

**“Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.**

**Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.” (Psalm 96:7-8)**

I have been so blessed recently that I want to share it with everyone! (Which means I would love to know how others have been blessed too!) One of the points in Peter’s sermon last Sunday (28th June) was to remind us that we are all different. His focus was on our own Christ Church Christian community and he challenged us to celebrate the differences which go to make up the team that we are – the body of Christ here. It’s possible for us to carry on with our lives unconsciously not noticing the larger focus of this, and therefore missing out on a glorious reality which reveals a God of so much more variety than we acknowledge. I have listened to the BBC radio 4 services during lockdown (8.10am, but I listen later in the day, and often listen twice). I have heard Christians from Manchester, Cardiff, London, Iona and elsewhere, and every service included voices with different accents, clearly voices of people who have come from abroad to live here. The Fathers’ Day service was presented by three Londoners and was particularly moving and challenging.

The “UK blessing” (a sung version of the OT blessing, “May the lord bless you and keep you ...”, found on youtube) was inspiring to me because I was struck by the variety of minority communities who are part of our body, the body of Christ, here in the UK. I went on to find the French and Australian versions and saw more of my brothers and sisters around the world. And then I found the Irish version which began, before singing the blessing, with a glorious celebration of Christianity within the Irish culture, using “Be thou my vision”, attributed to an Irish saint of the 6th century.

I love the verse of the hymn: “As o’er each continent and island the earth moves on another day, the voice of prayer is never silent, nor dies the strain of praise away”. This voice of prayer will be words foreign to us, songs, dance, silence, thoughts, imaginings ... and our own prayers take up the never-ending chain of prayer around the world.

Psalm 96 is a jubilant song of praise: **“Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength ...”**. Let’s revel in the joy of the diversity of our world-wide family of God.

Remember you can send your prayer request to: Prayer@baystonhillchurch.org Or ring: (01743) 583215

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