

Where those ill and in pain long for relief;  
where the fearful long for an end to fighting  
**For the earth's people, let there be peace.**

Where those who are isolated long for community;  
where the landless long for justice  
**For the earth's people, let there be peace.**

Where the world's politicians struggle to meet the needs of their  
own people;  
where the world yearns for global generosity  
**For the earth's peoples, let there be peace.**  
In the name of our incarnate God, Jesus. **Amen.**

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father...**

HYMN StF 673 **Will you come and follow me**  
H&P 765 (StF 678) **Come, all who look to Christ today**

#### CLOSING WORDS

Come, Holy Spirit of peace, to touch our hurt, heal our pain,  
answer our dreams and bring us together into the love that  
knows no bounds, no distinctions, embracing all human beings,  
all living things.

**For the earth's people, let there be peace.**

Thank you to Rev Jean Hudson for preparing our service this week.

## **Darlington Methodist District** **Worship at Home** **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021**



#### CALL TO WORSHIP

For summer blessings  
**Creator God, we thank you.**  
For inward light and assurance  
**Saviour God, we thank you**  
For energy and guidance  
**Holy Spirit of God, we thank you.**

HYMN StF 59 **Lord, the light of your love is shining** or  
H&P 561 **Father, we thank you**

#### PRAYER

Fount of life and light, gracious God, we come as we are to praise  
you for our everyday life with you with all its ups and downs,  
promise and disappointment, its routines and its surprises.  
Through it all, your love and the love we receive from others fills  
us with gratitude and delight. But we know that too often we are  
not loving or careful or sensitive enough ourselves and we pray  
that through your grace we are already forgiven and renewed to  
become more like Jesus, and from our hearts we thank you. In  
Jesus' name. **Amen.**

READING: [Hebrews 12: 1-3](#)

## REFLECTION

We may have learned more about determination and perseverance during the last 18 months or more than ever before. At times lockdowns may have released us to develop new skills, to spend time appreciating the world around us, to meet new people and realise the value of kindness. But at other times, we have just had to grit our teeth and plough on.

Perseverance and endurance...qualities not usually sought by today's rushing society wanting everything to come easily and speedily, in either of the senses I'm about to talk about.

In the first sense, endurance and perseverance involve waiting. When my church, Glebe, in Washington, celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we invited the then District Chair, Leo Osborn to come and talk to us on the Saturday morning about mission. It was fruitful for those of us present as Leo made us laugh, think and embrace an idea or two.

One of the ideas was to deliver a card to one street per month, promising to pray for the street on a named Sunday morning, and inviting each household to request particular prayers if they wanted. Leo told us that this had proved to be a catalyst for spectacular growth in a church he had known – after 15 long years of faithfully delivering the prayer cards without seeing any results! Endurance, perseverance...

The other sense in which I want to use these words is that of exercising an iron determination to see something through. In my other church, St Andrew's, a man called George had a brain tumour. I had visited frequently during the months of its development and heard his speech become ever more indistinct.

On Mothering Sunday, we were holding an all-age Communion service, in a circle with a special liturgy for children. I didn't expect George to come, but he arrived with his wife, Pat. During the

service, there was the usual space for open intercessions, and into the silence, George spoke. Maybe only a few of us understood what he was saying. Knowing he was dying, George prayed for God to take care of Pat. God heard and understood. George died just days afterwards.

He was God's special gift to me in family services – always prepared to answer my daft questions and make us laugh. He had never prayed aloud before, but he knew what he wanted to do on that special Sunday, gathered his remaining strength and determination – and did it.

'Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus...(who) endured the cross...'

HYMN: StF 504 / H&P 739 **May the mind of Christ my Saviour**

## INTERCESSIONS

Incarnate God, it is a comfort and a joy to remember that you are ever-present in this world you have given us to care for, which is at once sad and hopeful, unjust and compassionate, damaged and beautiful. Please hear our prayers for the earth's people.

Where families long to be released from debt and despair;

where whole communities long for clean water

**For the earth's people, let there be peace.**

Where those who feel forgotten long to belong;

where asylum seekers long for acceptance and refugees for the possibility of return

**For the earth's people, let there be peace.**