

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

The Revd Heather McIntyre
Friday 8th May 2020



Opening Psalm 108: 1-4

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing
and make melody. Awake, my soul!

Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn.

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples, and I will
sing praises to you among the nations.

For your steadfast love is higher than the heavens, and your
faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

Prayer:

Faithful and loving God, as you always welcome us with an
open heart, so now we welcome you into these moments of quiet
and reflection. Be with us by your Spirit we pray and help us to
find our still centre in you. Lift our hearts and minds to you that
we may sing your praises and know afresh your life in us. As we
come before you wherever we are, may this place be your holy
place.

Amen

Reading: Colossians 3:14-17

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Reflection and prayer:

Music is part of who we are as human beings. We all know that music stirs the soul and engages the heart. But music isn't just something that happens *to* us. Music is something we *do*: human beings sing. Not all of us are good at keeping a tune but most of us still sing—or at least we hum along under our breath to the tunes we hear others sing. I love singing, but I certainly sing louder when others aren't within earshot!

In society down through the ages people have often sung together. Whether it's folk tunes, anthems, hymns, or chants at sporting events, singing has brought people together, stirred hearts and souls, and enabled people to express together what they love and long for.

This evening, the 8th May 2020, as we commemorate VE day there will be a concert at the Royal Albert Hall, without an audience of course, but at which Katherine Jenkins will perform some of the wartime favourites. Dame Vera Lynn will join her to sing a virtual duet of “We'll meet again” and the nation will be

encouraged to come together in song wherever they are. Just as in London on VE Day 1945, over a million people celebrated victory in Europe and the end of nearly six years of war, so it is hoped that the spirit of commemoration and celebration will once again lift the spirits of those joining together in song this evening.

Singing can raise our spirits, it can lift our hearts to God, and it can help us feel connected with one another. In this passage, Paul encourages his readers to sing with one another to God. Although at the moment we can't do that in person, let us today join together in lifting our hearts to God through the words of a beautiful hymn and may it be a way of encouraging both ourselves and one another in our journey of faith:

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth

Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Blessing:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound with hope by the power of the Holy
Spirit.

Amen