

HOME *Worship*



July 2026

Sunday 5th July 2026

Trevor Millar

Read Psalm 46

This is a most comforting psalm. It begins by telling us that “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.” – verses 1 and 2 (NIV). How reassuring this is.

Doubts may well surface however when things start to look bad in our situation. When, as the psalmist points out in verse 3 “though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.” This is because we are more aware of our own weakness than the Lord’s strength.

Looking back over our lives there have been many anxious moments, and yet we have survived to tell the tale. Many times, that the odds have appeared stacked against us and we have been full of fear. Yet we have emerged from each crisis stronger and can now appreciate just how the Lord provided for our need.

How do we keep our minds calm and focussed in troubled times? Verse 10, the final verse of the psalm, begins “Be still and know that I am God.”

Is that all that God is asking us to do – just “be still”? This can be harder than it appears since so many doubts and fears can arise in times of trouble. Just to sit quietly, to let go of worry, seems the wrong approach to human minds. We feel the need for action, to do something rather than to let go and let God.

We would not, out of choice, work our physical bodies so hard that our muscles gave way and we collapsed in a heap on the floor. Do we allow our busy minds sufficient rest from anxiety?

It is so easy to let our minds mull over past injustices; we do not live there anymore. So easy to fret over future events that may not even happen. Now is where we should be living. This is where our life is taking place. We should be aware of our own surroundings, people and places.

We should be aware also that other lives are being lived in the same time and space as ourselves. The natural world has its seasons as does the human lifespan. Life is to be lived, not rushed. Slow down!

“Be still” says the psalmist. Allow quiet time for yourself. You need it and you deserve it.

Some years ago, I was stuck in traffic in Bradford when I noticed an advertising board which read “Nobody’s last words were ‘I wish I had spent more time at the office’. Take a break – Have a Kit Kat!” We all need to give ourselves a break from stress.

We began by referring to God as “an ever-present help” in trouble. However, the Lord is more than some celestial insurance policy against trouble. Consider a small child who, after falling over, runs to its mother to kiss its poorly knee better. The child has a daily relationship with its parent whether it falls over or not. We could have a similar relationship with our heavenly parent. Take time out. Connect with the Lord within. “Be still and know that I am God.”

Prayer: Lord help me to know you in stillness. Help me to know my real self. Teach me to be my real self, the one you want me to be. *Amen.*

HOME *Worship*



July 2026

Sunday 12th July 2026

Trevor Millar

Read Read Mark 4: v 35–41 and Psalm 23

The account of the stilling of the storm appears in all three synoptic gospels, with minor variations. In addition to Mark, it can be found in Matthew 8: v18 and 23–27 and Luke 8: v22–25. It tells the story of Jesus and the disciples crossing the lake on a boat. It was evening and Jesus fell asleep on a cushion in the stern.

The Sea of Galilee is notorious for its sudden squalls as it is 200 metres below sea level and subject to strong cold winds drawn down from the surrounding mountains. On this occasion, verse 37 tells us that “A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped.”

It must have been a very great storm indeed. Some of the disciples were fishermen with a great knowledge of the lake and knew how to cope with sudden squalls. Realising that the situation was perilous they woke the sleeping Jesus. He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased and there was a dead calm. (verse 39, NIV).

“Where is your faith?” he said to them? Looking at this miracle in a symbolic sense, rather than literally, can speak to us in our difficulties today. When the disciples realised that Jesus was with them the storm was stilled. The Lord is always with us. He keeps us safe.

The theme of safety is spelled out in Psalm 23, which begins with the assertion that “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.” Verse 4 expands on this with “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.” For more on the shepherd and his flock see John 10 v1–18.

One of the problems facing people today is genuine anxiety about the future. Faced with uncertainty our minds can magnify problems and overwhelm us. We need to find our still place within us, and to make time for people and things that help us feel good about ourselves. Whatever storms have battered us in the past, we have survived them. Many of the things that could go wrong in the future may never happen, so why worry about them now?

Are our “problems” really problems or are they facts that we can not change? Once we recognise that something is here to stay acceptance of it frees us from stressing about it.

If a stream encounters a rock in its path, it simply flows round it. Can we take the same approach with some of the obstacles in our life? It is so easy to get stuck on our spiritual journey and to believe that progress is blocked by this or that.

Remember that the Lord is with us in our boat. We can call on him at any time to still our inner storms. He can give us the inner strength to deal with daily life.

Prayer: Lord help us to connect with you, to start each day with gratitude and confidence in your care. *Amen.*

HOME *Worship*



July 2026

Sunday 19th July 2026

Trevor Millar

Read Genesis 8 v 22 and Genesis 9 v 1-17

The last two Sundays have looked at stillness, but today we move on. In Isaiah 30 v15 the Lord says to Israel "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength."

Inner quietness stills our soul and prepares us for use. We can go forward trusting in the Lord's strength acting through us.

In the second verse of hymn 185 in our New Church hymnbook the writer (Edward Turney, 1816-1872) proclaims:

"I will go in the strength of the Lord; to the work he appoints me to do;

In the joy with which he shall reward, my soul shall her vigour renew.

His wisdom shall guard me from harm, his power my sufficiency prove;

I trust in his omnipotent arm; I rest in his promise of love."

The first line talks about the work the Lord appoints me to do. To invite the Lord to support us in the work that WE appoint ourselves to do is a different matter. We can trust the Lord's Holy Spirit to guide us in the path we should follow, and to provide for us on the journey. That provision may be of a material nature or in the form of people we meet on the way. Sometimes we may be part of that provision for others.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, wrote a book about "Tokens of Trust." I particularly remember him talking about a teddy bear given to a child while the mother was out of the room for a while. Teddy was a token of trust that mother would return.

In similar fashion our reading for today from Genesis 8 v22 to Genesis 9 v17 shows God giving tokens of trust to Noah after the Great Flood.

Genesis 8 v22 promises "as long as the earth endures, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."

In Genesis 9 v12 and 13 God says "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth." As a Franciscan I love that the promise includes every living creature.

People have always felt a need for reassurances and these are often given in the Word. The Psalms have many examples of this; we looked at Psalm 23 last week. Consider the bold assertion in Psalm 27 verse1:

"The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?"

Prayer: Please help us to rest in your love, and to trust in your wisdom. *Amen.*

HOME *Worship*



July 2026

Sunday 26th July 2026

Trevor Millar

Read Matthew 6 v 25-34

So far this month we have looked at the need for periods of inner quietness, and for trust in the Lord's protection and guidance. Today we look at what the Lord is asking of each of us.

Firstly, the reading tells us not to worry about our life; verse 34 puts it as follows:

"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (NIV). Instead, the advice given in verse 33, is to seek first his (the Fathers) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things (our needs) will be met.

Mother Theresa of Calcutta was sure that God did not demand great things of us, just small things performed with great love. This reflects the love and concern that the Lord has for all his children. Jesus understands that we get tired; he slept on a cushion at the back of the disciples' boat as it crossed the sea of Galilee before the great storm broke (See Mark 4 v35-41).

In Matthew 11 v28 Jesus gives the following invitation:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light."

One more quote, this time from John Keble's hymn "New every morning is thy love." – number 279 in my New Church hymn book – which tells us where to find our way to serve the Lord.

"If on our daily course our mind be set to hallow all we find, new treasures still, of countless price, God will provide for sacrifice.

The trivial round, the common task, will furnish all we need to ask: room to deny ourselves, a road to bring us daily nearer God."

The Lord wants us to regard our daily activities as something important, not trivial. They can be 'hallowed'; performed lovingly and in a sacred manner. They are done locally, wherever we happen to be. This fits well with New Church teaching that motivation matters; that things should be done from love of the Lord and from love of the neighbour.

We need to realise that we each have an important part to play in the continuing descent of the New Jerusalem from heaven. We are living stones in the spiritual temple that the Lord is building on earth, and the surrounding stones need our support.

The Lord chooses and shapes the stones for his temple. We have all been individually chosen.

The shaping process, life's hardships, may be difficult at times but the Lord will see us through them.

If life ever seems flat, try reading a few psalms or hymns from our hymn book.

Prayer: Lord make us more aware of how you can use us as we are, where we are, to bring love and caring to others. *Amen.*

HOME *Worship*



August 2026

The Four Elements

The four elements, earth, water, air and fire form the basis of our outer world. We shall be looking at them this month as the basis of spiritual concepts for our inner life.

Sunday 2nd August 2026

Revd Mary Duckworth

EARTH

Read Psalm 24

'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.' Psalm 24:1 A good place to begin – acknowledging that the whole earth, the whole world, belongs to the Lord; he created it and sustains it. It would not exist without him. He created it that we might have somewhere to live. He created and continues to create it and us moment by moment.

How often do we acknowledge this? That all we see around us – the whole of nature in all its variety and diversity – is God's gift to us and is an expression of himself that we might know him and sense something of both his infinity and presence always.

The earth on which we stand is God's footstool – the ultimate of his creation. This is what the Lord says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." Isaiah 66:1 The Lord goes forth first into the heavens where he reigns, where he loves and is loved, and then the earth, coming forth in spirit, and that expression of himself coming to rest physically in this natural world, the ultimate expression of the endless aspects of himself, a cradle for humanity.

The Lord continues: "Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the Lord. Isaiah 66:1-2 How do we respond to the Lord's provision of this wonderful earth? Do we take it for granted and just enjoy it as we please? Or do we listen to him questioning us? What is the house he wants us to build here for him to live in? We ourselves can be likened to a house with rooms. How can we prepare ourselves as a suitable 'resting place' here for the Lord?

Read and reflect on Psalm 24 this week. It could provide clues to answering the above questions. Read the whole to begin with and then each day focus on a different verse. Keep in mind that the Word is the means the Lord has provided as a link between ourselves and heaven and so with him. As we read the Word and relate it to our life here, the angels in heaven understand something comparable and meaningful relating to their life. The Word connects us. Since angels live from the Lord, his presence filling the heavens, reading the Word draws us close to both heaven and the Lord. Can you sense this? Is there something subtly different when you read the Word? As the earth is the physical, natural foundation on which we stand, so God's Word is the basis of our link with the Lord, the means through which he communicates to us who he is, who we are in relation to him and one another, the purpose of creation, and how to live that we might be united with him and live useful lives both here on earth and with him and our fellow beings in community in heaven for ever.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord. for creating this amazing earth for me to live on with all its landscapes – mountains and valleys – endless variety of trees and flowers, animals and insects, all displaying some aspect of your goodness and truth that I might know you. *Amen*

HOME *Worship*



August 2026

Sunday 9th August 2026

Revd Mary Duckworth

WATER

John 4: 7-15

We turn the tap on and we have water straightaway, water to drink, to wash with, to bathe in; constantly at hand; no need to go to the spring, the well, the stream – water on tap. Water from the heavens when it rains, collected in reservoirs, lakes; falling fresh on our faces. I rarely feel that now but loved it as a child, and splashing through puddles in my wellies. Rain from heaven, gift of God, as are all things created. We can live for days without food but not without water to drink.

I think of Jesus sitting by the well at Samaria talking to a Samaritan woman. "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water... Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." John 4: 10, 13-14

Water is so basic to life here. It corresponds to truth. How would we live our lives without truth to guide us? As human beings we have a thirst for knowledge to understand the reason why and how things are as they are, so that we can use them for our benefit to aid the way we live. So too we thirst for the water of life, God's truth, to guide us on our path through life, to teach us how to live useful lives in harmony with one another. Left to ourselves we would each be fighting our corner, wanting what was best for us, never mind what happened to anyone else. But the water of life changes that for us. When we learn how the Bible teaches us to live, our eyes are opened to a new way of relating, to considering others and not just ourselves. We need to keep being reminded of this throughout our life, constantly, because our sense of self is so strong and demanding, 'Me, me, me!' Even the angels in heaven are reminded of this human default position.

So, yes, we need to drink water regularly to keep our bodies in good working order, and to read our Bibles daily, to drink in the Lord's words of truth to cleanse and refresh our mind and spirit. When we live our life according to the Lord's way, he endows us with a love for it, so that we grow to love it and we become more like him, filled with his goodness, 'a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'

Prayer: Lord, may I always turn to you for your living water to become in me an everlasting fountain guiding me in your true and loving way always. Even when I go astray it is there to draw me back to you. Amen



HOME *Worship*

August 2026

Sunday 16th August 2026

AIR

Revd Mary Duckworth

Genesis 1: 1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Genesis 1:1-2

Spirit of God, wind

I recently walked across a bay on the first morning of our holiday, feeling the sand beneath my feet, the sea a little way off as the tide went out, the sun blazing on us and a warm, steady wind refreshing our faces. Exactly what we needed to let go of all the busyness of what we'd left behind, to relax and just be, in the now, that moment, nowhere else, with the sea birds, the wind – the refreshing wind in our faces – clearing our heads, our minds. Sand, sea, sun and air – refreshing air!

Air, wind, breath, spirit. The Spirit of God moving over the face of the water, coming forth from the Divine, the Spirit of Truth, creating order, form, a world supporting simple cellular life evolving into creatures, fish in the sea, birds in the air, animals on land and eventually humankind walking on land, breathing in the air.

So God created mankind in his own image...; male and female he created them. God blessed them... Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant... and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food and to... all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." Gen. 1:27-30

Just as we need air to fill our lungs and oxygenate our bodies, so our minds need the guidance of the Spirit of Truth to develop in the way our Divine Creator intended – as images and likenesses of him. In order to do so he has provided his Word of Truth contained in the Holy Bible. As we read the Spirit enlightens our minds as we are open and able to receive at that time. This throws light on our darkness. We can see things we think and say and do that are unkind and hurtful both to ourselves and others. This can lead to our wanting to change and to asking the Lord to give us the desire and strength to love others rather than hurt them.

'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.' Psalm 33: 6

We need God's breath every moment, as the hymn says, 'Breathe on me, breath of God; fill me with life anew, that I may love what you most love, and do what you would do.'

Breath – life. Breathing in air enlivens our bodies. God's breath/spirit brings life to our heart, mind and soul, to our spirit; it renews our spirit every moment.

'The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters', over the darkness of our mind, separating darkness from light, creating awareness of our natural tendencies to focus on ourselves, allowing us to see beyond ourselves, to his brightness, beauty, something other to focus on, to wonder at, to be drawn to, to see from, to have a new understanding of life and priorities, something other than self.

Prayer: As I read your Word, Lord, fill me with an understanding of your truth and a desire to live by it lovingly and compassionately. *Amen*

HOME *Worship*



August 2026

Sunday 23rd August 2026

Revd Mary Duckworth

FIRE
Psalm 121

Burning heat of the sun, raging forest fires – destructive, widespread, terrifying, overwhelming. Blazing anger striking fear and terror.

Warming rays of the sun relaxing, restful, at peace. Warm loving embrace, comforting, at one. We are very aware of the devastating effects of wild, raging, uncontrolled fire and the equally hurtful, damaging effects of uncontrolled anger, rage and hatred. Whereas we love to warm ourselves in front of a log, coal or electric fire and feel the warm embrace of a loved one.

The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life. Psalm 121: 6-7

Fire corresponds to love. The greatest ball of fire we know of – the sun – corresponds to the Divine, the Lord, God. He is love; his essence, his being is love. The sun is a great reminder of the constant presence of the Divine, even at night when we don't see it, we know it is there on the other side of the world. Its warmth and heat are a reminder of God's loving care for us, even though we don't always feel it. It also corresponds to the opposite of love, to anger, hatred, according to context.

Fire gives light as well as heat. Light corresponds to truth which leads us to learning how to love wisely. The Divine is both love and wisdom, which are expressed through goodness and truth. These are how we come to know love and wisdom. How do we know what love is except when expressed through good actions? How do we know what is wise except from trying something out?

A coal or log fire or bonfire give us a closer, more intimate sense of the warming nature of fire, a more personal sense of the warmth of love, of our Lord's care for us. Fire to heat our homes – to provide a warm environment in which to live – for cooking food for the body. Love – food for the soul. Babies need loving care and a loving environment in which to flourish – not just warm clothes and food and physical care.

Prayer: Lord, give me the strength to control my blazing temper. May I be like the sun, like you, reaching out to all lovingly, caringly, giving, seeking and seeing the good. *Amen*

HOME *Worship*



August 2026

Sunday 30th August 2026

Revd Mary Duckworth

EARTH | WATER | AIR | FIRE | EARTH | FIRE

EARTH

In the beginning God created heaven and earth. Genesis 1:1

Arcana Caelestia 16 Heaven, or the sky, symbolizes the inner self, and the earth, before regeneration occurs, symbolizes the outer self.

Bear in mind the above as you read and reflect on Psalm 8.

WATER

A story about another well: Genesis 21: 12-21 God's provision for Hagar.

What stops us from seeing what the Lord provides?

When might we become aware of it?

AIR

The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Gen 1:2

AC 19 'The Spirit of God' is used to mean the Lord's mercy, which is said 'to hover', like a hen over eggs, over what the Lord stores away in a person and which in the Word are frequently called 'remnants'.

FIRE

Read Exodus 3: 1-12 Moses and the burning bush

AC 6832 'In a flame of fire from the middle of a bramble bush' means God's love present in true factual knowledge. This is clear from the meaning of 'a flame of fire' as God's love.

[3] The reason why 'a flame' is God's love is that love in its earliest origin is nothing other than fire or flame from the Lord as the Sun. The fire or flame of this sun is what supplies each individual person with the being (esse) of his life; it is that life-giving fire which fills a person's interiors with warmth, as one may recognize from what happens with love. To the extent that love increases in a person he warms up; but to the extent that it diminishes he cools off.

What spoke to you most as you read from Exodus? Stay with those words and let them sink in to your head and your heart. How are you feeling?

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for your lifegiving love which enables me to be, for your caring love which warms and nurtures me, and for your protective love which keeps me from harm. May I love you always. *Amen*

HOME *Worship*



September 2026

Sunday 6th September 2026

Revd Helen Brown

“enter into the joy of your master”

Read Mt 25: 14–30

What is the joy of the master?

This reading concerns the parable of the talents that sheds light on the nature of the kingdom of heaven and the nature of joy. What is joyful for you? What is the quality of the joy of the Lord?

Let's begin by looking at what it is not. We are surrounded by a world and culture that takes pleasure in material, what is short term. This doesn't last. It fills the gap and emptiness in people's lives for a while but then dissipates. We can see plenty of examples around us and it is easy for us to get sucked into this mentality. The path of pleasure has the hallmark of self-centredness – pleasure takes in. Whereas the path of joy seeks goodness for others – joy goes out.

In the parable, the master gives his servants his property – his riches – his money. Throughout our lives the Lord stores up spiritual riches or treasure in our memory from birth onwards. These are knowledges of what is good and what is true. These are spiritual talents that we can use or just keep in our memory unused. If we keep a storehouse of spiritual learning just for ourselves, it is not being useful to either ourselves or others. It has not rooted in the way we live; it has not changed us. Therefore, it has not developed our understanding or broadened our knowledge. In the story the servants receive differing amounts of this currency: the numbers 5, 2 and 1 are to be understood spiritually not literally.

5 talents symbolise received spiritual treasures – the knowledge of good and truth that are stored up deep within us from birth onwards. These we can accept, use and in so doing be of use to others we can further the Lord's kingdom which is a kingdom of usefulness. In so doing this brings further spiritual treasures, spiritually the '5' is doubled.

2 talents symbolise a more advanced stage of our spiritual life when the Lord enables us to unite what we have received and accepted as our faith to a spiritual love for what is good in the Lord's eyes. This also brings an abundance this is doubled as we bring to prioritise what is good for all in place of what is good for us.

These words are said in response to these two servants: “enter into the joy of your master.”

The Lord gives us these spiritual riches so that they might be of service to others and increase in depth and breadth. So that we might experience his joy in giving what is real, eternal, spiritual treasure. In contrast the 1 talent symbolises the situation when having received spiritual treasure we just store it up in the level of our mind. We have a belief, but we don't allow it to change us or use it for the good of others. If you like it exists purely in our mind not in our heart. There can be no spiritual growth or abundance stemming from this. The following quotation links the quality of love with the life that is lived.

Anyone can see perfectly well that no hint of life ever exists without some kind of love and that no trace of joy ever exists unless it results from love. The nature of the love determines the nature of the life and of the joy. Secrets of Heaven 33

Prayer: Dear Lord, with a heart full of gratitude, we thank you for the boundless Love that creates the beauty and colour of the world we live in. We thank you for the Love that unceasingly creates what is new and life giving deep within us. We thank you for your desire to give each person the blessing of joy, peace and fulfilment. We thank you for your promise that each of us has a part to play in your heavenly kingdom. *Amen*



HOME *Worship*

September 2026

Sunday 13th September 2026

Revd Helen Brown

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete"

John 15:11

Read John 15: 9 -17

Remain in my love

This chapter from John's gospel starts with the relationship of the true vine and the branches. The Lord being the vine and we as branches dependant of his life. This demonstrates the aim of the Lord's coming into the world. His purpose was to re-establish a close connection with the human race. This is the goal of our spiritual life and the aim of all the Lord's care, attention and work in our lives. Notice that this saying is focused on a living and developing plant. We are being shown what being alive really is –that it has its being in the Lord. This quality of life is far above that which we experience just in ourselves. It is beyond anything that we could conceive of – for at its heart is the desire for the good for all. This is the Life that we are asked to 'remain in'.

The Greek word used for remain also has the meaning of 'abide' or dwell. In Psalm 23:6 we find these words: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. To dwell somewhere means to inhabit that space. Our inner dwelling place deep within us is created by the Divine to be a place of safety, peace stillness. Maybe you would describe it in other ways. But it has no resemblance to our old mind set, attitudes, knee-jerk reactions. It is something quite 'other'.

This quote from the writings shows how and why the Lord gifts us the freedom to choose to dwell in the house that He creates within us

The Lord loves us and wants to dwell with us but cannot love and dwell with us unless he is received and loved in return. This is the one and only means to union. This is why the Lord gives us freedom and the power to reason – the freedom of thinking and intending with seeming autonomy, and the power of reason that serves as our guide. It is impossible to love and be united with someone who is unresponsive, impossible to come in and abide with someone who is unreceptive. It is because our own receptiveness and responsiveness are given by the Lord that the Lord said, Abide in me, and I [will abide] in you. John 15:4 Doctrine of Life 102

We are being asked to receive, remain, dwell in the life that flows into us. Whatever we have freely chosen to receive of the Lord's good and truth, he is present within us. In choosing to be open to the Lord's quality of love, wisdom and life we are enabled to bring this into being in our life and the world.

And of course, the Lord always remains in us, he creates us and gives us life. He dwells in our inmost depths no matter what we choose. But the quality of our relationship and life we live is based on our choice.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other. John 15 & 16

Prayer: Dear Lord, you always remember us, We come with grateful hearts because you love us no matter how far we have strayed from your path. We come knowing that you forgive our fickleness, and once again place our feet on a secure path. You lift us out of what seems overwhelming and make all things possible. We are renewed and strengthened and can take the next step which you put before us.
Amen

HOME *Worship*



September 2026

Sunday 20th September 2026

Revd Helen Brown

**Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive,
and your joy will be complete. John 16:24**

Read John 16: 19 -24

In My Name

Remembering a person's name brings their personality to mind. Perhaps we think about what we have shared and experienced together, particularly if they have passed on into the spiritual world and we no longer can physically be present with them.

The Lord's name encapsulates every aspect of love and faith, because he is the only source and there are His. All the good that love inspires and the truth that faith teaches come from Him. When our minds turn towards the Lord, we remember everything he gives us; life, peace hope and of course joy.

In this reading we are faced with the ups and downs of the spiritual path. There are inner states when we experience seeming separation and isolation from the Lord. Perhaps we fall into despair and a lack of trust in his providence. We read the words in John 16: 20: 'You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.' These are the tests and challenges in experiencing the contrast between a focus on self and the outer world rather than a focus on what is good for the whole. It is only when we experience the loss of trust hope and joy that we value them and chose to turn back to our loving Saviour.

Our reading compares this process with the labour of birthing a child. This is our inner work, to persist in our intention to trust in the Lord and follow his commandments. It may seem to be an endless process, but it is a labour of love. Our love for the Lord and all the gifts he gives us.

The reward for this spiritual labour is new life, an awakening to a deeper awareness of the Lord's presence with us. We know by experience that He alone can lift us out of hopelessness and once again set our feet on his path.

This process of going through spiritual testing and inner labour and its positive outcome is encapsulated in the words of the following verse: Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

When we are self-absorbed or immersed in the outer world there is no intention or space to turn and ask for the spiritual insights and good intentions that only the lord can provide. We do not ask for anything in His name.

What matters is being the kind of people the Lord commanded us to be; to do this is to believe in his name. To say that salvation is to be found in no name but the Lord's is to say it is found in no other theology—none other than that of mutual love, which is the true theology. It is found in no one but the Lord, because he alone is the source of all love and of the faith that rises out of love. Secrets of Heaven 2009.

We are instructed to ask, ask in his name. Ask desiring for his purposes to guide and be channelled through us. Having experienced the Lord's power to lift us out of spiritual darkness and despair we know his eternal loving wisdom and compassion for each person.

Prayer: Dear Lord who is Boundless Love, We rest in your love that does not count the cost and never fails. You draw us with bonds of love because you yearn to give each person countless blessings. Blessings of deep peace, joy and the delight of being of service to others. This bond of love is what connects and builds community and heaven on earth. *Amen*

HOME *Worship*



September 2026

Sunday 27th September 2026

Revd Helen Brown

You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Psalm 16:11

Read Psalm 16

When we read the psalms we find an outpouring of feelings such as despair, hope, supplication and many other heartfelt expressions of the inner experience of the spiritual path of regeneration. The psalms are concerned with the Lord's earthly life as He contended and overcame the forces of evil to restore humankind's spiritual freedom.

The psalms are also a mirror in which we can begin to see His constant work to enable the experience of heaven and in particular heavenly joy to be present in our living.

This quote describes the contrast between evil and good at the heart of which is disunion or union with the heavenly life.

- evil exists essentially in disunion, as is evident from what good is. Essentially good is a joining together because all good stems from love to the Lord and love towards the neighbour. Arcana Coelestia 4997

Psalm 16 is an expression of a deep acknowledgement of the presence and connection to the Lord that comes from a lived experience. This is not just known and understood in the mind. It is borne out of a trust and dependence on the Lord working deep within us. It is full of thanksgiving and gratitude for what the Lord has provided.

Please read this again and notice what especially draws your attention and resonates with your life at this moment.

As this month our theme is focused on the quality of joy, let's look again at the last verse of the psalm. It encapsulates what the Lord desires for every person. He wishes to show us the way to live and be present fully in our being which is the essence of heavenly joy. And this inner state is eternally receptive to his divine goodness, the hallmark of righteousness.

Spiritually, these three phrases contain everything which relates to our life; its purpose and progress, its need of the Lord to be directing it, and its need to be brought into activity, use and service, which are the right hand of God. This is what He puts in front of us; providing opportunities for the next step on the path towards Life. His Life.

Prayer: Dear Lord, You are the Source of all that is joyful. And you yearn to share this joy with all people. Thank you for the moments that take me out of my tiny world of self-absorption. Thank you for giving me the joy of experiencing a communion that expands my horizons. Thank you for being enabled to contribute to the whole, to be a co-creator, giving to others what I receive from you. These precious moments when life flows, can only occur because of your Presence within us. Thank you. Amen