



From Darkness to Light: A service of reflection

Wednesday 4 November 2020 5.30pm

Led by the Rev Lucy Winkett
Rector of St James's church, Piccadilly

Sermon by Dr Rowan Williams
Chair of Christian Aid

We welcome you to our service of reflection

This year has been one of great loss for so many across the world. The loss of people we love to Coronavirus, the loss of the ability to hold the hand of a loved one fighting illness, and also the opportunity to simply be together with our families and friends. Many of us also feel another more ambiguous sense of loss, which can be hard to name. We feel it in the huge shifts in our daily lives amidst the ongoing uncertainty around us and the loss of simple freedoms, comforts and rituals.

In our service, we take time to reflect on the loss that each of us feels. And importantly, we remember and celebrate the lives of people dearly loved by their families, friends, neighbours and communities.

We will hear from Christian Aid supporter, Iain, sharing stories of his son Andrew and how his family have honoured Andrew's life through gifts in his memory to Christian Aid. Yet Iain and Andrew's story, and their desire to help others and create change in the world, is just one of countless stories represented through families and friends joining us for our service. Their kindness and passion for justice bring hope to poor communities around the world.

There are people watching whose gifts in memory were given at their loved one's funeral. In a year where even gathering for funerals has had such painful limitations, we thank you for thinking of the work of Christian Aid at this time. There are others who have chosen certain moments in the year to give, sometimes to mark a birthday or an anniversary. Thank you so very much for your generosity. It has been an honour for our team to talk with you about your loved ones and help you allocate your gift to a part of our work that would have meant something special to those you remember.

Because of your gifts in memory and because of the kind and generous gifts left in Wills that enable and transform our work, we truly see what those we love have given to the world. A part of themselves.

We are honoured that they chose and trusted Christian Aid to bring about change in the lives of so many people and their communities. To them, and to you – their families and friends - we say thank you.

Alison Linwood
Legacy and In Memory Giving Manager



Opening music

Vater unser im Himmelreich – Georg Böhm

Welcome

Amanda Mukwashi, Chief Executive of Christian Aid

Opening response

The Rev Lucy Winkett, Rector of St James's church

Come among us God.
You who cast the planets into space
and cradle the sparrow in her nest,
come, God and meet us here.

Come among us God.
You who bless those who are poor or broken
and stand by those who are sad or strong:
come, God and meet us here.

Come among us God.
You who dance in the silence
and shine in the darkness:
come, God and meet us here.

Our God is a God
who longs to be with us: in our deepest places,
in our sadness and our tears.

Our God is a God
who holds us compassionately: bringing us comfort,
sharing our pain.

Our God is like a rock:
unmoved from love,
firm beneath our feet.
Let us worship God.

(Saying Goodbye by Ruth Burgess)



Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
Feed me now and evermore,
Feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fiery cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield,
Be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will ever give to Thee,
I will ever give to Thee.

(William Williams and Peter Williams)



Reading

Matthew 5:1-12, Good News Translation, read by Christian Aid supporter, Iain Watkinson.

Iain will also share some stories about his son, Andrew, and how he and his family have remembered and celebrated his life through their support of Christian Aid.

Sermon

Dr Rowan Williams, Chair of Christian Aid

Anthem

'The Call' from Five Mystical Songs - Ralph Vaughan Williams

The anthem allows us a moment of reflection. During this time, we invite you to join us in lighting a candle at home for those you are remembering.

Affirmation of Hope

In God, our deaths are not the final word,
**Our moments of crisis
Are part of eternal possibility,
And our weakness is taken up into the courage of God.**

In Christ,
**Our humanity is touched with divine life,
Our tears are mingled with the longing love of Jesus
And our solidarity with those who suffer
Is joined by the Godly presence.**

In the Spirit
**There are no boundaries on the dream
No endings to hope,
And a world beyond our seeing.
We will never live beyond the cherishing of God**

(Liturgies for the Journey of Life by Dorothy McRae-McMahon)



Prayer of intercession and lighting of candles

Leader: God of life,
In the darkness, help us to see light; where there is poverty, help us to see possibility.

May your hope shine in us and burn as a light in our lives. We pray for all who labour under the burden of poverty and despair.
All: In the darkness, we light a candle of hope.

The first candle is lit.

Reader one: In a world filled with pain and injustice,
let us be touched by the flame of compassion.
We pray for all Christian Aid partners around the world, whose commitment inspires our own.

All: In the darkness, we light a candle of faith.

The second candle is lit.

Reader two: We remember those who have loved us,
who have moved us to love and to reach out to others.
We pray that all may be warmed by your living flame of love.

All: In the darkness, we light a candle of love.

The third candle is lit.

Reader three: We have seen the miracle and mystery
of change and transformation
made possible through your grace
in the lives and work of ordinary people everywhere.
We pray for all who give their gifts, time, talents and prayers
to Christian Aid to make a fairer world.

All: In the darkness, we light a candle of praise.

The fourth candle is lit.

Leader: Enlivened by your Spirit, O God,
may our separate small lights burn brightly as one,
that together we may be energised and sent out renewed to
serve the world with courage, faith and cheerfulness. In the
name of Christ,

All: Amen.



Sending out

May God's goodness be yours.
May you be an island in a troubled sea,
May you be a star in the darkness,
May you be a staff to the weak,
May the love Christ gives you, fill your heart and cast out all fear.
And the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be with you.

**May the blessing we have shared together inspire our living
That we may heal what is hurt, repair what is damaged
and transform the world
Through our love, kindness and compassion.
Amen**

Postlude

Prelude in G Op. 105 No. 3 – Charles Villiers Stanford

Thanks and acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks to everyone who has helped make our service possible this year, especially so, in these challenging times.

A special thank you to the Watkinson family for sharing their memories and stories of their son, Andrew.

Our thanks to the Director of the Chapel Choir, Dr Joseph Fort, and members of the Choir of King's College London for sharing their talents and voices at our service.

Choir members: Nicholas Bacon and Jennifer Spencer
Organ Scholar: Mitchell Farquharson

To the clergy and staff at St John's church, West Byfleet; St James's church, Piccadilly and Eglwys Dewi Sant in Cardiff for their support in the recording of our service.

Prayer of intercession readers: Jennifer Spencer and Nicholas Bacon of the Choir of King's College London and Christian Aid Scotland Media Officer, Jo Dallas.

Our service was recorded following strict government COVID-19 health and safety guidelines and protection measures at all times.

Film Director: Robin Prime

