

Winchester, Eastleigh and Romsey Circuit

**Worship at home: Sunday 12 May 2024,
A Service For Christian Aid Week.
Prepared by Graham Hepburn**

Call to worship (Psalm 102 verses 1-2), a prayer of an afflicted person who has grown weak and pours out a lament before the Lord.

Hear my prayer, Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly.

Listen, read, pray or sing along

We begin with the hymn 'We lay our broken world In sorrow at your feet,' (StF 718), <https://youtube.com/watch?v=kvmXNG6VXJU>

We lay our broken world
In sorrow at your feet,
Haunted by hunger, war and fear,
Oppressed by power and hate.

Here human life seems less
That profit, might and pride,
Though to unite us all in you
You lived and loved and died.

We bring our broken towns,
Our neighbours hurt and bruised;
You show us how old pain and wounds
For new life can be used

We bring our broken loves,
Friends parted, families torn;
Then in your life and death we see
That love must be reborn.

We bring our broken selves,
Confused and closed and tired;
Then through your gift of healing grace
New purpose is inspired.

O Spirit, on us breathe,
With life and strength anew;
Find in us love, and hope and trust,
And lift us up to you.

Anna Briggs (b 1947)

Brokenness

We are broken, Lord
Broken by pain, physical and mental
Broken by families where there is turmoil and trouble
Broken by a world that is indifferent to the suffering of others
Broken by war, neighbour fighting neighbour
Broken by suffering in a broken world
But in our brokenness we find you,
your presence the cement that holds us together
In our brokenness we see your healing
Hear your healing words
Feel your healing touch
Crucified Christ you were broken on the cross
And in your brokenness found wholeness
Help us to find the wholeness that we seek
Amen

Pauline Jones

Prayer of Light and Love

May we remember the power of our kindness,
thoughtfulness and care
through our smiles to strangers,
hugs to loved ones,
gifts to those less fortunate.

When we are low and feeling hopeless,
may we remember the times we have felt joy,
happiness and love;
cherished times when we shared a meal,
story, warmth or company
with a stranger or loved one;
times we've received praise for work;
times we collectively stood up for justice,
surrounded by love and solidarity.

May we remember the beauty surrounding us;
the sunrises and sunsets,
be they over snowy white mountains
or smog-filled cities;
they joys of rain,
and the sun which warms and supports us.
With everything we say and do,
may God's light and love shine strongly
through.

May we let our lives speak.

Amen

*by Anya Nanning Ramamurthy, a young British Quaker
involved in the movement for climate justice*

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Bible Readings

- Matthew 2, verses 13-15a

'The escape to Egypt'

- Hebrews 11, verses 13-16

Reflection - Longing For Home'

The 2021 Christian Aid Book 'Rage and Hope - 75 Prayers for a Better World - Celebrating 75 years of Christian Aid', contains 75 reflections/mediations/prayers written by contributors from around the world. Copied below in full is the contribution, written by Rev George Kopti. I hope that you will agree with me, that in 2024, it is even more relevant now than it was when it was written around 2021. Reproduced with permission.

"I am part of a Palestinian family that found refuge in Jordan after being forced out of their homeland and their family in Jaffa, Palestine, in 1948.

My grandparents fled from Jaffa after the sad massacre of Palestinians that happened in Deir Yassein.* That massacre forced many families to leave their homes and belongings to escape a similar fate.

My grandparents left Jaffa with two little girls that were two and four years old (my aunts). My grandmother was also pregnant with my father and in her last days of pregnancy. She delivered my father in a small village called 'Abboud in the West Bank a few days after

walking out of Jaffa. She didn't find a place to deliver him except the village's public hall. My father was practically born a refugee 'on the road' because there was no other option.

It strikes me that my father's birth story resembles the gospel story of Jesus' birth. The context is the same, the land is the same, and the human brutality is the same! Jesus was born in a manger because there was no other place to host the Holy family; he had to escape Herod's massacre. What strikes me more is that Jesus was not only the first 'Christian' refugee, but also that there is no evidence (in the Bible or the extra-biblical literature) that Jesus came back to his birthplace, not even for a visit.

Going back home is a dream of every refugee, a home that is safe and stable, Hebrews 11, verses 13 to 16, gives me hope. People of faith who left their homeland, either by force or by choice, to follow God's guidance are called for a better country. That doesn't mean that Palestinians have to forget about their homeland, but they have to live their faith and hope as witnesses for Christ while waiting and longing.

Part of my ministry is among Iraqi Christians who decided, after being forced out of their homes and homeland by ISIS to emigrate to Western countries to establish a better future for their children. It is hard to convince them to return home with the present situation, my charge to them on their way to the airport; 'God is calling you out of your land as he called Abraham in the Old Testament, to be blessed and a blessing to others, as Abraham was.'

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you experienced being a refugee. You had to flee from death and hostility. You have not returned home to your birthplace, You know the pain of refugees and their longing for their homelands and a better future.

I pray that you may bless all refugees, give them hope amid loss and sorrow. Bless them as they find comfort in you and believe in your

justice. Make them a blessing wherever you want them to be. Guide and protect them in the power of your Holy Spirit.

Amen”

(End of ‘Longing for Home, by George Kopti)

Listen, read, pray or sing along

Our next hymn is ‘For Everyone Born, A Place At The Table,’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-C3PXPG0zCw>

For everyone born, a place at the table,
For everyone born, clean water and bread,
A shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
For everyone born, a star overhead.

(Chorus)

And God will delight

*When we are creators of justice and joy,
Yes, God will delight*

*When we are creators of justice,
Justice and joy.*

For woman and man, a place at the table,
Revising the roles, deciding to share,
With wisdom and grace dividing the power,
For woman and man, a system that’s fair.

(chorus)

For young and for old, a place at the table,
A voice to be heard, a part in the song,
The hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
For young and for old, the right to belong.

(chorus)

For just and unjust, a place at the table,
Abuser, abused, with need to forgive,
In anger, in hurt, a mindset of mercy,
For just and unjust, a new way to live.

(chorus)

For everyone born, a place at the table,
To live without fear, and simply to be,
To work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
For everyone born, the right to be free.

(chorus, repeated)

*Words; Shirley Erena Murray, 1931,©1998
Hope Publishing Company*

*Tune; For Everyone Born, Music, Brian Mann,
1979.©2006 Brian Mann(admin . General
Board of Global Ministries, GBG Musik*

Intercessory prayer

We pray for refugees throughout the world suffering from poverty and injustice. For all people facing the impact of global climate change and the global migration crisis, as we try to imagine what it is like for them to have to leave their home and their families for any hope of a future.

- Those who feel displaced by recent events or events many years ago
- For all suffering in Israel/Palestine due to recent events or events many years ago
- For all families separated and suffering due to the ongoing war in Ukraine and other countries
- For all who still bear the scars of conflicts from many years ago
- We pray for all people affected by recent natural disasters and those who live with the longterm effects of natural disasters many years ago - earthquakes, droughts, famines and floods
- For all who have been and continue to be allowed to stand on their own and support their families and communities through the work of Christian Aid. We pray for farmers who provide essential food for their communities, and co-operatives which give people more power over their own lives.
- We pray for all Christian Aid’s campaigns, both the recently launched disaster appeals in response to current issues, and the long running ongoing campaigns around the world.

Offering and Prayer of Dedication

If you give your weekly offering through an envelope scheme or in cash, please set it aside, and pray with those who give using Standing orders.

Gracious God, accept these gifts, our money, and all our offerings, and with them our lives, to be used in mission and service through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

If you wish to donate to the work of Christian Aid, donations can be made online to <https://give.christianaid.org.uk/donate/CAM-004499> or by post to Christian Aid, 35-41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL

Listen, read, pray or sing along

Our final hymn is 'One human family God has made,' (StF 687)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnBjppHddkl>

1 One human family God has made,
and all for each to care.

One world, to be the home of all,
with all its wealth to share.

One Christ, to manifest on earth
love's ultimate design.

One Church to know the mystery
of broken bread and wine.

2 One race, one world - yet torn apart,
we spurn the way of love.

But still ahead, the Christ leads on
and calls his Church to move
from love of power to power of love,
to give the word to all -
to trust the love that conquered death
outside the city wall.

3 And are we brave enough to join
with that great company -
the cost not less than all we have
and are or hope to be -
the bitter cup of human sin
to drink with him who died,
and take his love outside the wall
to all the crucified?

4 Claim him who claims us for his own,
to share his pain and grief,
to bear the scars that stamp us his -
the hallmark of belief.

As partners of the living Christ,
who risk the path he trod,
with wondering love we find we share
the timeless joy of God.

Rosemary Wakelin (b.1932)

Sending and blessing

May we persevere in faith,
May we go out in hope,
May we act and speak with love,
By the grace of God, our creator, redeemer,
and comforter, Amen.

- *'Brokenness', From 'Dignity, Agency, Power', Stories prayers and reflections from 40 years of Church Action on Poverty, wild goose publications*
- *Prayer of Light and Love from Christian Aid Publication 'Mighty of Heart'*
- *Reflection - 'Longing For Home' is reproduced with permission from the Christian Aid Book 'Rage and Hope - 75 Prayers for a Better World - Celebrating 75 years of Christian Aid'.*
- *Rev George Kopti was born in Jordan. He graduated with BTh from the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut in 1998 and was ordained a priest in the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem in 2001. He obtained both an M.Div from the NEST in 2010 and an M.Th from Otago University, New Zealand in 2019, where his thesis was on Christian/Muslim Early relations.*
- **The massacre of 107 Palestinians at Deir Yassein is recounted by Jeremy Bowen in his excellent 2008 documentary 'The Birth of Israel', available on the BBC iplayer for the next five months. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00b91vj/the-birth-of-israel>*
- *I find the Al-Jazeera coverage (Freeview Channel 235) of the ongoing conflict, and especially the casualty figures in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank helpful in giving what I believe is a more comprehensive picture of events than is obtained from the British media.*

CCL 30794