May they be conscientious in pursuing the truth that justice may be applied even-handedly to all who seek it.

Quench their thirst with your living water.

God of peace, we pray for those who thirst for peace. We remember all those who are suffering as a result of warfare and civil strife. We especially commend to you the people of the Middle East in this time of escalation of violence.

Quench their thirst with your living water.

God of compassion, we pray for those who thirst for healing and restoration. We hold before you all aid workers especially those working alongside the victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Give them wisdom, insight and strength to meet the needs of the day and the vision to build for the future.

Quench their thirst with your living water.

God of love, we pray for those who thirst for your presence and your healing touch. Be near to those who are sick in hospitals and at home and those who care for them.

We particularly remember those known to us. Give them patience and strength to carry on and may the assurance of your presence bring them hope.

Quench their thirst with your living water.

We bring ourselves to you, O God, and ask that we may receive the thirst-quenching power of your living water and that we may be renewed, restored and re-invigorated for our discipleship.

We pray in the name of Jesus who offers living water to all.

**Amen**

**Hymn STF465**

**Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land**

1 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
pilgrim through this barren land ;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty ;  
hold me with thy powerful hand :  
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,  
feed me now and evermore ;  
feed me now and evermore.

2 Open thou the crystal fountain  
whence the healing stream shall  
flow ;  
let the fiery, cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through :  
strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,  
be thou still my strength and shield ;  
be thou still my strength and shield.

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3 When I tread the verge of Jordan  
bid my anxious fears subside ;  
death of death, and hell's  
destruction,

land me safe on Canaan's side :  
songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee ;  
I will ever give to thee.

William Williams (1717–1791)

*translated by* Peter Williams (1727–1796)

Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words Edition, number 465

### **Blessing**

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us and with those we love and remain with us forever.

**Amen**

### **Acknowledgements**

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