



Pentecost 3rd November 2019

The heights of nonsense!



Maybe faith demands we keep our feet firmly on the ground!



Call to thoughtfulness The Observer Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926)

I can tell a storm by the way the trees are whipping, compared to when quiet,
against my trembling windows, and I hear from afar things whispering
I couldn't bear hearing without a friend or love without a sister close by.

There moves the storm, the transforming one, and runs through the woods and through the age,
changing it all to look ageless and young:
the landscape appears like the verse of a psalm, so earnest, eternal, and strong.

How small is what we contend with and fight; how great what contends with us;
if only we mirrored the moves of the things and acquiesced to the force of the storm,
we, too, could be ageless and strong.

For what we can conquer is only the small, and winning itself turns us into dwarfs;
but the everlasting and truly important will never be conquered by us.
It is the angel who made himself known to the wrestlers of the Old Testament:
for whenever he saw his opponents propose to test their iron-clad muscle strength,
he touched them like strings of an instrument
and played their low-sounding chords.

Whoever submits to this angel, whoever refuses to fight the fight,
comes out walking straight and great and upright,
and the hand once rigid and hard shapes around as a gently curved guard.
No longer is winning a tempting bait.
One's progress is to be conquered, instead,
by the ever mightier one.

HYMN 211 Today I awake and God is before me

HABAKKUK 1 1-4 2 1-4 the law becomes slack and justice never prevails

The gathering prayer of those too often left out of the gathering URC p 102

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, give us your peace!

Never forget, Justice is what love looks like in public



Christian leadership?

Never forget, justice is what love looks like in public

HYMN We must test our heritage Words Fred Green Tune Winchester 365

The Church of Christ in every age beset by change but Spirit led,
must claim and test its heritage
and keep on rising from the dead.

Across the world, across the street, the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live until they die.

Then let the servant Church arise, a caring Church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity.

For he alone, whose blood was shed, can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

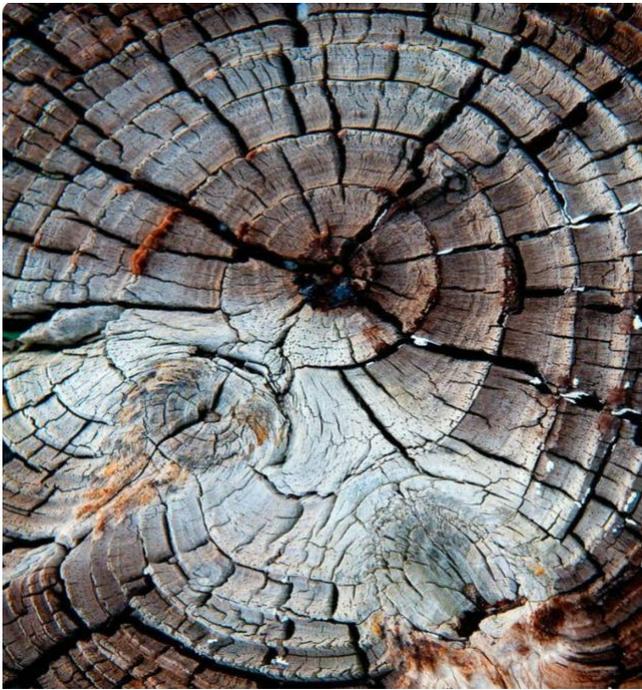
We have no mission but to serve in full obedience to our Lord:
To care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating Word.

HymnQuest ID: 61670

LUKE 19 1-10 11-19 ... of wealth and Sycamores, and being short in stature!

Some time to hear the story in quietness

Reflection God to the rescue with a ladder



Silent witness

OFFERTORY HYMN a different view Words Andrew Pratt Tune Amazing Grace 555

As boats can carve a way through waves, so Jesus surged through lives.
The challenge that he offered then, disrupts and yet revives.

The sinners were surprised by love, the hypocrites perturbed,
foundations were upset by grace, complacency disturbed.

The challenge caused some folk to turn, as values fall or shake,
they left behind both work and friends to follow in his wake.

And those who hear God's word today and understand that call,
will find their world turned upside down like craft within a squall.

And like those folk who left their nets and all they'd ever known,
will we have courage, cast away, sail from our comfort zone?

HymnQuest ID: 10347

Prayers for the world and the Lord's Prayer

HYMN 188 Thou hidden love of God, whose height whose depth unfathomed no one knows

Lord, as we rise to leave this shell of worship, called to the risk of unprotected living,
willing to be at one with all your people; *Lord, we ask for courage.*

For all the strain with living interwoven, for the demands each day will make upon us
and for the love we owe the modern city; *Lord, make us cheerful.*

Give us an eye for opening to serve you; make us alert when calm is interrupted,
ready and wise to use the unexpected; *Lord, sharpen our insight.*

Lift from our life the blanket of convention, give us the nerve to lose our life to others,
be with your Church in death and resurrection; *Lord of all ages, may we greet you in our day!*

The Blessing after which we sing

May the God of peace go with us as we travel from this place
May the Love of Jesus keep us firm in hope and full of grace

