

## ***Worship Together - 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021***

Welcome to our worship this morning.

I hope you are continuing to know God's care and encouragement during these difficult and uncertain times. We are going to spend time worshipping God together, and Agnita Oyawale will talk to us from the book of Esther.

But first, a notice to take notice of:

1. Flame prayer at 12.30PM today. Join us for this zoom prayer time.

Meeting ID : 864 1867 9161

Passcode : 601358.

2. Leaders meeting on Monday 1/3/2021 @ 7.15PM. Please pray that the leaders will know God's guidance and encouragement as they meet via Zoom.

### Psalm 24

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;  
for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.

Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place?

The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.

They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Saviour.

Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

Who is he, this King of glory?

The Lord Almighty— he is the King of glory.

Let's pray together:

O Lord, our God, you are worthy of all our praise.

You are the God who never fails to keep his promises.

We thank you that in Jesus' life, death and resurrection we see your love, justice, mercy, provision and victory.

You are the God who lifts up those who are weighed down.

You are the God who provides for your children.

Our desire is to praise you as long as we live.

Inhabit our praises as we gather together today.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Let's bring our praises to Him with these songs. As usual I encourage you to sing, clap, use actions, dance, or even kneel as you express your worship.

[Song: Come and worship Christ the King](#)

[Song: Mighty to save](#)

[Song: Waymaker](#)

Take a moment to thank God for any answers to prayer or encouragements this week. Feel free to speak to someone or use the whatsapp group to share a testimony of God's goodness.

You may want to consider your regular giving at this point and include an act of putting aside an offering. Thank God for his faithful provision.

This next song is based on the Lord's prayer

[Song: God our Father](#)

Liz leads us in our Prayers for the World:

Our prayers today are for the people of Myanmar, also known as Burma.

A brief summary of the country's recent history:

- Myanmar became independent from Britain in 1948. For much of its modern history it has been under military rule
- Restrictions began loosening from 2010 onwards, leading to free elections in 2015 and the installation of a government led by veteran opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi the following year
- In 2017, militants from the Rohingya ethnic group attacked police posts, and Myanmar's army and local Buddhist mobs responded with a deadly crackdown, reportedly killing thousands of Rohingya. More than half a million Rohingya fled across the border into Bangladesh, and the UN later called it a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing"

I'm sure many of us will be aware of the most recent events in Burma, which have made headline news. The military coup in Myanmar on 1st February has led to widespread protests and anger across the nation, and has brought back terrible memories for many who lived under military rule between 1962 and 2011.

A partner of 'Open Doors', (a Christian organisation which supports the persecuted Church worldwide), who has served the Church in Burma for many years told Open Doors: "When I see the soldiers in uniform, I am still afraid. When the military announced the coup this year, I was angry. I did not eat food, but spent time in prayer. I prayed to God to change the hearts of the military rulers.

Many Christians are afraid to even talk about the current situation. Many are also

interceding for their country. Pastors have called their church members to prayer. Some Christians have strong political views and leanings. Some feel for Aung San Suu Kyi, primarily on humanitarian grounds that she is getting older and is in detention again.” The Church is responding to the situation. They ask God for His wisdom. Some feel led to join the protests, others decide not to. But they all know they are called to pray.

Prison sentences of up to 20 years for obstructing the armed forces

Believers intensify prayers as military tightens grip on protestors.

“Church members are treated as treasonous.”

“From Yangon to Kalaymyo to Chin State – young and old, Pentecostal or Catholic – everyone has been on their knees.”

Many Burmese believers rely on the internet, especially social media sites – and this has been even more important during the pandemic. Internet restrictions have brought online Church services to a halt. Also due to the ban, people have been unable to use Wave Money, a Burmese e-wallet service. This money transfer app is reliable and widely used so many people have been facing financial difficulties.

There's a very strong Buddhist nationalism movement in Myanmar and the military is very much a part of that. Christians are viewed by some with hostility, thought to be ‘followers of the white people,’

Let's join with Christians in Burma to pray for their nation, for the government of Burma and for the Army, even as it commits atrocities. Pray that the military would see this is not the way forward and would hand back the power they have taken.

Almighty God, our loving Father, we pray for the people of Burma.

For the many different people groups in that nation.

We pray for those in power, for those with wealth and influence, that they would use what they have for good not evil purposes.

And we pray for those living in poverty, those with little control over their own lives and those who are persecuted.

We pray for the victims of oppression and for the oppressors.

We pray that the internet ban would be lifted and the sites that are relied upon by many in their day to day lives, would be available again.

We pray for the country's economy and for people's livelihoods.

Lord we pray for peace and stability in the nation. That You would change hearts and would prompt the military leadership to do what is best for their country and hand back power to an elected government.

We pray for peace and protection for Your Church.

That You would strengthen them physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Please work in and through their lives to bring about the peace they long for. Amen.

From a Christian working in Burma:

War is everywhere and it kills indiscriminately, both those who cause it and those who would stop it, and are willing to give their lives to serve those suffering its violence.

As we see the innocent suffer and those who serve them die, it makes me ask: what difference does prayer make? I don't know all the answers, but I do know that prayer changes my heart. It shows me a way of love and shows me that even though the things of this world are fatal, they are not final.

Those things we pray for, like love, remain after all else fades. This is our hope: that no matter what the circumstances are, in Burma or elsewhere, we have a way to respond in love. We believe that love is eternal and can change hearts and make a difference. Ultimately, we hope and pray that people's hearts would soften, and they would learn to follow the way of Love..

Our reading today is Esther Ch 4 v 7 to Ch 5 v 3. Agnita reads this out about halfway through her video but if not you want to read it first or have it open, you can find it [here](#).

Agnita brings us [today's message: 'Esther, woman of destiny'](#)

Take a few moments to reflect on what has been said today. Is there something that you need to consider or do? Please do get in touch with the leaders if you want to discuss or pray about something with them.

And let's continue to pray:

If we remain silent, who will rise up?  
If we close our eyes and turn our heads, who will see the injustice?  
If we wring our hands and shuffle our feet, who will act with mercy?  
What if we were called for such a time as this, to see through different eyes and move to a different drum.

Father, give us your strength, at such a time as this, to lead distinctive lives, and see your Kingdom come.

[Song: O faithful Lord](#)

Let's say these words for each other, and for those we will be in contact with.

**A new week coming and God is with us  
In loving, in caring, in hoping and expecting,  
God is with us and never lets us go  
God live in us, God live with us, God live through us**

**God keep us faithful through the days that lie ahead  
God keep us caring as we see the pain that fills your world  
God keep us serving as we seek to do your will  
God live in us, God live with us, God live through us**

**God keep us loving toward neighbours near and far  
God keep us trusting through the uncertainties of life  
God keep us sharing from your generous abundance  
God live in us, God live with us, God live through us**

**Amen.**