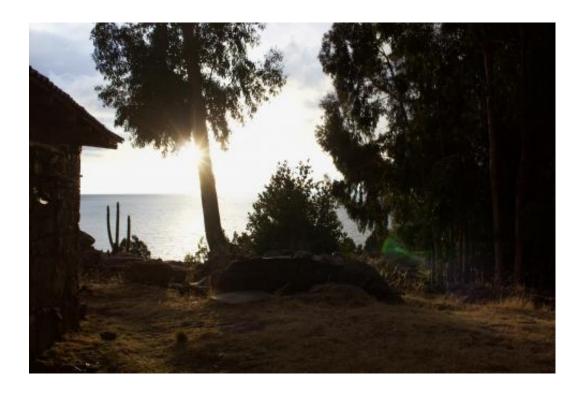
District Retreat 2020: Psalms Redux

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 spotlit

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 spotlit 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.

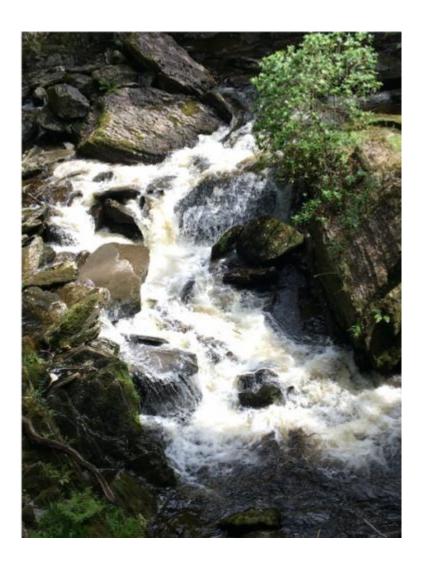
Out of praise comes new perspectives

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