

# Praying for our community

## Saturday 19th April 2008

*Please feel free to light a candle before, or at any point during, this time of prayer*

### Welcome and Introduction

### Listening

We hear a recording of two Croxteth young people Tom and Chelsea interviewing the Chief Constable of Merseyside Police, Bernard Hogan-Howe, on 'Broadcasting House', BBC Radio 4, Sunday 13 April 2008. Interspersed with verses from *All the Wonder that Surrounds Us*, John L Bell © 2002, Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community, Glasgow:

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|---|---|
| 1 All the wonder that surrounds us<br>springs from God's care:<br>all that marvels or confounds us,<br>raw, rich or rare;<br>touch and texture, sights and voices,<br>nature's countless forms and choices:<br>all for which the heart rejoices<br>springs from God's care. | 3 How can we revere God's goodness<br>meant for all time?<br>How ensure that each uniqueness<br>keeps in its prime?<br>How shall we revere with pleasure<br>all God gives for life and leisure,<br>how preserve that earthly treasure<br>meant for all time?                  |
| 2 Every creature, every human<br>lives by God's grace:<br>every family, man and woman,<br>culture and race;<br>those whom fortune seems to favour,<br>those exploited for their labour,<br>those who need to know a neighbour<br>live by God's grace.                       | 4 God has willed that peace and justice<br>walk hand in hand.<br>These, with love, shall build<br>foundations<br>on which we'll stand:<br>love for lover, friend and stranger,<br>love defying death and danger,<br>love as first born in a manger -<br>heaven close at hand. |

### Prayer of Penitence and Preparation

We gather in the presence of the One who is making us.  
We gather in the presence of the One who is healing us.  
We gather in the presence of the One who is guiding us.  
**We gather in love and adoration.**

Where we have failed to listen: **God, open our ears**  
Where we have failed to see: **God, open our eyes**  
Where we have failed to understand: **God, open our hearts**  
Where we have failed to praise: **God, open our mouths**

We gather in the presence of the One who is shaping us.  
We gather in the presence of the One who is helping us.  
We gather in the presence of the One who forgives us.  
**We gather together in praise.**

Jim Cotter from *Out of the Silence...Into the Silence*, Cairns Publications, Harlech 2006 (adapted)

**Song: All Are Welcome**

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- 1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live  
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome  
In this place
- 2 Let us build a house where prophets speak and words are strong and true  
Where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew  
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome  
In this place
- 3 Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat  
A banquet hall on holy ground, where peace and justice meet  
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space  
As we share with Christ the feast that frees us  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome  
In this place
- 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone  
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach and love the Word they've known  
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face  
Let us bring an end to fear and danger  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome  
In this place
- 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard  
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word  
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace  
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter  
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome  
In this place

**A Benedicite for the city**

Let the sounds of the city bless you, great God,  
the quiet hum of engines sing your praise.  
May the laughter of children bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the people next door bless you, great God,  
the passers-by sing your praise.  
May strangers and friends bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the wheely-bin collectors bless you, great God,  
the meter readers sing your praise.  
May the deliverers of letters and parcels bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the city council bless you, great God,  
those who care for the streets sing your praise.  
May the park keepers and tree surgeons bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the health authority bless you, great God,  
the local surgeries sing your praise.  
May the hospitals and hospices bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let those who work with computers bless you, great God,  
those who sweep offices sing your praise.  
May those who keep guard and those in charge bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the shopping malls and leisure centres bless you, great God,  
the swimming pools sing your praise.  
May the sports grounds and stadiums bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the cinemas and theatres bless you, great God,  
the concert halls sing your praise.  
May the pubs and cafes bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the police and the courts bless you, great God,  
the firefighters sing your praise.  
May the ambulance drivers bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the taxis and buses, the trains and trams bless you, great God,  
the drivers and conductors sing your praise.  
May the mechanics and engineers bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Let the places of prayer bless you, great God,  
the cathedrals and churches sing your praise.  
May the synagogues, mosques, and temples bless you, Beloved,  
**praise your name and glorify you for ever.**

Jim Cotter from *Out of the Silence...Into the Silence*, Cairns Publications, Harlech 2006

### **Reading: Revelation 22.1-7** *The River and the Tree of Life*

1 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. *continues...*

6 And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.

7 "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

© New American Standard Bible

## **Intercessions including placing of prayer leaves on the tree**

*All are invited, in turn, to make a prayer for the community. This may be done silently, or spoken out loud. You may also like to write a prayer on the leaf which you have been given, and having written it - at any point in the prayers - to take the leaf and place it on the prayer tree.*

## **Prayer for the bearing of fruit**

Creator, whose gift is the tree of life: **may that tree flourish in our community;**  
Saviour, whose kingdom is abundant life: **may the leaves of that tree bring us healing;**  
Spirit, who enables us to live a new life: **may the fruit of that tree be shown in us here.**

## **Song**

*During this song you will be offered a piece of fruit to carry out with you into the community, with your prayers and intentions.*

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| 1 One is the body and one is the Head,<br>one is the Spirit by whom we are led;<br>one God and Father,<br>one faith and one call for all.  | 3 Gifts have been given well suited to each;<br>some to be prophets, to pastor or preach,<br>some, through the Gospel,<br>to challenge, convert and teach.         |
| 2 Christ who ascended to heaven above<br>is the same Jesus whose nature is love,<br>who once descended<br>to bring to this earth new birth | 4 Called to his service are women and men<br>so that his body might ever again<br>witness through worship,<br>through deed and through word<br>to Christ our Lord. |

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## **The Sending out**

May God's goodness be ours.  
Well, seven times well, may we spend our lives.  
May each of us be an isle in the sea,  
may each of us be a star in the dark,  
may each of us be a staff to the weak.  
**May the love Christ Jesus gave fill every heart for us.**  
**May the love Christ Jesus gave fill us for every heart.**

Service prepared and presented by Revd John Davies,  
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