

MID WEEK WORSHIP - 7 October 2022 led by Nigel Crisp

Opening Hymn Jesus Stand among us

Responsive Psalm

Psalm 106

Praise the Lord!

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures for ever.

Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord
or fully declare his praise?

Blessed are they who maintain justice,
who constantly do what is right.

Remember me, O Lord, when you show favour
to your people,
come to my aid when you save them,

that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen
ones,
that I may share in the joy of your nation
and join the inheritance in giving praise.

We have sinned, even as our fathers did;
we have done wrong and acted without
thought.

Save us, O Lord our God,
and gather us from the nations
that we may give thanks to your holy name
and glory in your praise.

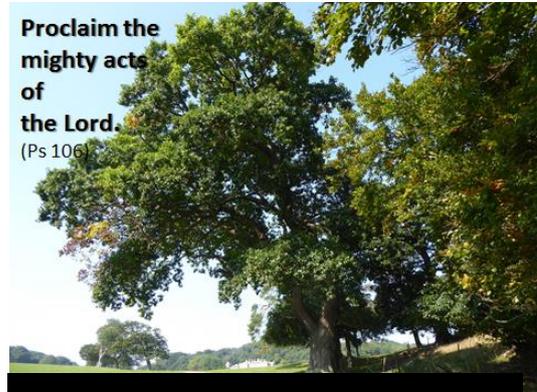
Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
Let the people say, "Amen!"

Praise the Lord.

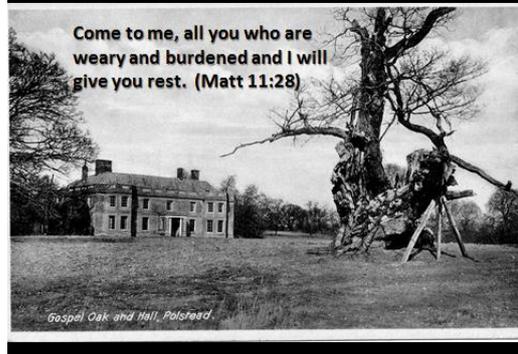
Tree Texts

Taking what was written in the October newsletter about the book 'The Oak Papers' where the author, James Canton, explores how we as humans can connect with nature, drawing wellbeing from knowing the oak tree, the slides this morning takes images of trees and attempts to home into biblical texts to gather meaning. Initially it was hoped to use just the words of Psalm 106, but it didn't seem to work so we looked wider in Scripture.

Oak Tree In the OT the oaks of Bashan (to the east of Galilee) was the religious symbol of strength. (Genesis 35:8)



The Gospel Oak was the place early Christians in the Britain met before the building of church buildings. This is Polstead Gospel Oak before it finally gave out. It is close to the church and saplings have taken its place.



Beech Tree at Higham planted in 1953 to celebrate the Coronation of our Queen – today a celebration of longevity. *Planted by my grandad's old friend Oscar Easey – himself a man of longevity.*



Horse Chestnut Tree at Layham where I gather conkers in my pre-school days. A symbol of joy and pleasure.



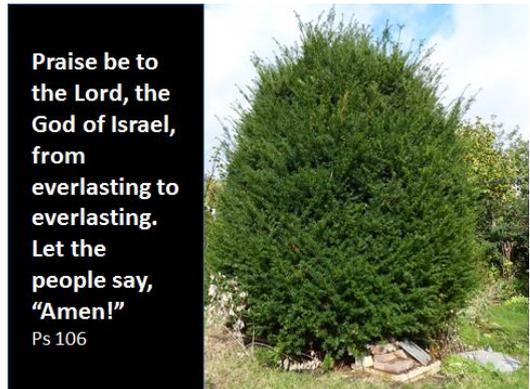
Rowan Tree with its bright autumn berries for the birds to feast on. Symbols of the good gifts that God gives us all.



Olive Tree. In the Old Testament olive oil was used for the lights of the Temple (Exodus 27:20). In the New Testament the light that shines is Jesus.



Yew Tree. A symbol of longevity - even eternal longevity – cut it done and it still springs back into life. The love of Jesus can never be extinguished.



Prayers of Intercession (Essentially those of Sunday October 4)

Father God

May our prayers of intercession

- our prayers for others
- be prayers of thanksgiving and solidarity
- prayers reaching out with compassion, justice and peace.
- prayers reflecting something how it must be to suffer in the world at this moment

Hear our prayers Lord

And may we strive to be guided to see where and for whom

- our reaching out, our lives, our actions,
- might be the answer to someone's prayer.

Lord God [Covid 19]

We pray for unity across the world in dealing with this Covid 19 crisis

- for a compassionate and a common mind in stopping the spread
- and cooperation in a means of combatting the virus through vaccines or whatever.

This week we have seen infection rates continue to rise in this country and around the world

- we have seen the world death rate reach one million
- we have seen mounting concern over our stability of living
 - through loss of homes,
 - unemployment
 - financial change and debt
 - and health services world wide

Father

- **we pray** for those who grieve through the loss of loved ones
 - that they will be comforted
- for those hit by the virus and are still to recover
 - that recovery may come
- for those separated from loved ones in care homes or hospital
 - that they may be comforted
- for those continuing to self-isolate because of their health conditions
 - that they will not be anxious or lonely
 - that they will find safety in you
- for those who are engrossed in worry and despair through having lost employment, security and even their homes,
 - that they may find hope
 - that through compassion in local government, food banks and the like, help will be there
- **we pray** for those in places of local lockdown, crowded living, students trapped in halls of residents
 - that through the careful and harmonious living of us all real freedoms may come
- **we pray** that this virus may abate – however that may be
 - and that this world may find a new normal, better than the old.

Father we pray for all the many issues of world health in crisis

Lord God [General]

We have so many other concerns for this world at the moment

- many which we may forget with Covid 19 dominating our thinking and our news
- so much news goes unknown, un-reported or just forgotten
- yet so much is integral to striving for the better world that we seek

We think and pray therefore

- over issues around conflict and desires for peace around the world
 - particularly this week that peace may overcome the fighting that has erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan
- for displaced peoples and refugee camps and in particular those who face great loss following the Moria Camp fire on the island of Lesbos
- for the issues around climate change and the health of our planet
- for the issues around energy use and carbon footprints
- for our excessive use of plastics
- for leadership of the world where honesty, justice and peace so often get lost
 - particularly that sense, intellect and decency may emerge in the apparently shambolic state of the US presidential election.
- for our own government in the tremendous challenges that they face
 - that our parliament will demand integrity and competence
- for the many small apparently insignificant issues that pass our minds each day,
 - be with us in our living and desire for a better world.

Lord God [Summary]

In gratitude,

- we honour the gifts of life and love that come from you
- shared with us by friends and those who care,
- families and the creatures who share our world.

May thankfulness mark our meditations,

- enliven our spirits
- and reorient us to
- our life's vocation
- finding your Spirit.

In silence let us pray for the earth and its people

- for particular people and situations known to us
- where comfort, justice and healing are needed.

<read names in blue book>

Receive our prayers, our words, our sighs and our longings In Jesus' name we pray.

Lord's Prayer

Amen

Closing Hymn Who is this Man? Words: Mary Pearson: Tune Londonderry Air

Who is this man, who gathered people to him
and touched their lives along each dusty way,
who spoke to all with passion and with peacefulness
and valued all their ordinary days?
Who is this man, who at the day's long ending,
would draw apart to wait on God and pray?
Who, in the mystery that knows no ending,
would find God's wisdom
and would know God's words to say?

Who is this man, who spoke to men of gentleness
and showed them all the children at his side;
who taught of love and justice for all people,
and took a towel and washed away their pride?
In him they saw the strength of truth and mercy,
and how he trusted God to be his guide,
knew how he led them through misunderstanding,
and then forgave them when they ran away to hide.

Who is this man, who gave to women dignity
in partnership of worth and equal grace?
Who listened to the stories that they told him,
and honoured each whatever was their place;
who let them choose to come and join his company
and learned with them God's love of every race,
who showed to each the courage of their nature
to care and tend each lonely and each suffering
face?

Who is this man, who calls us now to follow,
a shadow presence asking us to be
companions on the way through this life journey,
to live in truth, to set our tired world free?
So, let us find each other now in partnership,
with ears to hear and eyes awake to see,
that we might grow in grace and understanding,
and walk beside that man who comes from Galilee.

The Grace