



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 18th May 2025

*compiled by compiled by Dean James - Worship Leader,
using some material from Christian Aid for Christian aid
week*

Call to worship from Psalm 148

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds, kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth, young men and women, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his splendour is above the earth and the heavens. And he has raised up for his people a horn, the praise of all his faithful servants, of Israel, the people close to his heart. *Praise the Lord.*

Hymn

1] The splendour of a King, clothed in majesty
Let all the earth rejoice, All the earth rejoice
He wraps himself in Light, and darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice and trembles at His voice

*How great is our God, sing with me
How great is our God, and all will see
How great, how great is our God*

2] Age to age He stands, And time is in His hands
Beginning and the end, Beginning and the end
The Godhead Three in One, Father Spirit Son
The Lion and the Lamb, The Lion and the Lamb

How great is our God, sing with me

Name above all names, Worthy of our praise
My heart will sing, How great is our God

How great is our God, sing with me

Chris Tomlin (b. 1972) Jesse Reeves & Ed Cash (b. 1971)

Prayer

Gracious God, you gather all creation together in love. As we worship today, enlighten our hearts, so that we may perceive the hope to which you have called us. As your children, may we grow into your likeness, filled with compassion and desiring justice. Embolden us to live out our calling, and put faith, hope and love into action. Amen

A Prayer for Christian Aid Week 2025

Lord, you are faithful to your promises. Through your Spirit, you bless us with abounding hope. When power seeks to silence justice, give us the courage to raise our voice. When an end to poverty seems far off, renew our faith in your kingdom come on earth. When our neighbour reaches out, inspire us to respond with overflowing love. Loving Lord, you came not to be served but to serve. We pray for all who serve you through their work for Christian aid in this the 80th year of this organisation.

Lord, we confess that we have often buried our talents, and turned away from those who need our gifts. 'Love your neighbour as yourself,' you command us. But we worry that such love will cost us too much. In your mercy: forgive us and help us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Reading: John 13: 31-35

Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Love is an action not a feeling with God. Reflect on the words of this worship song. How do we show this love?

Song

A new commandment I give unto you,
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
By this shall all know that you are my disciples,
if you have love one for another;
by this shall all know that you are my disciples:
if you have love one for another

Roy Crabtree

Hymn

1] Come, let us sing of a wonderful love, tender and true,
out of the heart of the Father above, streaming to me and to you:
wonderful love dwells in the heart of the Father above.

2] Jesus, the Saviour, this gospel to tell, joyfully came,
came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell, sharing their sorrow and shame;
seeking the lost, saving, redeeming at measureless cost.

3] Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet; why do they roam,
Love only waits to forgive and forget; home, weary wanderers, home!
Wonderful love dwells in the heart of the Father above.

4] Come to my heart, O thou wonderful Love, come and abide,
lifting my life till it rises above envy and falsehood and pride;
seeking to be lowly and humble, a learner of thee.

Robert Walmsley (1831-1905)

Aurelia's story

In the Alta Verapaz region of Guatemala, 90% of people are living in poverty. The region is home to the Indigenous Q'eqchi' (Co-WAY-chee) people. Men in the community often seek work away from their homes, while women grow crops to feed their families. Aurelia is a community leader, a mother of eight and a beloved grandmother. In recent years record high temperatures and unpredictable weather patterns have hit farmers like her hard. Water sources are drying up or being polluted by industry. Aurelia and others from the place where she lives walk for around four hours each day during the two trips they must make to collect safe, clean water from a cenote – a natural sinkhole like a cave, with water at the bottom. But Aurelia won't give up. 'I really give my life to my neighbours,' she told Christian Aid. Aurelia's love for her neighbours and abounding hope sustain her as she works to transform her prospects and those of her community.

Congcoop, Christian Aid's partner in Guatemala, supports communities with agricultural resources and training that help them to become more climate resilient. Aurelia took up the opportunity to gain new skills with Congcoop. She's combining her deep knowledge and understanding of her land with innovative techniques. She's making organic fertiliser, constructing rainwater collection systems, and growing a wider range of crops. Aurelia has a big multi-generational family to take care of, from her father Ricardo to her many grandchildren. But she's always looking to help more people in her community. 'I really give my life to my neighbours, sharing my knowledge with them,' she told Christian Aid. Despite the long journeys to collect water and the need to work on her own farm, Aurelia still finds time to support other women and show them the skills she's learned through her training. Let us pray for those like Aurelia whose hope overflows into action. And let us seek to follow in Aurelia's footsteps in our own commitment to the good of our neighbours.

Reflection

Earlier in chapter 13 of John's Gospel, Jesus demonstrates his love for the disciples who will fail him miserably. Jesus washes and feeds Judas who will betray him, Peter who will deny him, and all the rest who will fail to stand by him in his hour of greatest distress. The love that Jesus demonstrates is certainly not based on merit, and Jesus now commands his disciples to love others in the same way.

As disciples of Jesus, the church, us, have often fallen far short in our love for one another as well as in our love for those outside the community of faith. Theological and ethical arguments. Personal interests sometimes put before the common good of the church; those in need of compassion have found judgment instead of understanding and love. Jesus could not be clearer: It is not by our theological correctness, not by our moral purity, not by our impressive knowledge that everyone will know that we are his disciples. It is quite simply by our loving acts - acts of service and sacrifice, acts that point to the love of God for the world made known in Jesus. This "new commandment" "that you love one another as I have loved you" is in parallel with what Jesus has already told his disciples: "You call me Teacher and Lord - and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (13:13-15).

The love Jesus speaks about, and which Jesus demonstrates in his life and death, is a love which extends from the mundane to the extraordinary and encompasses every kind of self-giving act in between. Jesus tells his disciples that it is by this kind of love that everyone will know that they are his disciples. It is true that here Jesus commands his disciples to love one another, but he also declares God's love for the world (John 3:16), which includes all those outside the church. Jesus demonstrates the depth of God's love for the world in his death on the cross. Where and how can we show the love of God to all people? It is a question we must ask ourselves every day if we call ourselves disciples of Jesus.

Prayer

Lord, you are faithful to your promises. Through the Spirit, you bless us with abounding hope. When power seeks to silence justice, give us the courage to raise our voice. When an end to poverty seems far off, renew our faith in your kingdom come on earth. When our neighbour reaches out, inspire us to respond with overflowing love. In Jesus' name, Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, hear us as we pray for all people living in poverty. For children who will not be able to eat a nutritious meal today, or cannot afford to attend school. We pray for an end to the outrage of poverty. May we hear the cries of those who are marginalised in our world. May we speak up with them for a more equal and just society. We watch in hope for the Lord: our God will hear us.

Lord, you welcome us when we are heavy laden with sorrow or pain, in you we find rest.

We pray for all those known to us who are sick or suffering. *[Remembering particularly...]*

We pray for all those who are grieving. *[Remembering particularly...]*

We pray especially for communities living in poverty around the world who have suffered great losses: the loss of homes, the loss of access to clean water, the loss of family members. Bless them and give them your comfort. We watch in hope for the Lord: our God will hear us.

Lord, hear as we pray for those whose hope overflows into action.

We give thanks for all those giving, acting and praying this Christian Aid Week.

May each of us seek to serve our global neighbours. Help us to see the value of our loving service.

Make us your witnesses, proclaiming your kingdom. We watch in hope for the Lord: our God will hear us.

We offer these prayers in Jesus' name. Our God will hear us. Amen

Rev 21 5-6: 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.

The Lord's prayer

Hymn

1] Lord the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness shining,
Jesus light of the world shine upon us,
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,

Shine on me. Shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the father's glory;

Blaze, spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.

*Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and
mercy;*

Send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

2] Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
from the shadows into your radiance,
By the blood I may enter your brightness,
me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me. Shine on me.....

3] As we gaze on your kindly brightness.
So our faces display your likeness.
Ever changing from glory to glory,
mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me. Shine on me.....

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

Blessing:

God of hope, fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
that we may abound in hope by the power of the holy spirit. Amen