

District Retreat 2020: Psalms Redux

A Morning Prayer



Being beyond imagining
Light penetrating gloom
Peace infusing our existence
We praise you.
WE PRAISE YOU.

Life giving Creator
Darner of our torn life
Shaker of the sparkle
We praise you.
WE PRAISE YOU.

Proclaimer of goodness
Establisher and restorer of truth
Midwife to life
We praise you.
WE PRAISE YOU.

Indescribable God as we come together to
pray
release the ropes that tether us that we
might float in the stream of your Spirit
and rest in the harbour of your love.
AMEN

Anne Smith

After reading Psalm 123



The heavens, mottled with cloud,
proclaim your glory
The earth below, the ground of our
being,
Gives birth to your splendour,
Our eyes are drawn to you
And earth and heaven are joined
Dependant on your love
Resistant to your will
Secure in your faithfulness
Hesitant in obedience

Humble yet proud in equal measure
Have mercy Lord
We wait for your approval
As recalcitrant children look to the
parent
Have mercy Lord
We receive from your bounty
As beggars from the perpetual
benefactor
Have mercy Lord

We go in your grace,
In awe, in peace, in light.

Anne Smith

Through the window



The night draws in

Light fades

Vision is dimmed

Distance excluded

Immediate magnified

Closeness spotlight

Reflection possible in the blackness

Each to its own light

Natural and manufactured

The Lord is my light

Yet when God grows dim

For those who look

The image can be seen

Help me to keep attentive to the light
and dark,

The magnified, the spotlight and the
reflection,

In order to see

the active,

emerging,

ever present God

Anne Smith

A Psalm of Lament



God of healing and comfort,
Why are you absent in the lives of our
children?

Where are you in our anxieties and
disappointments?

How can your people flourish in their
pain?

God of peace and justice

Why do tribes need to stand against
others to feel good about themselves?

Why do the victors rub salt into the
wounds of those they have defeated?

Why do the powerful turn their backs on a
fruitful future for all?

God of hope.

Where is our hope gone?

We long for our hope to be in you.

In your ways we see the path of healing
and peace,

In your love we see a way to live with our
anxieties.

Can you turn the hearts of your people?

Tear down the barriers that divide

Enable the building of relationships
create openness, respect and trust across
our differences.

So people can stand together for the
healing and comfort, the peace and
justice, the hope that we long for.

For in the beauty of the world as you
made it,

In the creativity of humanity,

In the joy of fruitful relationships

We see your glory glistening through.

And out of our longing we praise you.

Ian Howarth

Qualified Praise



God is Good

All the time.

All the time

God is Good.

The refrain echoes round

The enthusiasm transparent,

The faith deep and sincere.

But why my half-hearted response,

Prompting guilt and inadequacy?

What hypocrite am I to question God's
goodness,

to denigrate such joy!

But what of the evil, the pain?

What of the injustice, the oppression?

Can faith be built on denial of reality?

But out of praise comes hope.

Out of praise comes new perspectives

Out of praise comes commitment to
make the world as God would want it.

O God, I want to praise you.

O God, I will praise you.

Let all the earth acclaim the Lord.

Ian Howarth

Fast Flows the Living Water



Soft falls the dappled light,
Gentle falls the cooling rain,
Fast flows the living water,
Make me whole again.

Dark come the storm filled clouds
harder feel the stones I tread.
Fast flows the living water
Over things I dread.

Close walk the given friends
closer still the love I find.
Fast flows the living water
Embraces soul and mind.

Out stretched the lifting hands
spoken out the healing words
Fast flows the living water
Carries heavenwards.

Deep runs the heartfelt prayer
Deeper still the song I sing
Fast flows the living water
offers thanks I bring.

Nigel Coke Woods