

PSALMS OF HOPE

@UnitedChurchFerdown

United Church Ferndown's 2023 Lent Programme

Friday 24th March

Reflection #31

SHARE THE BLESSING



Pray:

Lord, let everything I do in this season of Lent come from you, be inspired by you. I long to be closer to you. I long to receive the hope that you offer. Help me to remember that nothing is more important than you in my life. Help me to rely on you for help. I want to walk in your footsteps, Jesus. I confess that I have often felt I knew better and ignored your presence. Heal me, Lord, and help me to find you in the darkness of my life. Let me reach out and feel your hand and love there to guide me. Speak to me in this moment, Lord God. **Amen.**

Introduction:

In March, we sometimes have good, warm weather and the spring bulbs start to appear. I love walking the dog and seeing the daffodils and crocuses popping up. I love the warming sun on my face and as you know, my shorts will be out! At other times it will be wet and windy and the threat of snow! Snow to me is beautiful too. Seeing the dog run through it, making snow footprints up the road as you're the first person to walk on it. We really do have British weather. Whatever the weather though, creation is amazing and beautiful. It's good to reflect that our heavenly Father, our Creator of all things, leaves his footprints of love and supreme authority in his world, our world too. God makes his way known in the beauty and power of it all. Not only has God created this wonderful world, but we too are a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), a people of God's promise and a people of hope.



Read: Psalm 67:1-7 (NIV)

- ¹May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face shine on us –
²so that your ways may be known on earth,
your salvation among all nations.
- ³May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
- ⁴May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth.
- ⁵May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
- ⁶ The land yields its harvest;
God, our God, blesses us.
- ⁷May God bless us still,
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

Consider:

Creation is good. Psalm 67 is a 'song of thanksgiving' – not only for the wonders of creation, the scenery, the birdsong, the flowers, the trees, and the harvest (v6), but also for our salvation and the redemption of the world. The psalmist asks that God's ways may be known on earth and his salvation among the nations (v2). Verse 6 also contains a strong hint not only of nature's harvest but also of the harvest of souls who will fear God in all the ends of the earth (v7). So, here is a very strong reminder of redeeming love as we approach Easter: from the cross of Jesus to the empty tomb, salvation for the whole of humanity, all who accept God's offer of salvation. Creation will be redeemed as well – a perfect plan from creation in Genesis, to salvation among the nations, a perfect future. God blesses us as the psalmist asks and we can share this blessing of hope with others.

Pray:

Pray thanking God for the wonders of his lovely creation. Thank God that we are a new creation too in Christ. Pray for others to know this.

Try it out:

Take time to reflect on the beauty of creation and also on God's redeeming love as we come towards Easter. And reflect on how to share the blessing of bringing the good news of hope in Jesus to people we know.