Worship at Home service Sunday 22nd June 2025 with Revd Ian Forsyth

A Call to worship:

Let us come to God who is the same, yesterday, today and forever.
Let us come to God who makes all things new. Let us be ready for the changes he has in store. **Amen.**

A Gathering prayer:

Lord God, thank you that you are always showing us new things in our world. We remember rainbows after rain
and the cleansing effect of a strong wind.
We think of a grimy world made white and pure by snow, and a beach washed clean by the tide. Most of all, we thank you for the new start you gave the world in Jesus. **Amen**

StF 636 - O love that wilt not let me go

O love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow. May richer, fuller be.

O Light that follows all my way, I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day. May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me thru' pain, I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow thru' the rain
And feel the promise is not vain/ That morn shall tearless be.

O cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red. Life that shall endless be.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyzJUMrGKDI

Bible readings Psalm 15 John 18 - 21

Reflection:

The worshiping Communities in NMC are currently studying the Gospel of John for the Bible month.
In reading the prologue the opening chapter is quite magnificent and starts with Almighty God being called the Word.

Today's heading is focused on being open to where the Spirit leads and as we come to the end of the Gospel of John, it is not the end. In John's Gospel the purpose of John's writing is that we might go on believing and in Ch 20 v 31 he declares that these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. In the final chapters of John 18 to 21 he says this 'hour has to happen, the final weekend in which Jesus is arrested, tried, flogged, crucified and resurrected. These chapters are essential to know who Jesus actually is.
The three short reflections are based on the Gospel of John study guide which is in the resource produced by David F Ford, Charmaine Yip, Andy Fishburne and Gail Adcock.

Arrest and trial. Jesus speaks to Pilate at his trial "You say that I am a King. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." As followers of Jesus, we hear the news daily and we need to verify the source of what we hear and increasingly there are endless news feeds and outlets using AI which makes it harder to hear Truth today.

Passion and death. In John's gospel, John records the words of Jesus from the cross. We may be familiar with the words that Jesus spoke on the cross when He spoke to his mother and his beloved disciple. Jesus cries out 'I am thirsty', which fulfils the Old Testament prophecies,' (John 19 v 28). In the Psalms we read there are cries for help and thirst particularly in the Psalms of David. What does the phrase 'I am thirsty offer to quench our soul's thirst' mean. In my experience of listening to people, it is the time when we just cannot go on. In those moments of just crying out to God and saying I just cannot go on any more on my own, when God's steps in.

The Resurrection and the ongoing journey.
David Ford says 'The resurrection is a God – sized event and as we end with John 21, we can see that the epilogue that mirrors the prologue.
In Matthew's Gospel we are invited to follow Jesus where He says to his disciples "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Following Jesus means that as we read the Bible, spend time praying and worshipping He will lead and guide us. Today I am going to use a closing prayer we use weekly at Great Billing prayer breakfast.

For all that God do within us, for all that God can do without us, **Thanks be to God.**
For all in whom Christ lived before us, for all in who Christ lives beside us, **Thanks be to God.**
For all the Sprit wants to bring us, for where the Spirit wants to send us, **Thanks be to God.**
Listen, Christ has promised to be with us in the world as in our worship. **Amen. We go to serve him.**

Prayers for the elderly

Living God, save us from pigeonholing the elderly; from accepting negative stereotypes that depict them as infirm, senile, redundant, Father of all, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you that people today are able to remain fit and active in later life as never before, continuing to contribute not just to family and friends, but to wider society, through their wisdom and experience gained across the years. Grant that they will be respected and valued for who and what they are. Father of all, **hear our prayers.**

Reach out to those for whom advancing years does bring a decline in body or mind, and give them, their loved ones and their carers strength and support to alleviate their suffering and maintain their dignity. Father of all, **hear our prayer.**

Grant to all, young and old, the knowledge that your love is always with us, throughout our lives and beyond. Father of all, **hear our prayer. Amen.**

StF 476 - One more step along the world I go

One more step along the world I go
One more step along the world I go
From the old things to the new. Keep me traveling along with you

And it's from the old I travel to the new. Keep me traveling along with you

'Round the corners of the world I turn
More and more about the world I learn
All the new things that I see. You'll be looking at along with me

And it's from the old I travel to the new
Keep me traveling along with you

As I travel through the bad and good.
Keep me traveling the way I should
Where I see no way to go
You'll be telling me the way, I know

And it's from the old I travel to the new
Keep me traveling along with you

Give me courage when the world is rough
Keep me loving though the world is tough
Leap and sing in all I do
Keep me traveling along with you

And it's from the old I travel to the new
Keep me traveling along with you

You are older than the world can be
You are younger than the life in me
Ever old and ever new
Keep me traveling along with you:

And it's from the old I travel to the new
Keep me traveling along with you
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YquLANPYiRU

A sending out prayer:

Lord, help us to recognise changes for the better in the world around. Make us bold to face our fears so that we can reach out in love. Be with us through the coming week as we go out wearing Christ's coat. **Amen.**