



The Church of Scotland

Place for Pause

A WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHURCH AND COUNTRY
17th - 22nd August 2020

MONDAY 17TH AUGUST • PRESS PAUSE, BE STILL

Reading - Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see what the LORD has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Reflection

While some have the luxury of much stillness in their lives - which, of course, can easily morph into loneliness - most of us, most of the time, are overly busy. Have we been fooled into believing that our worth is measured by our work, by our activity, our productivity?

Heaven forbid that we all down tools but, please God, might we discover a renewed sense of Sabbath - an understanding that doing nothing isn't the same as doing nothing. At least not when it's allowing a process of re-creation within us. And not when it's about being still long enough that a sense of the eternal might seep into our everyday.

This day, might you find time - or let me say, might you make time - to be properly still. It's when we are still that there is space to sense, to hear the One who says, 'know that I am God.'

Prayer

You Lord, are our refuge and our strength,
an ever-present help in time of trouble.
Hear us, then, as we speak to you of that which troubles us.

But you are present and so we shall not fear for though weak,
we will look to you to strengthen us.
Hear us, as we acknowledge our weakness, our frailty, our brokenness.

Most High God, your dwelling place is secure
and will not fall and yet all around us,
there is uncertainty in both church and country.
Hear us, as we tell you of the fears and anxiety
which have surfaced all the more through the pandemic.

And yet you are with us and you are our fortress.
We have seen what you have done
and long to become more aware of what you are doing now.

Might we be still to hear you.
Might we cease, in these moments,
from doing simply to be.
And in being, to know that you are God.

And now,
may God enfold you and surround you.
May God be in your speaking and thinking -
in your sleeping and waking,
your watching and hoping.

May God be in your heart and soul
and fill all of your life,
now and for eternity.
In the name of the Three; Amen.

Daily Activity

"His banner over us is love"

Choose a tree and lie down under it. Enjoy looking up at the branches and the sky between and around them. The branches are like a banner or a tent over us keeping us safe. God's love for us is like that. It covers and protects us.

Do nothing! Spend some time chatting to God and then be still. Listen.
What is God saying to you? Maybe he's directed your thoughts, maybe something you are seeing or hearing is reminding you about a truth from the Bible, maybe you can hear him whisper to you. Be still. Listen.
If you are doing this activity with children share what you think God is saying to you and ask them what they think God is saying to them.