

Intercessions on 25 October 2020

by Andrew Goodman

Last Sunday after Trinity

Readings: Leviticus 19: 1-2; 15-18 and Matthew 22: 34-40

In a blog entitled 'The Second Wave Breaks', Paul Valler¹ reflected last week that:

"As the days get darker and shorter, people are finding the prospect of more restrictions for months to come even harder than when we first went into lockdown.

In the first pandemic wave many experienced loss in all sorts of ways. Now, after an emotionally draining six months, the second wave is here. Apart from the medical impact, we have more job losses, more uncertainty, a very real lack of fun, and the disappointing reality that this is going to go on for a long time. We are running out of steam. As Psalm 42 says, 'all your waves and breakers have swept over us.' We need hope."

Lord, may we find lament therapeutic in this sad and weary time. May we realise that we can be completely real with you, and in our lament find true hope through focussing on your immense character.

We join with the psalmist who says: "Why are you downcast O my soul? Why so disturbed within me?" We put our hope in God, for we will yet praise you, our Saviour and our God.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

¹ Chair of the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity Board

Melody Zhang² reflected this week on the connection between our tired bodies and our exploited earth:

"We all participate in an economy of extraction when we practice the belief that our Earth has no dignity, no life, or inherent value apart from what we get out of it for utility and short term profit. We participate in this economy when we continue to strip the dignity from any sort of bodily - or embodied - work and exploit mainly Black and brown bodies for hard labour with criminally low wages and working conditions in exchange for comfort enjoyed only by some.

We all fall prey to the logic of extraction when we engage mindlessly in consumerism and accumulation, whether through buying stuff we do not need or wasting what we have."

Lord, may we share in your longing and working toward wholeness and healing, toward justice and restoration for all created beings. Help us to participate in building a more radical and sacred economy - one where each person and every created being is indispensable and worthy of care.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Thank you, Lord, that once again this week a 22-year-old footballer³ has demonstrated more wisdom and compassion than the Government and its MPs, with a few notable exceptions, can muster. Thank you, Lord, that he has inspired community organisations, businesses, local government of all political persuasions and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales

² Climate justice campaign coordinator at Sojourners, Washington DC

³ Marcus Rashford

and Northern Ireland to acknowledge and respond to the fact that children and families who need support with food in term time do also need to eat during holiday periods.

May those MPs who enjoy a basic salary of £82,000 and public subsidised food allowances in certain circumstances withdraw their objection to ensuring that children have enough to eat, and learn that they have a responsibility to care about child health.

As our Government this week imposed a legal requirement on schools to facilitate remote learning, may they make available and fairly distribute the additional resources required to do this, including the provision of laptop computers and broadband connection where necessary.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lord, it has been an incredibly difficult year for the people of Lebanon: an economic crisis, protests across the country, coronavirus and then the catastrophic explosion which destroyed much of the central part of Beirut. This is on top of other healthcare stresses, including supporting a refugee population of 1.7 million.

Thank you, Lord, for the positive approach NGO's bring to their work there:

- The Tahaddi Centre, a Tearfund partner, supports families with food and education. Help them to continue this support when constrained by lockdown restrictions. May the transition from face-to-face to online learning evolve smoothly.

- International Health Partners (IHP) has brought together two organisations in order to help people access much-needed medicines - antibiotics, treatments for parasitic worms, and medicines for diabetes and heart disease:
 - Anera runs health and other services in many of the country's Palestinian and Syrian refugee camps.
 - International Medical Corps (IMC) supports a network of healthcare clinics and dispensaries and operates mobile medical units and emergency response.

Bless the work of all three organisations as they put together a shipment for refugee camps in Jordan.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Events in Nigeria this week have shocked many around the world. Calls for change and protest have come mainly from a younger generation who represent the largest demographic. Footage posted after the events and broadcast live on social media showed soldiers firing live rounds into fleeing protesters.

Lord, our church families have connections with and family in Nigeria. People are shell shocked at the moment, and things are on a knife edge.

Comfort everyone affected and maintain their hope. They seek divine intervention, as they see no logical solution to the change people are hoping for.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Restore the joy of your salvation and sustain those we know who are unwell, including:

Mark, Win, Barbara, Paul, Barbara, Debbie, Connie, Imogen,
The Lubi Family, Tim, Joe, Chris, Terry, Dorothy, Colin, Julia,
Susan, Jean, Bernard, Julia

Comfort those who mourn the death of a relative or friend. We
remember those who have died:

Margaret Miles, Evelyn Kellett, Charles Lule, Afolabi Euba

We remember in Year's Mind those whose anniversaries fall at this
time:

George Ditton, Peter Morey, Gwyneth Ruffles, Thora Blake, Rev.
Charles Harris, Amelia Dickins

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lord, deliver and protect us. Answer us when we call upon you.
You are with us when we are in trouble. Rescue us. Satisfy us with
long life and show us your salvation.

(Based on Psalm 91:14-16)

Merciful Father.....**accept these prayers for the sake of your
Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**