

# Christ Church New Southgate & Friern Barnet

## 20 November 2022

---

Welcome

Song: All who are thirsty

1 All who are thirsty, come to the Lord,  
all who are hungry, feed on his word;  
buy without paying food without price,  
eat with thanksgiving God's sacrifice.

2 Why spend your money, yet have no  
bread;  
why work for nothing? Trust God instead!  
He will provide you richest of food:  
come to the waters, drink what is good.  
*All who are thirsty come...*

3 Call on God's mercy while he is near,  
turn from your evil, come without fear;  
ask him for pardon, grace will abound!  
This is the moment he can be found.  
*All who are thirsty come...*

4 Where once were briers, flowers will grow,  
where lives were barren, rivers will flow:  
praise to our Saviour, grace and renown  
ours is the blessing, his be the crown!  
*All who are thirsty come...*

Prayer

Song: 10,000 reasons

Bless the Lord oh my soul, oh my soul  
Worship His Holy name  
Sing like never before, oh my soul  
I'll worship Your Holy name

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning  
It's time to sing Your song again  
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before  
me

Let me be singing when the evening comes  
You're rich in love and You're slow to anger  
Your name is great and Your heart is kind  
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing  
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

And on that day when my strength is failing  
The end draws near and my time has come  
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending  
Ten thousand years and then forevermore

All age activity: World cup football prayers,  
Open Doors material

Song: He's got the whole world in his hands

Reading: Psalm 46

**To the leader. Of the Korahites.  
According to Alamo. A Song.**

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present<sup>[a]</sup> help in trouble.  
<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the  
earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart  
of the sea;  
<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its  
tumult. *Selah*  
<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad  
the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.  
<sup>5</sup> God is in the midst of the city;<sup>[b]</sup> it shall not  
be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.  
<sup>6</sup> The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms  
totter;  
he utters his voice, the earth melts.  
<sup>7</sup> The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge. <sup>[c]</sup> *Selah*  
<sup>8</sup> Come, behold the works of the Lord;  
see what desolations he has brought on  
the earth.  
<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to the end of the  
earth;

he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup> 'Be still, and know that I am God!

I am exalted among the nations,  
I am exalted in the earth.'

<sup>11</sup> The Lord of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our refuge. <sup>[d]</sup> *Selah*

Song: Be still for the presence of the Lord

The Holy one is here

Come bow before him now

In reverence and fear

In Him no sin is found

We stand on Holy ground

Be still for the presence of the Lord

The Holy one is here.

Be still for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around

He burns with Holy fire

With splendor He is crowned

How awesome is the sight

Our radiant King of light

Be still for the glory of the Lord

Is shining all around.

Be still for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place

He comes to cleanse and heal

To minister His grace

No work too hard for Him

In faith receive from Him

Be still for the power of the Lord

Is moving in this place.

*Sermon: God speaks and says: be still*

Here is the game of Jenga, a party classic that broke into youth groups and family parties everywhere in the 1980s and is still popular today. Each competitor has to be willing to remove one block from the base and put it on the top. Incidentally, the name comes from the Swahili word 'to build'.

As we build the tower higher, we know that it is easy at the beginning but gets harder and

harder as the tower becomes unstable. Eventually the tower wobbles, totters and it falls with an almighty crash.

In the ancient world, there was a belief that the world existed like a sort of constructed Jenga game. In Genesis, we hear of God who spoke and created the world. God who spoke and the seas were separated, and the land formed. We hear of God who speaks and brings order over chaos. In that worldview, God had ordered the scary sea by raising the mountains on which the earth was supported.

Recently, another word has been added to the dictionary: permacrisis. I think we all know what that means, Brexit + covid + war in Europe = economic, political and social crisis. As a nation, our sense of how the world works has been challenged. The stability provided by democratic government and our economy has wobbled. And it's upsetting.

It's upsetting to all of us who have less money in our pocket, more worries about energy bills, and more fears about our health and wellbeing. It's deeply upsetting too that our environment is changing, as we see icecaps melting, and the seas rising, we know that the earth is changing because of what we have done.

Everything is changing. Our new normal has not come. We have found ourselves in a permacrisis as individuals, communities, churches, and a nation.

To every person, people and nation in crisis, God speaks, and he says: be still.

Psalm 46 is a song. It's got the pianist scribbled notes at the top, no-one really knows what according to alamothe means anymore, it could mean girls sing the first bit, or use the flute on the intro, or use 'over the mysteries.' What we do know is that this is a song with 3 verses, do you see *selah* after v3, 7 and 11. It means 'pause'. Or be still.

Maybe the chorus should have been in verse 3 too, or maybe it's like quite a few Christian songs where 2 verses are sung before the chorus comes, and the chorus is v7 the lord almighty is with us, the god of Jacob is our fortress.

In all our trouble, in all our wobbly moments in our lives, families, church and community hear again: be still. Pause. Remember that God is our refuge and strength. We will not fear because the God who ordered the world, is the creator of the world. God who speaks and creates. God who speaks and brings life.

If God is the creator of the world, and he is, then he is always the creator of the world. It is literally God's business to create, and create and renew. God is our help in times of trouble, not just because he gives us a place to shelter and rest, but because no matter what happens he has the ability to build and renew. He is the creator of the world and he is not finished.

He takes the chaos of the sea and forms life giving water that flows from heaven and brings life. Life in his name, life in the name of Christ, life in the name of the Spirit who flows through each and everyone of us.

So God speaks and he says: be still. Stop running around, flitting from one thing to the next and sit and be still and remember who he is. Be still and know that I am God.

Jerusalem is a big modern city with plenty of suburbs, shopping malls and restaurants. But the old city is what the people of the biblical world thought of as Zion – the city of God, even though the lines of the walls have changed. This song psalm 46, is a song that would have been sung at a festival in that same old city of Jerusalem.

The city was deeply symbolic to the people of God, for it was an earthly echo of the throne

of God in heaven. Ever since the Israelites were kicked out of Egypt, God's presence went with them in the tabernacle, in a tent. King David then brings the tabernacle into the city and creates the temple as a permanent sign of God's dwelling. The temple was then destroyed, rebuilt a bit and destroyed and now has a very delicate existence at the far edge of the old city.

It might sound silly, but I hadn't realised how small old Jerusalem was. When we visited, we walked round the walls of it in under 2 hours. It's a maze of tiny streets, squares and shops squeezed in now around enormous churches.

God's presence is no longer restricted to a small place, bound in by bricks. God's dwelling place is in every heart that yearns for him. In every congregation that seeks him and in every community seeking to build the kingdom of God.

The voice of God that spoke and created the world, is the same voice that speaks in v10 in this psalm: be still and know that I am God. It's the same voice that called Mary, Peter, Paul, Lydia, Priscilla. It's the same voice that calls each of us today.

God speaks and he says: be still. Be still and know that I am God. How does his voice speak to us today? What is he showing you? How is he leading you as a church into dwelling in his presence and hearing: be still. *Reflect:* Be still breath exercise. Read each word of Psalm 46 slowly, breathing in-between each word. Ask God to speak to you as you dwell in his word.

Be still doesn't mean don't act. Be still doesn't mean stop doing everything. Be still and know that I am God, is placing real order in our lives. Be still and accept that God is King of all the earth, including my workplace, family and church. Be still and accept that God loves you and wants you to thrive and

flourish. Be still, even if the world seems wobbly like the final rounds of Jenga, and know that I am God. Be still, God will renew the earth and restore the world to come. God speaks and he says: be still.

### *Communion*

Song: Speak, O Lord, as we come to You  
To receive the food of Your Holy Word  
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us  
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness

That the light of Christ might be seen today  
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith  
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us  
All Your purposes for Your glory

Teach us Lord, full obedience  
Holy reverence, true humility  
Test our thoughts and our attitudes  
In the radiance of Your purity

Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see  
Your majestic love and authority  
Words of pow'r that can never fail  
Let their truth prevail over unbelief

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds  
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for  
us  
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time  
That will echo down through eternity

And by grace we'll stand on Your promises  
And by faith we'll walk as You walk with us  
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built  
And the earth is filled with Your glory

Blessing