

Tuesday 8th December

Colin Brown & Veronica Frances

Readings

Psalm 96

Isaiah 35:1-10

Matthew 18:12-14

*“O use me, Lord, use even me,
just as thou wilt, and when and where,
until thy bless face I see,
thy rest, thy joy, thy glory share.”*

Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, praise his name; (Ps 96 vv1-2a)

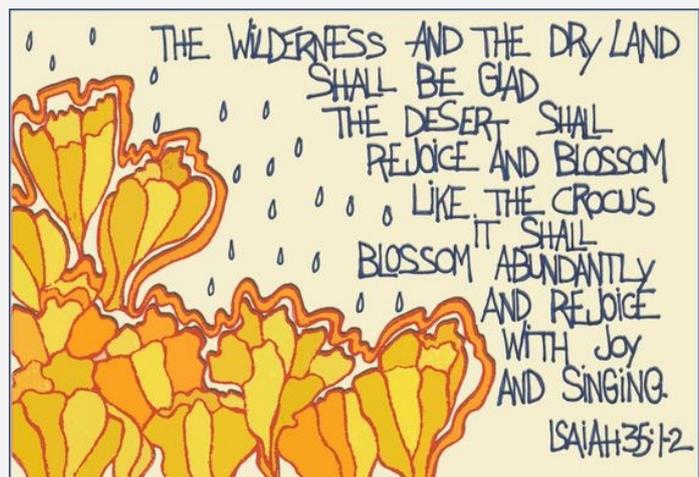
Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come.....
he will come to save you.” (Is 35 vv3-4)

Today’s passage from Isaiah is sandwiched between his description of a wasteland and a prophecy of sickness and war to come. How very Christmassy!! Yes, really – it IS. Because right in the middle of a sense of desolation and doom, disease and conflict, in spite of any weakness and fear that we may feel, HERE is the very essence of Christmas: “God will come to save you.” And he DID. In a stable, in an insignificant village, he came. And he comes to us today, however feeble our hands or unsteady our knees. He comes into our hearts – however fearful they may be – and brings his promised salvation.

No matter that this Christmas may be a bit different from usual. Even if we are sorrowful, or if we fear for the future, our celebration of the birth of Jesus reminds us that he came into a troubled world, and that if we open our hearts to him he will come again to us, in our troubles as in our times of joy, in our weakness and when we are strong.

So in the words of today’s psalm....

Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, praise his name;



Tuesday 8th

Hark the Glad sound

Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long!
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne,
and ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release,
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before Him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of His grace,
to bless the humble poor.

Our glad Hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim;
and heav'n's eternal arches ring,
with Thy beloved Name.

Philip Doddridge in 1735

Prayer

Almighty God
We are fearful.
We look at our world and our hands shake
and our knees knock.
But we know that you have the power
to save us **and** the world,
for underneath are your everlasting arms.

Hark the Glad sound
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeBRYhG86x0>

We pray that we may see the
needs of others, even unspoken
and hidden. We pray we may
see with the eyes of God and
respond in a way that brings
honour and delight to God.



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