



## EMMANUEL DAILY DEVOTION – SATURDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2021



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.

### Isaiah 41:10

Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

We were enjoying a canal boat holiday with our teenage daughters and our dog. We had just crossed the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct with its glorious views when we decided to stop and get lunch. We had some difficulty mooring and at one point we suddenly realized that all four humans were on the bank fruitlessly pulling on ropes, leaving our dog in sole charge of the boat – she realized it too and started barking wildly at us until we all managed to scramble on board again and motor a little further to find a better place to moor.

Unlike we fallible humans, who often fail our friends or family, our loving God promises to be always at our side. I imagine that at some point we've all felt that God is far away from us, not aware of what's going on in our lives, but nothing could be farther from the truth. God promises in His Word over and over again that he is always with us. Not only that, he has proved time and again both in the Bible and in our lives today that he keeps that promise. We read in the Bible how God was there even in the midst of wars, famines, floods, and storms. God is with us always and promises to never leave us nor forsake us.

In the verse from Isaiah above, God tells us not just that he is with us, he also bids us not to fear. He's aware of our tendency to be afraid and he cares about every fear we face but he doesn't want fear to consume us. In the Bible there are more than 300 commands and encouragements not to fear. We need to trust in God's presence and to know he is close to us, listening and working on our behalf. We must trust God instead of fearing that any situation we encounter is bigger than God is.



For over a year now many of us have at times been fearful about the pandemic which continues to affect our world and our lives. It's quite possible to have faith in God and still be fearful – we think about our circumstances and come up with an idea of how God could make things better. The problem is, we're often wrong. God's ways are much higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9).

God tells us not to fear, not because what we are facing is easy. It often isn't. We will of course face trials in the world (John 16:33) but we need never fear because God goes through every trial with us. He is there with us no matter what we're facing (Psalm 46:1-3).

### Prayer

Heavenly Father,  
We bring our fears to you.  
We know you are almighty.  
We know you are sovereign.  
But sometimes we are still afraid.

Help us to remember all the wonderful things you have done for us, all the times you were with us when life got hard.

We thank you, Father, for your constant love, for your patience and your tender mercies that are new every morning. And thank you most of all today for your promise to be with us always.

Help us to trust in that and to cast aside our fear. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.