



AT HOME SERVICE

Sunday 26th January 2025

Holocaust Memorial

*compiled by Michael Winter Local Preacher
& Anglican Lay Minister*

This Holocaust Memorial Day (officially 27th January) marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp complex.

Psalm 19 vv7-9

The law of the Lord is perfect,
refreshing the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.

The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever.

The decrees of the Lord are firm,
and all of them are righteous.

Prayer of Confession (by Rev Patrick Comerford)

For too long:

We walked different ways.

For too long:

We let what separates us define us.

For too long:

We turned a blind eye.

For far too long.

When it mattered so much, we did not stand with you.

We did not see the sights you saw, hear the sounds you heard, or feel the pain you felt, through persecution and hardship and unprecedented levels of brutal inhumanity.

But now we have listened:

We have come to walk more closely,
And we commit to a new relationship.

We are here to remember.

We recall the longed-for liberation, and now we seek justice and truth.

We did not walk with you into those dark places but we walk together now, we stand together now.

For it matters still. We will stand together. **Amen**

Hymn: STF 495

1] Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

2] In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.

3] O Sabbath rest by Galilee,
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!

4] With that deep hush subduing all
Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call,
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.

5] Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

6] Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Prayers (*Prayer written in 2020 by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Senior Imam Qari Asim.*)

Loving God, we come to you with heavy hearts, remembering the six million Jewish souls murdered during the Holocaust.

In the horrors of that history, when so many groups were targeted because of their identity, and in genocides which followed, we recognise destructive prejudices that drive people apart.

Forgive us when we give space to fear, negativity and hatred of others, simply because they are different from us.

In the light of God, we see everyone as equally precious manifestations of the Divine, and can know the courage to face the darkness.

Through our prayers and actions, help us to stand together with those who are suffering, so that light may banish all darkness, love will prevail over hate and good will triumph over evil. Amen

A prayer for Holocaust Memorial Day (by Rev Patrick Comerford):

God of the past, present, and future, we remember today, 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz, the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution, and all those who have been targeted and killed in subsequent genocides.

We remember those who, having survived genocide, share their stories with us:

We give thanks to You for the lessons of human stories, both in their suffering and in their joy.

We remember those who stood up against injustice and saved lives:

We give thanks to You for their example.

Together we acknowledge the sacrifice of those that stood together with those who suffered during the Holocaust and other genocides.

And we affirm that every life is loved by You and sacred.

Yet, during the Holocaust too many failed to stand together with their neighbours. Oppression stains Your world and contradicts Your love.

So we pray that You will inspire us now as we stand together on this day in the love that we know of God in Christ Jesus.

Let us commit to remembering:

And glorify God in our words and actions.

We make these prayers in the name of Christ Jesus who, through His life, death, and resurrection, journeys with us into the eternal hope of Your truth and light. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Reading: 1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Hymn: STF 480

1] The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

2] My soul He doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
E'en for His own name's sake.

3] Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill;
For Thou art with me, and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

4] My table Thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes;
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

5] Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me,
And in God's house forevermore
My dwelling-place shall be.

Psalm 23

The Scottish Psalter, 1929

Reflection

From the Holocaust Memorial Day Website

"80 years on from the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred) has increased significantly in the UK and globally following the 7 October attacks in Israel by Hamas and the subsequent war in Gaza. Extremists are exploiting the situation to stir up anti-Muslim hatred in the UK. Many UK communities are feeling vulnerable, with hostility and suspicion of others rising. We hope that HMD 2025 can be an opportunity for people to come together, learn both from and about the past, and take actions to make a better future for all.

There are many things we can all do to create a better future. We can speak up against Holocaust and genocide denial and distortion; we can challenge prejudice; we can encourage others to learn about the Holocaust and more recent genocides. We can learn both from and about the Holocaust and more recent genocides, for a better future.

Whilst racism and hatred do not always lead to genocide, all genocides begin with insidious stages including propaganda, 'othering' and dehumanisation. Professor Gregory Stanton has developed an academic model outlining demonstrating that genocide is a process that develops in stages that are predictable – but not inevitable. And at each stage preventive measures can stop it. Learning about the Holocaust and more recent genocides can help us all to identify the warning signs in the world around us.

The Holocaust was the attempt by the Nazis and their collaborators to destroy all Jewish people in Europe. It took place across 22 different countries with the active participation of some of the citizens of those countries. Building upon centuries of antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred), persecution of Jewish people began as soon as the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933. Classification, dividing people into 'us' and 'them' followed with the Nuremberg Laws which discriminated against Jews, stripping them of their German citizenship. They were forced to wear yellow stars, a visual manifestation of the hatred which escalated to dehumanisation, polarisation, persecution. Ultimately it led to the extermination of 6 million Jewish people."

And in order to learn, in order to create that better future we need to love: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres". There is no place for any other attitude to others for those who profess to disciples of Christ than love as set out by St Paul in those inspiring but challenging words.

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn

1] From all that dwell below the skies,
let the Creator's praise arise;
let the Redeemer's name be sung,
through every land by every tongue.

2] Eternal are thy mercies, Lord;
eternal truth attends thy word.
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
till suns shall rise and set no more.

3] Your lofty themes, ye mortals, bring,
in songs of praise divinely sing;
the great salvation loud proclaim,
and shout for joy the Saviour's name.

4] In every land begin the song;
to every land the strains belong;
in cheerful sounds all voices raise,
and fill the world with loudest praise.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Prayer of Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

Songs published under CCLI No 558764