

Apart but Together Worship- 19th April

For the Beauty of the Earth

Welcome to today's service.

The music and words of all the worship songs can be found by following the blue YouTube links.

Psalm 19 verse 1

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands.



Easter morning sunrise picture from Steve Seal

Hymn: [Morning Has Broken \(Kaleb Brasee\)](#)

Prayer

We praise you Lord for this beautiful world. We thank you for this new day. Help us to use it wisely and thankfully we pray. Amen

Introduction

This morning we are starting a series looking at the hymn- **For the Beauty of the Earth.**

This hymn was written by a man called Folliot S. Pierpoint in 1864.

He was 29 at the time and, looking down over the city of Bath, the view inspired him to praise God for the beautiful world we inhabit.

Although we might think of it as a 'creation' hymn, it was written to be used at Communion services.

Let's sing together: -

Hymn: For the Beauty of the Earth

Bible Reading- Psalm 8

- ¹ LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
- You have set your glory
in the heavens.
- ² Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.
- ³ When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
- ⁴ what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?[[]
- ⁵ You have made them a little lower than the angels^[e]
and crowned them with glory and honour.
- ⁶ You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
you put everything under their[[]feet:
- ⁷ all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,
- ⁸ the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.
- ⁹ LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!



“For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies.”

These words of the hymn were written as the writer paused and looked at the view. The beauty of it was the reason given to raise our thanks to God. When the psalmist looked to the heavens he was overwhelmed and felt insignificant, but he recognised how special the Earth and its people are to God.

The hymnwriter paused on his walk and in Psalm 8 verse 3 the psalmist says “when I consider”. Well we have plenty of time to be pausing and considering lately! We may be in ‘lockdown’ but the world has not stopped. Beautiful sunrises are followed by lovely sunsets and starry nights.

We can see signs of Spring in gardens and lambing is well underway on farms.

I am fascinated to read that mountain goats are now coming into quiet Welsh villages and across the world in India the Himalayas can be seen for the first time in 30 years now pollution is lower:



Psalm 8 verse 6 is a reminder that we have been given charge of 'the works of your hands' and it is our duty to be good stewards.

For Celtic Christians, creation is translucent - it lets through glimpses of the glory of God. My challenge for you this week is to find a WOW moment - something that stops you in your tracks and makes you want to say thank you to God.

“For the love which from our birth, over and around us lies”



Stephenie's beautiful picture of baby **Hannah Jane Selby**

It is not just creation the hymn writer saw as a reason to praise God; he praises God's love for us from our birth, which surrounds us. We can take comfort that, despite our social isolation, we are not isolated from God! Here are some verses from Psalm 139:

Bible Reading-Psalm 139 v7-16

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,

your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me

and the light become night around me,”
12 even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
13 For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
15 My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
16 Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.

We are “*fearfully and wonderfully made*” and God’s love still surrounds us.
My second challenge for the week is to find another WOW moment - Remember a time
when you experienced God’s love over and around you, and give thanks.

Hymn: [Here Is Love Vast As The Ocean - Robin Mark](#)

That is a very old Welsh hymn sometimes called The Revival Hymn. I heard it again last
Sunday on BBC Songs of Praise, and they sang a third verse I hadn’t heard and couldn’t find
a music version of.

I have written the words of that third verse here:

**“In thy truth thou dost direct me
By thy Spirit, through thy word.
And thy grace my need is meeting
As I trust in thee my Lord
Of thy fullness thou art pouring
Thy great love and power on me
Without measure, full and boundless
Drawing out my heart to Thee.”**

Intercessions

You are invited to pause and be silent in preparation for prayer.

Or if you prefer you can use this song as preparation:

Optional song: [Praise You Lord for the Wonder – \(Divine\)](#)

Please name aloud those you want to pray for.

We say together a prayer that Ilena wrote:

Dear Father,

Thank you that you have love for us.

Thank you that your love led to the sacrifice of Jesus that led us to back to you.

Thank you that your love enables us to love others - enables us to love everyone.

Forgive us when we forget this and find someone difficult to love.

Lord in this time thank you for all those who are leading sacrificial lives to tend to all affected by this pandemic.

Lord comfort all those who are suffering.

Lord let us not forget those who are in pain throughout the world - hungry, persecuted, imprisoned, affected by disaster.

Finally, I ask for your healing, comfort and hand for all those we personally know and who are in our prayer book at Hornsea URC.

Thank you for hearing our prayer. May all praise and glory be yours, Father.

Amen.

“Gracious God to thee we raise, this our sacrifice of praise”

Now is the time to collect any instruments and sing joyfully together our final hymn:

Hymn: [O Lord my God - Citrail](#)

We close by saying to each other (even if we can't see each other...)

'Till we meet again,

The Lord bless you and keep you

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you

And give you peace.

Amen.