

Transformation – NOW!
PEACE

Hymn: All my hope on God is founded
sung by the Choral Scholars of St Martin's in the Fields

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown,
he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power,
hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness ay endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light, and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of nought.
Evermore,
from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily doth the almighty giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow;
his desire our soul delighteth,
pleasure leads us where we go.
Love doth stand
at his hand;
joy doth wait on his command.

Still from man to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call
one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

*Meine Hoffnung stehet feste Joachim Neander (1650-1680)
Paraphrased Robert Bridges (1844-1930)*

Opening words

I refuse to believe that we are unable to influence
the events around us.
I refuse to believe we are bound by racism, war, and injustice.
I believe those around me are my brother and my sister.
I believe in dignity every day and that our brokenness can be healed.
I believe we can overcome oppression and violence,
without resorting to it.
This means I seek to reject revenge and retaliation.
I remember, "Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can."

drawn from the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Bible Reading Psalm 34: 11-18

- ¹¹ Come, my children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
- ¹² Whoever of you loves life
and desires to see many good days,
- ¹³ keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies.
- ¹⁴ Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.
- ¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
and his ears are attentive to their cry;
- ¹⁶ but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to blot out their name from the earth.
- ¹⁷ The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.
- ¹⁸ The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

from the New International Version

Reflection

As sabres rattle in lands both close and distant
we confess that we are in pain,
fear has taken root in the souls of our being.
*Even as we turn to the parables,
familiar stories that we thought we loved,
we find troubling stories offering ever more questions.*

We are loathe to take account of the many ways
in which we unwittingly profit
from the machinery of war and greed.
*Still we read the parables of Jesus
which fly in the face of social convention
offending those who dare to listen.*

Believing that we are insignificant,
and at the same time fearful that we might become so,
we are timid to use our voices to speak truth to a world of war.
*Now the parables of Jesus offer a new vision;
now the servants dine and the masters serve,
now the last becomes first and the first becomes last.*

Hear the good news of the Story
that no sheep is unworthy of rescue,
no coin too small to be missed.
*Hear the good news
that love is stronger than hate
and that this power is alive within you
now and forever.*
Amen.

(c)Katherine Hawker (2002)

Hymn: Let There Be Peace On Earth, and Let It Begin With Me
sung by Harlem Boys Choir

Authors: Jill Jackson and Sy Miller

Let there be peace on Earth
And let it begin with me
Let there be peace on Earth
The peace that was meant to be
With God as our father
We are family
Let us walk with each other
In perfect harmony

Let peace begin with me
Let this be the moment now
With every step I take
Let this be my solemn vow
To take each moment
And live each moment
With peace eternally
Let there be peace on Earth,
And let it begin with me

Prayers

We pray for people living in places where brothers and sisters
do not see eye to eye.

Where the language of violence speaks loudest.

And the voice of peace is not heard.

Let there be peace on earth

and let it begin with me.

We pray for families who cannot listen to one another's pain.

Where the language of bitterness is loudest.

And the voice of understanding goes unheard.

Let there be peace on earth

and let it begin with me.

We pray for those communities where diversity is not celebrated,

Where the language of prejudice is

oudest

And the voice of acceptance and respect is not heard.

Let there be peace on earth

and let it begin with me.

We pray for Christians who cannot agree.

Where the language of discord silences unity.

And the voice of generosity is not heard.

Let there be peace on earth

and let it begin with me.

We pray for one another,
that the language of love be spoken and heard,
and the voice of truth and compassion meet with ears of humility.
We pray for ourselves, that we may actively work to be people of
peace in our world.

*Let there be peace on earth
and let it begin with me.*

Manchester Diocesan Mothers' Union prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we meet as members
of Mothers' Union in Manchester
may we know your presence and hear your word.
Teach us how best to serve you,
seeing not just the needs of this diocese
but those of the wider world.
Help us at all times to trust in you and seek to do your will.
Fill us with your spirit, encourage us, use us and bless us,
that we may have strength to follow your way.
We pray in sure hope and the assurance of your power.
Amen.

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Hymn: For the healing of the nations

sung by St Martin's Voices

*Fred Kaan (1929-2009)
© 1968 Stainer & Bell Ltd*

For the healing of the nations,
Lord, we pray with one accord,
for a just and equal sharing
of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom,
from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred,
all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator-God, have written
your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness
bring the life of Christ to mind;
that by our response and service
earth its destiny may find.

Dismissal

God of all, we go out today to offer you the best of ourselves:
to take hold of mercy and let go of fear,
to take hold of generosity and to let go of resentment,
to take hold of forgiveness and to let go of sin,
to take hold of gratitude and to let go of grudge,
to take hold of all your very self, that will bring us peace.
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

***If we say we have no peace,
it is because we have forgotten we belong to one another.***
Mother Teresa.

Material: as stated
Theme music: 'Overflowing grace' by Catherine Hilton
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CCLI: 5097385

Prayers next month will be on 14th March 2024 – LENT