

## 2026 09 06 WORSHIP AT HOME

Dear friends,

As you will see, this offering is somewhat longer than usual. Ian and I hope we may be able to get away at some stage during September and so I have prepared a slightly shorter piece for each Sunday during September for you to have now and to use as you wish. I have looked at the OT for this month, concentrating on some chapters from Exodus, and hope that you find what you need for this month. While I usually concentrate on NT as that is where we learn about Jesus & his mission, while the OT can seem harsh sometimes, it was his listeners' background & so we ought to see where they were coming from.

In October I shall return to our normal setting, all being well. God bless you all, Margaret

### **The words to 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind' by John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892] StF 495**

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways;  
reclothe us in our rightful mind; in purer lives thy service find,  
in deeper reverence, praise.

2 In simple trust like their who heard beside the Syrian sea  
the gracious calling of the Lord, let us, like them, without a word,  
rise up and follow thee.

3 O sabbath rest by Galilee! O calm of hills above,  
where Jesus knelt to share with thee the silence of eternity,  
interpreted by love!

4 With that deep hush subduing all our words and works that drown  
the tender whisper of thy call, as noiseless let thy blessing fall  
as fell thy manna down.

5 Drop thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease;  
take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess.  
the beauty of thy peace.

6 Breathe through the heats of our desire thy coolness and thy balm;  
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire; breathe through the earthquake, wind and fire,  
O still small voice of calm.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,

for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

for ever and ever. Amen.

**6<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026**

**Call to worship:**

Let us meet God together – may we be ready to hear his Word and to explore his message.

Let us be ready to pray for ourselves and the world.

Lord, help us to sing a new song:

a song of love, not quarrelling – a song of light, not darkness – a song of joy, not sorrow.

Help us to remember your love for us, as we praise you with music and dancing in our hearts. Amen.

Eternal God,

with ears ready to hear you and hearts ready to receive you,

with voices ready to praise you and hands ready to reach out to you,

with lives ready to serve you,

we celebrate your presence with us now, wherever we are. Amen.

**Prayer:**

God of the present and the past, for all that you have done in the lives of your people – we praise you.

For all the ways you invite us to serve and follow you – we praise you.

For the continuity of faith through the ages – we praise you.

Reading your Word, remembering your faithfulness, following your precepts, together as your people- we praise you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Forgive us, living God, for those moments when we have been slow to respond to your prompting – when we haven't been ready to give up our time, our resources, our 'self' to serve you – when we have walked alone, instead of walking with others – when, in chasing a future, we have trampled on the past.

Forgive us and unite us as your people, equipped to share our faith and your love.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Jesus, lamb of God,

you have brought us out of the land of oppression and failure;

guiding us through want, trauma and conflict;

blessing us with new hope, new opportunities, and a new story;

uniting us with those who have gone before;

strengthening our relationship with those around us,

and inspiring us to witness to those who will come after us,

that your kingdom may come and your will be done, today and always. Amen.

Loving God, we thank you for being a God of action and words, of possibility and promise, hope and healing, of faith and fulfilment, of remembrance and renewal, of love and liberation, of history and of here and now.

Thank you for being a God of individuals and community.

Thank you for being our God, and for calling us to be your people. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Exodus 12: 1-14 taken from the Holy Bible, Easy- to-Read Version. Copyright 1987,1999,2006 World Bible Translation Centre.**

While Moses and Aaron were still in Egypt, the Lord spoke to them. He said: 'This month will be the first month of the year for you. This command is for the whole community of Israel – on the tenth day of this month each man must get one lamb for the people of his house. If there are not enough people in his house to eat a whole lamb, then he should invite some of his neighbours to share the meal. There must enough lamb for everyone to eat. The lamb must be a one-year-old male, and it must be completely healthy. This animal can be either a young sheep or a young goat. You should watch over the animal till the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month. On that day, all the people of the community of Israel must kill these animals just before dark. You must collect the blood from these animals and put it on the top and sides of the doorframe of every house where his people eat this meal.

On this night you must roast the lamb and eat all the meat. You must also eat bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. You must not eat the lamb raw or boiled in water. You must roast the whole lamb over a fire. This lamb must still have its head, legs, and inner parts. You must eat all the meat that night. If any of the meat is left until the morning, you must burn it in the fire.

When you eat the meat, you must be fully dressed and ready to travel. You must have your sandals on your feet and your walking stick in your hand. You must eat in a hurry because this is the Lord's Passover.

Tonight I will go through Egypt and kill every firstborn man and animal in Egypt. In this way I will judge all the gods of Egypt and show that I am the Lord. But the blood on your houses will be a special sign. When I see the blood, I will pass over your house. I will cause bad things to happen to the people of Egypt. But none of these bad diseases will hurt you.

You will always remember tonight – it will be a special festival for you. Your descendants will honour the Lord with this festival forever.

**Comment:** Uncertainty and risk are an inevitable part of life. The challenge is how to respond to chance and change. The people were to eat the Passover hurriedly, with sandals on their feet and staffs in their hands, ready for God's coming. Our experiences are often unsettling, but reaching for the hand of God as we face change can renew us in faith and forgiveness, peace and purpose. The Passover story is retold year after year in Jewish households – an act of remembrance that continues as we remember Jesus' last supper when we celebrate Communion. Passover is a remembrance of slavery and liberation, of violence and protection. For us, too, remembering key events can help us to be prepared for future challenges and to learn lessons from the past. How might we regularly reflect on what God has done in the past and ready ourselves for God to work in the present?

**Close:**

God of all, help us to be ready always to listen to you – help us to ready to follow you – help us to be ready to see you in our world and help us always to be ready to serve you in our world. Amen.

Lord, now we are all ready to follow you – all set to carry your message and to go out into the world, spreading your love and peace.

And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each and every one of us now and for evermore. Amen.

**13<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026**

**Call to Worship:**

Are you ready?

It's time to go – it is time to go with God – time to go with him on a journey.

Let's go together with God here and now.

God who created the world, we are here before you now in many different places and we ask you to be with us wherever we are.

God who saves us, we bring our fears and our questions. Guide us and protect us.

Uniting God, we come now as pilgrims on a journey together and we ask that may let us know that you are with us as we journey with you.

God of our journey of faith:

Wherever you send us – we will go.

Wherever you lead us – we will follow.

Whenever we stumble – we will reach out to you.

Whenever we are afraid – we will reach out to you.

Wherever we gather – we will worship you.

Whenever we hear your word – we will embrace you.

All our days we will honour you.

In ones and twos and in tens and hundreds – we will praise you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Prayer:**

Eternal God, through you all things are possible: seas become dry land; darkness is lit up; oppressors are overcome; the oppressed are saved; fear becomes fortitude; death becomes life; slaves are freed; despair blossoms into hope.

We praise you, God, our creator – Jesus, our Saviour – and Holy Spirit, our comforter. Amen.

Loving God, forgive us, we pray, when we go against your wishes – when we ignore your presence with us – when we lead others into wrong ways – when we pursue that which is reckless and bad for us.

Forgive us - and help us to trust that your light is stronger than our darkness – your creativity stronger than our destructiveness – and your faithfulness stronger than our doubt. Amen.

God of power and presence, your grace goes ahead of us, drawing us away from the sins that drag us down. Your forgiveness heals us from all that has drawn us away from you and others.

Your love is in our midst, giving us courage, leading us on and guiding us to your eternal kingdom.

Blessed are you forever, God, for you are with us every step of the way – raising us up, cheering us on, guiding us, shaping us, teaching us and drawing us closer to you.

With the dawn chorus of the waking birds and the sparkling of the evening stars, we will always praise and worship you – ready to follow you wherever you lead.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Exodus 14: 19-31 – taken from the Holy Bible, Easy-To-Read version. Copyright 1987, 1999, 2006 World Bible Translation Centre.**

The angel of God moved to the back of the people [The angel was usually in front of the people, leading them]. So the tall cloud moved from the front of the people and went to the back of the people. In this way the cloud stood between the Egyptians and the Israelites. There was light for the

Israelites. But there was darkness for the Egyptians. So the Egyptians did not come any closer to the Israelites that night.

Moses raised his hand over the Red Sea, and the Lord caused a strong wind to blow from the east. The wind blew all night long. The sea split, and the wind made the land dry. The Israelites went through the sea on the dry land. The water was like a wall on their right and on their left. Then all of Pharaoh's chariots and horse soldiers followed them into the sea. Early that morning the Lord looked down from the tall cloud and column of fire at the Egyptian army. Then he made them panic. The wheels of the chariots became stuck. It was very hard to control the chariots. The Egyptians shouted: 'Let's get out of here! The Lord is fighting against us. He is fighting for the Israelites.'

Then the Lord told Moses: "Raise your hand over the sea to make the water fall and cover the Egyptian chariots and horse soldiers."

So just before daylight, Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the water rushed back to its proper level. The Egyptians were running as fast as they could from the water, but the Lord swept them away with the sea. The water returned to its normal level and covered the chariots and the horse soldiers. Pharaoh's army had been chasing the Israelites, but that army was destroyed. None of them survived!

So that day the Lord saved the Israelites from the Egyptians. Later, the Israelites saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians on the shore of the Red Sea. The Israelites saw the great power of the Lord when he defeated the Egyptians. So the people feared and respected the Lord, and they began to trust him and his servant Moses.

**Comment:** living in slavery isn't something we would choose to do, so we can imagine how desperate the Israelites were to escape from Egypt. Despite this desperation, being chased by the Egyptians must have been terrifying and reaching the sea must have seemed like an impossible barrier. TV programmes showing the RNLI and similar services rescuing people in trouble often depict how people struggle to allow rescuers to help them. Stepping from a sinking ship into a lifeboat can feel terrifying. The Israelites had to trust and go where God said.

Where might we need to take a step of faith to go with God in our lives?

In Exodus, God went as a pillar of cloud or fire, both guiding the Israelites and shielding them from the approaching Egyptian army. What might it look like for us to take our cues from God and be shielded by him in our lives?

**Close:**

Help us, Lord God, to go with you, knowing you are leading us:

out of bad choices and into good choices,

out of fighting and into peace,

out of hate and into love.

Help us to know you with us, walking alongside us in all of life. Amen.

Let us have courage – as we know God before us.

Let us have faith – as we know God beside us.

Let us have joy – as we know God behind us.

Let us have love – as we know God goes with us. Amen.

May God's blessing rest with each one of us as we go with him into the week ahead. Amen.

**20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026**

**Call to worship:**

As Moses and the people were fed with manna – so we come to be fed by the Bread of Life.

As God sent them water in the desert – so we come to be refreshed by the Water of Life.

As God spoke to them through Moses and the prophets – so we come to hear the Word of God.

Generous God, we are here to thank you for our daily food.

God our Protector, we are here to put our trust in you.

God of justice, we are here to seek your guidance and rejoice in your love for us. Amen.

Holy God, it is enough for us to be here in this moment, to receive from you all that we need for fulfilment and to give to you all that we cherish and love.

We celebrate that with you in our lives, we are rich and that with you as our guide, we are blessed.

To you be all glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**Prayer:**

Faithful God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – in you we trust for all that we need at this moment.

We bring to you our hopes and our struggles and reach out to you in awe, knowing that you will lift us up – that you will inspire, nourish and bless us.

In your presence we praise and adore you. Amen.

Lord God, forgive us: when we want more than we need;

when we want more time, but don't use the time we have wisely;

when we want more money, but don't use what we have sensibly;

when we want more things, but don't value what we already own;

when we want more attention, but don't give our focus to others;

when we want more reassurance but forget our blessings.

Forgive us and empower us to live as those who know that, in you, we *have* enough and *are* enough.

Living God – as you have heard the cries of your people through the ages, so you have heard our cries.

You reach out to us to forgive, restore and sustain.

You feed us with the living bread of Christ – you clothe us with the blessing of your Spirit – and you call us from darkness into your marvellous light.

We thank you, Lord. Amen.

God of each moment and each day, thank you for giving us enough.

Your love is enough – your forgiveness is enough – your promises are enough – your guidance is enough – your presence with us is enough, and so we praise you and thank you.

We trust you and give ourselves to you, knowing that with you we are enough. Amen.

**Exodus 16: 2-15 taken from The Holy Bible, Easy-To-Read version. Copyright 1987, 1999, 2006 World Bible Translation centre.**

The whole community of Israel began complaining again. They complained to Moses and Aaron in the desert. They said: 'It would have been better if the Lord had just killed us in the land of Egypt. At least there we had plenty to eat. We had all the food we needed.'

But now you have brought us out here into this desert to make us all die from hunger.

Then the Lord said to Moses: 'I will cause food to fall from the sky. The food will be for you to eat. Every day the people should go out & gather the food they need that day. I will do this to see if they will do what I tell them. Every day the people will gather only enough food for one day. But on Friday, when they prepare their food, they will see that they have enough food for two days.'

So Moses and Aaron said to the Israelites: 'Tonight you will see the power of the Lord. You will know that he is the one who brought you out of Egypt. You have been complaining about the Lord, and he heard you. So tomorrow morning you will see the Glory of the Lord. You have been complaining & complaining about us. Maybe now we can have a little rest.'

Then Moses said: 'You have been complaining & the Lord has heard your complaints. So tonight he will give you meat, and in the morning you will have all the bread that you need. You have been complaining to Aaron and to me, but now, maybe we will have a little rest. Remember, you are not complaining against Aaron & me – you are complaining against the Lord.'

Then Moses said to Aaron: 'tell the whole community of Israelites to come together before the Lord, because he has heard their complaints.'

So Aaron spoke to all the Israelites. While he was talking, the people turned & looked into the desert. And they saw the Glory of the Lord appear in a cloud. The Lord said to Moses: 'I have heard the complaints of the Israelites. So tell them: "Tonight you will eat meat. And in the morning, you will have all the bread you want. Then you know that you can trust the Lord your God."

That night, quails came all around the camp, and in the morning dew lay on the ground near the camp. After the dew was gone, something like thin flakes of frost was on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they asked each other: 'What is that?' because they did not know what it was. So Moses told them: 'This is the food the Lord is giving you to eat.'

### **Comment:**

Our brains seem hard-wired to complain – a survival strategy to identify what is wrong & try to fix it. I expect we can all think of times when we have complained. In some situations, our right to complain is legally protected. Perhaps you think the Israelites were ungrateful – or maybe that they had plenty to complain about. Do you complain more when you are hungry or tired? Yet God provided enough for the Israelites' needs, which suggests their complaint wasn't dismissed but heard. Are we satisfied with enough – or are we always looking for more?

In *The Market as God* [2016] theologian Harvey Cox analyses the religion of 'The Market', whose first commandment is 'There is never enough'! It is easy for us to be enthralled by economic growth as the obvious and sufficient purpose of our national life, without asking what purpose this growth is supposed to serve. In the 2021 report, *the Economics of Biodiversity*, the economist Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta argues that we need to use an 'inclusive' measure of wealth that accounts for human health, the care of creation, knowledge and skills, & the value of communities. What might an economy that values these assets look like?

### **Close:**

May God our provider bless us, giving us just what we need.

May God the Son bless us, being our bread of life.

May God the Spirit bless us, fuelling us to bless the world. Amen.

**27<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

**Call to worship:**

Come and speak with our God who listens.

Come and meet Jesus who speaks on our behalf.

Come and hear the God who answers.

Come and receive the Spirit who helps us.

Lord, we are here now to be with you. We thank you for listening to us – help us to listen to others and to speak up for those who can't speak for themselves.

In the name of Jesus, who speaks up for us. Amen.

Living Lord, we are here from so many different places and with many different needs – but we are here to receive your teaching – to reflect on your deeds – to praise you for your faithfulness – and to pray for our world. Amen.

**Prayer:** God, our strength and our sustainer,

we thank you for the precious gift of prayer – for the words and the silence, the moods and the mystery – for the knowledge that we can be fully ourselves, whether honest, sad, joyful, angry or questioning.

Thank you for the privilege of prayer – for hearing our prayers – for inspiring and guiding them. Amen.

Faithful God,

so often we are like the Israelites, complaining to everyone around us as soon as things get tough and don't go our way – as soon as things don't turn out how we hoped or planned – as soon as the things we want don't immediately appear.

Forgive us, we pray, and bless us with patience, faith and a quiet trust in your purpose for our lives.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

God, thank you for revealing your faithfulness through the journey of the Israelites – your purposes through the ministry of Moses – your forgiveness through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. You cleanse us with the living water of hope, healing and wholeness. Amen.

God of the past and the present, we stand in awe and gratitude before you.

When we complain, you don't condemn, but confer on us fresh blessings.

When our lives hit rocky places, you bring freshness and hope.

When we feel your absence, you surprise us with your living presence, through the power of your Word, through the witness of your prophets and through your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Exodus 17: 1-7 taken from The Holy Bible, Easy-To-Read version. Copyright 1987,1999,2006 World Bible Translation centre.**

All the Israelites travelled together from the Desert of Zin. They travelled from place to place as the Lord commanded. The people travelled to Rephidim and camped there. There was no water there for the people to drink. So they turned against Moses and started arguing with him. They said: 'Give us water to drink.'

Moses said to them: 'Why have you turned against me? Why are you testing the Lord?'

But the people were very thirsty, so they continued complaining to Moses. They said: ‘Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out here so that we, our children, and our cattle will all die without water?’

So Moses cried out to the Lord: ‘What can I do with these people? They are ready to kill me.’

The Lord said to Moses: ‘Go before the Israelites. Take some of the elders of the people with you. Carry your walking stick with you. This is the stick that you used when you hit the Nile River. I will stand before you on a rock at Horeb. Hit that rock with the walking stick and water will come out of it. Then the people can drink.’

Moses did these things and the elders of Israel saw it. Moses named that place Meribah and Massah, because this was the place that the Israelites turned against him and tested the Lord. The people wanted to know if the Lord was with them or not.

### **Comment:**

Etty Hillesum described her religious awakening during the persecution of the Jews in Amsterdam. Before she was murdered at Auschwitz in 1943, she wrote: “I lay on my bunk at night among.....women who during the day would say, ‘I don’t want to think’, or ‘I don’t want to feel, I will go mad’. On those nights, I was filled with an immense spirit, and I .....said to myself, ‘If only I could be the thinking heart of the camp.....the thinking heart of an entire concentration camp.’” [*An Interrupted Life: The Diaries of Etty Hillesum 1941-1943*] Etty’s desire was to take on the troubles of those around her, despite her own hardship. This can be defined as similar to the role of a priest or ‘intercessor’. Jesus is our great example of this. What can we learn from Moses and Jesus in these roles?

In today’s focus passage, Moses acts to reveal God’s power and provision to the people.

How might being a ‘middleman’ be about the work of revealing – of pointing to God’s work all around us?

### **Close:**

God, as we go into the week ahead, help us to remember all the good things you have given us.

Help us to be people who show others your goodness, just as Moses and Jesus did.

Help us to be bridge-builders, mediators and intercessors and to bring your kingdom on earth. Amen.

The blessing of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – be with each one of us, with those whom we love and with all for whom we pray, this day and forever more. Amen.

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I hope that you have found this offering for September of value. All being well, I look forward to returning to our usual, slightly longer, format in October. Every blessing. Margaret