

Wednesday 2nd December

Steve Cooper

Readings

Psalm 23

Isaiah 25:6-10

Matthew 15:29-37

*“Hark! we hear a distant music, and
it comes with fuller swell;
'Tis the triumph song of Jesus, of our King Emmanuel”*

The image of God’s dwelling place being in, or above, hills or mountains finds its place in many Psalms and several places in Isaiah. These writers no doubt reflect that much of Israel/Palestine is quite hilly and mountainous, and many encounters with God are placed in terrain – Mount Hermon, Mount Sinai and Mount Zion among others. As a child I grew up on and around the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire, so the imagery resonates with me. We did ecumenical walks to the highest summit on the hills on Good Friday to plant a cross, which stayed there until Pentecost – and was visible from miles around.



In today’s Isaiah passage we have the writer looking forward to God providing fully and luxuriantly for his faithful people. The gospel passage in Matthew’s account of the feeding of the 4,000 has Jesus enacting that promise as with the available resources he meets the needs of those who have invested their time in learning their discipleship and responding in faith.



As we travel in Advent, and prepare for Christmas, how do we prepare to be luxuriantly provided for by God himself? Is that a gift that we are ready to receive? What of the gift of God’s vulnerability in the Christ child – it is and will be a great comfort for us to know and experience that “best of all is God is with us” – Emmanuel, but how much greater a gift are we ready to receive and respond to?

Tuesday 1st

There's a light upon the mountains,
and the day is at the spring,
When our eyes shall see the beauty
and the glory of the King;
Weary was our heart with waiting, and
the night-watch seemed so long,
But His triumph-day is breaking,
and we hail it with a song.

There's a hush of expectation, and
a quiet in the air;
And the breath of God is moving in
the fervent breath of prayer;
For the suffering, dying Jesus is the
Christ upon the throne,
And the travail of our spirit is
the travail of His own.

Hark! we hear a distant music, and
it comes with fuller swell;
'Tis the triumph song of Jesus, of
our King Emmanuel;
Zion, go ye forth to meet Him,
and my soul, be swift to bring
All thy sweetest and thy dearest for
the triumph of our King.

Prayer

God who transcends location, yet whom we want to place in time space, as you come among us help us to recognise all your promise for each and for all. Remind us that as we relate to you in time and space we are only "looking through a glass dimly," that you are so much greater than our wildest imaginings, yet you have constantly revealed your love and generosity as a gift to all people and to all communities. May we respond to you and to your people (known and unknown) fully reflecting that extraordinary grace that we have experience because of your choice to be with us in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

There's a light upon the mountains

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuvbW7qVwal)

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We pray for all young people
and children, our local schools
and those involved in youth and
children
activities in our local churches.

YouTube

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