

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

Welcome to our service today. About a month ago, Torquil Allen from Frampton Park preached on Faithfulness and used Psalm 23 as his inspiration. Today, we have Tom Head from East End Church, also speaking on Psalm 23. It will be interesting to hear what God has to say to us from a Psalm that we probably feel we know very well.

The worship is led by Hilary and later John will lead us in Prayers for the World.

**Notices:**

1. **A thank you to all those who support VPBC by direct credits from their bank.**
2. **A plea for those who would normally give by cash, please put aside your offering until you are able to bring it to church.**
3. **Please let me know if you want to set up a direct credit – it's quite easy.**
4. **Everyone, please remember the Crossroads Counselling Christmas offering – you possibly took an envelope in December. Please keep it safe until we can collect it. Please write your Gift Aid number or name on the envelope.**

**In a moment we shall hear the song 'Be still and know that I am God'.**

**As we read Psalm 46, look out for those words.**

**Psalm 46**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,**

**<sup>3</sup>though its waters roar and foam  
and the mountains quake with their surging.<sup>[c]</sup>**

**<sup>4</sup>There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy place where the Most High dwells.**

**<sup>5</sup>God is within her, she will not fall;  
God will help her at break of day.**

**<sup>6</sup>Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;  
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.**

**<sup>7</sup>The LORD Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.**

**<sup>8</sup>Come and see what the LORD has done,  
the desolations he has brought on the earth.**

**<sup>9</sup>He makes wars cease  
to the ends of the earth.**

**He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields<sup>[d]</sup> with fire.**

**<sup>10</sup>He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth."**

**<sup>11</sup>The LORD Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.**

I was singing that song as I washed up in the kitchen. I started making up new verses, singing new words. Maybe you would like to try too.

Here's my attempts.

- New mercies I see, each morning with you. Sing 3 times
- I give you my heart and I give you my life. Sing 3 times

Please send me your verses or put them on the Care&Share.

Anyone home schooling could get their children to help.

Song: Be still and know that I am God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zN0XfOTC8U>

Maybe you would like to sing your own verses after listening to this song.

**"Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.  
Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God  
the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."  
Ephesians 5:19 (NIV)**

I was looking for a song recently and found this one instead.  
Hope it helps you to worship and praise God.

Song: Let the praises ring

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yPWLIP-rTI>

In Luke 11 we read

### **Jesus' Teaching on Prayer**

**One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."**

**<sup>2</sup> He said to them, "When you pray, say:**

**"Father,<sup>[a]</sup>**

**hallowed be your name,  
    your kingdom come.<sup>[b]</sup>**

**<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread.**

**<sup>4</sup> Forgive us our sins,  
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.<sup>[c]</sup>  
And lead us not into temptation.<sup>[d]</sup>"**

**Song: God our Father, Let your kingdom come**

[https://resoundworship.org/song/god\\_our\\_father\\_let\\_your\\_kingdom\\_come](https://resoundworship.org/song/god_our_father_let_your_kingdom_come)

## **John will lead us in Prayers for the World**

Refugees and E123 Welcomes Refugees

Today I would like us to pray for the *E123 Welcomes Refugees Project* and for refugees & Asylum Seekers generally.

The media has often drawn attention to migrants crossing the English Channel and it is not always portrayed favourably. Although many people show compassion there is also a harsh and unsympathetic view which social media has often amplified. There are currently 26 million refugees around the world, half of which are children (the figure of forcibly displaced people would double this). These are people who have been through horrors that we can scarcely imagine.



They have been forced from their homes by conflict, persecution, disasters such as floods and drought, and extreme poverty. Many will have been separated from loved ones; many will be traumatised and grieving. Their journey with family, often with young children, is hazardous and when they do reach a place to settle, will have many barriers (personal and cultural) to overcome.

The Bible reminds us of God's compassion upon refugees and the need to help them.

*'He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.'* (Deuteronomy 10:18)

I attach a news clip which briefly shows reality of living in a refugee camp and the challenges of Coronavirus.

<https://youtu.be/Kxm6y0rk-lw>

We are thankful that there are opportunities to help and support families who come from traumatised backgrounds and there are many charities who work to offer support.



Our church, as many of you know, has joined with 3 other churches to offer accommodation and support to a family who will be permitted to settle in East London. This is part of the *Community Sponsorship for*

Refugees programme which supports refugees throughout their first year in the UK to:

- access English lessons and schools.
- access benefits
- access healthcare
- access employment



We have now received approval from Tower Hamlets Council and have a property in the locality which will be able to house a family for 2 years. Once the inspection of the property is carried out, we can submit an up-dated application. There is still some work to be done and further meetings to make sure things run smoothly, but the fact that we are at this *stage, despite* Coronavirus is an answer to prayer. The other churches involved are:

BGMC, E1 Community Church, Salvation Army, Stepney

After a long time, things are now moving extremely fast!

**Let us continue to pray and support this work.**

- Please pray the inspection of the property goes well.
- That the plan to offer education, training and practical help is finalised, especially with the disruptions of COVID.
- That the family will have approval and clearance to enter UK and arrive by the summer.
- The Steering Group and those involved in supporting the family will be able to plan and work well so the family feel welcomed as they start a new chapter in East London.

This is a real opportunity to share practical help and show compassion with a family who have experience great suffering. May we continue to show the power of Gods love.

We also pray for refugees throughout the world.

PLEASE PRAY



God of love,

You are the God who takes the side of the oppressed.  
You are the God who is close to the broken-hearted.  
You are the God who raises high the humble.

We pray for refugees around the world.  
May they be welcomed with open arms.  
May their needs for food, shelter, clothing, and love be met.  
May their wounds – emotional and physical – be healed.

We pray that the world will hear their plight.

We pray that the world will have compassion.



We pray that the world will act on their behalf.  
In Jesus' name.

Amen

<https://www.facebook.com/E123WelcomesRefugees>

Our sermon today is based on Psalm 23.

Below is the NIV version which is probably the one most of us are familiar with.

After it is the version from The Message.

Please choose which you want to read – or maybe read both

### Psalm 23 NIV

*A psalm of David.*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
<sup>3</sup> he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.  
<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,<sup>[a]</sup>  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.  
<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
<sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and love will follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
forever.

### Psalm 23 The Message

*A David Psalm*

23 <sup>1-3</sup> GOD, my shepherd!

I don't need a thing.  
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,  
you find me quiet pools to drink from.  
True to your word,  
you let me catch my breath  
and send me in the right direction.  
<sup>4</sup> Even when the way goes through  
Death Valley,  
I'm not afraid  
when you walk at my side.  
Your trusty shepherd's crook  
makes me feel secure.  
<sup>5</sup> You serve me a six-course dinner  
right in front of my enemies.  
You revive my drooping head;  
my cup brims with blessing.  
<sup>6</sup> Your beauty and love chase after me  
every day of my life.  
I'm back home in the house of God  
for the rest of my life.

Talk: Tom Head

<https://youtu.be/paNgOTkUzWk>

Song: The Lord's my shepherd  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-elQQayhpak>

Blessing: A song for us all to sing to one another based on 2 Corinthians 13:14

Song: May the grace  
[https://resoundworship.org/song/may\\_the\\_grace](https://resoundworship.org/song/may_the_grace)