



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.

Luke 11: 27-28 'Jesus' Mother is Pronounced Blessed'

²⁷ As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." ²⁸ He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

Matthew 5: 4,6, 8,9 'The Beatitudes'

⁴ 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁶ 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁸ 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

The words from Luke's gospel above are short and succinct, aren't they? They remind me of 'The Beatitudes', part of which are also above, a real blueprint for us to follow. I have been dwelling on these words recently since I read a post on Facebook about Desmond Tutu. He was asked about the defining moment in his life, and spoke of when he was child and walking down a street with his mother and a white man approached them from the other direction. Where he lived in those days black people were supposed to step into the gutter to let white people pass. Before Tutu and his mother could do so, the role was reversed and the white man, who happened to be the Anglican priest Trevor Huddleston, who was bitterly opposed to apartheid, stepped into the road and tipped his hat in a gesture of respect.

When his mother told him who it was, Tutu made up his mind there and then that he wanted to be a priest, and Huddleston became his mentor. It completely changed Tutu's life and through much struggle and after many years, apartheid was dismantled.

James Edmeston (1791-1867) wrote over 2000 hymns. He was an architect and spent much time helping at the London Orphan Asylum. The hymn below is a favourite of mine and I invite you to use it as a prayer. There have been many acts of charity particularly over the last seven months. The picture on the right is a drinking fountain designed by James Edmeston which speaks for itself.



Prayer:

*Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
for we have no help but thee;
yet possessing every blessing
if our God our Father be.*

*Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us,
all our weakness thou dost know,
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe,
tempted, taunted, yet undaunted,
through the desert thou didst go.*

*Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy;
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can put peace destroy.*