

Psalms for Today! - *By Trevor Denley*

Below is the output of an evening service held at St Aidan's – 'Worship through the Psalms'. This is one of a series of services in our Alternative Worship programme that originated from our 'Outside In' week.

We listened to the Psalms in a wide variety of presentations, read them and discussed their relevance for today. The culmination of the evening was writing our own Psalm. Using a technique borrowed from Revd. Celia Jones, I asked each person to copy the first lines from a Psalm of their choice, then write the next line themselves based on their own feelings. Then they were asked to fold the paper over, leaving only their own line revealed. They were then asked to pass the paper to the person on their right and repeat the exercise, and so on until the paper came back.

The outcome is below, very moving and very uplifting. Long live the Psalms!

Psalms of the moment

God is our refuge and strength; an ever-present help in trouble;

He is always by my side,

Prompting me to discern his 'still small voice',

Shout the news from the hilltops - give me clarity of vision;

Let me feel the strength of your love,

Give me courage to do your will.

I will dwell in your house forever.

O Lord you have searched me and you know me.

You hold my hand in times of trouble.

You are my comfort and strength,

You are there in times of need.

Help us to know when we are in need, and what our need is.

You are the all-provider.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Sometimes I find it difficult to realise you are there Lord!

Time are hard to accept, but you are there.

When we call you answer our prayer,

You answer all my prayers,

Help me to discern what your answer is.

Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

My heart was broken, I stood alone.

He is with me forever.

O God you know me and I sometimes miss what you intend me to be.

I preserve to seek understanding, from understanding comes knowledge.

God is our refuge and strength, we shall never want.

O Lord I thank you for your creation and preservation, and it is good to acknowledge your goodness.

Your goodness shines through the clouds of evil,

Your light banishes Satan from us.

Never think of evil, only good.

Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

Why, O Lord, do I stand far off? Why do I hide from you in the noise and the strength of my own heart and mind?

Come close and stand by me, find me, comfort me.

I need your strength in all I do, I need your love to share with all.

I need your love to share with all.

Nothing will shake me, I'll always be happy.

There are times when I feel doubt and hopelessness, so speak to me O Lord in my stillness.

God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

He is our rock when we are on shifting sands.

He is our sense when we have lost our senses. He is ever with us when we are in trouble.

When I was alone and weeping I sensed your presence with me,

It lifted up my spirits.

By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.

How we cried for you our Lord. You gave us strength, That we can only recognise when we acknowledge our weakness.

Give us strength to overcome our fears and weaknesses – insight can be a terrible thing.

We know that you always walk with us, and will hear us when we call.