

2nd May 2021 6 pm Healing and Refreshing: Soaking Prayer

Led by Ann Gibbons and Lynda Howells

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Introduction

[Ann Gibbons:]

Hello everyone, and welcome to this healing and refreshing service, St John's Church Kenilworth Sundays at 6pm. I'm Ann and with Lynda, we will be leading you through this time together. As we mentioned last time, this will be a time of soaking prayer, more about that shortly. Shall we pray before we begin, and then we will go straight into singing a hymn, Dear Lord and Father of mankind. So we pray.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we pray for this time of soaking prayer, that we may know Your presence in this time of quiet. Amen.

Hymn: Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise;
In deeper reverence praise. | 2. Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace;
The beauty of Thy peace. |
|--|--|
3. Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!
O still small voice of calm!

What is Soaking Prayer?

In soaking prayer, we are soaking in God's presence; a time to rest and wait; a time to listen and receive. So we need to be quiet; put our shopping list of prayers away for this moment, and allow the Lord to come to us. At first, our minds may be whirring with thoughts, but don't wrestle with them; just wait for them to settle, submitting our minds to the Holy Spirit, meditating on the fact that the Lord is in our spirit, believing that He is right here with us. If we are distracted, don't become frustrated; just acknowledge the distraction and turn your attention back to the Lord. As we wait in His presence, we may experience His love and His peace; we may find ourselves responding emotionally or physically as the Spirit works in us. The Holy Spirit might give us a vision,

or bring a memory to mind that He wants to heal. Often we enter into deep rest. And even if we don't feel anything happening, believe that the Lord is working in our spirit. Recently in the Lectio 365 app there was a prayer,

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me.
When I am silenced by suffering, I'm grateful that You pray through me.
And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I'm strengthened,
because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me.

I just thought those words were amazing to hold on to.

We have soaking prayer a few times a year, when we're in the church building. And when people are soaking, Lynda and I go around to every person and pray for them, sometimes leaving a verse of Scripture, or if we have been led, some words of encouragement or a description of a picture. Sometimes when we have taken this service to other churches or larger MU groups, it's not practical to pray for individuals. So we use ribbons over our groups of people, inviting the Holy Spirit to come. Today is slightly different: a first for us too, having soaking prayer in a live-streamed service, but we will be praying for you. And maybe you could imagine the ribbons gently over you.

Taken from Luke chapter 10, many of us have internal Mary/Martha struggles. We feel like Martha that we should be doing something. But this is Mary time. Martha got caught up in the busyness of serving Jesus, Mary got caught up in Him. Soaking prayer is not about how much we can accomplish by our own efforts; it's about God's action for us, giving Him time to minister into our hearts.

There will be quiet music playing, times of silence and verses of scripture spoken at times. So, a short time to settle down, and then I will read a stilling prayer, and we can breathe in to soak. This will be for about half an hour. The music will stop, to signal that we are coming to the end of this time; and Lynda will lead us out of soaking. Please don't rush to come out of soaking; take your time to come to gently. This prayer, *Step by Step*, and one that Lynda will use later, is from the book, *Walking with God*¹ by Sister Elizabeth Tuttle and Dennis Wrigley of the Maranatha community.

So let us be comfortable. If you're lying down, lie with your hands at your sides, and your palms facing up. If you're sitting, have your feet slightly apart on the floor, your hands in your lap, with your palms upwards. Become aware of your breathing. Take a deep breath and exhale slowly. Do this a couple of times to help you relax and continue to breathe gently, while we read the stilling prayer.

Step by step,
as we approach you,
the silence becomes deeper,
the light becomes brighter.
We shed our words,
discard our loads,
set aside all concepts, ideas and questions and tribulation.
We approach a purity in which there is no imperfection.
We approach a presence which overwhelms;
timeless, awesome, complete, all-loving, all-powerful, almighty;
and our eyes are opened, our ears are unstopped;
and we are lost in wonder, in love, and praise.

1 ISBN 9781903905333

[silence for 20 seconds]

Taking Time in the Secret Place

[Lynda:]

John 15 says²,

Intimacy with God is the key to fruitfulness in every area of our lives. As we become more aware of His presence in us... so do other people. As we become more affected by His presence in us... so do those around us. By taking time in the secret place with God, we start to walk by the Spirit in everyday life. We find that, rather than striving to achieve things for God, He is building His kingdom through us.

"Not by might, not by power, but by His Holy Spirit³"

Amen

[silence for a minute with this picture
(which is used every time there is silence)]



2 From a leaflet by CTF Ministries, "Catch the Fire – Soaking Prayer Network", discovered on <https://www.crosswalk.com/church/pastors-or-leadership/the-joy-of-soaking-prayer-1463841.html>

3 A free translation of Zechariah 4:6

[music for 5 minutes]



Psalm 23:1-3 [RSV]

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want;
- 2 he makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters;
- 3 he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

[silence for 60 seconds]

[church bells for 20 seconds, then Gregorian chant for almost 5 minutes:]

Puer natus est nobis,
et filius datus est nobis :
cuius imperium super humerum eius :
et vocabitur nomen eius, magni consilii angelus.

[Isaiah 9:6:
To us a boy is born
And a son is given to us
The government will be on his shoulder
And he will be called great counsellor,
angel]

Cantate Domino canticum novum :
quia mirabilia fecit.

[Psalm 98:1:
Sing to the Lord a new song,
who has done marvellous things]



[silence for 25 seconds]

Philippians 4:6 [NLT]

6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

[silence for 60 seconds]

[music for almost 5 minutes]



[silence for 20 seconds]

Psalm 40:1-2 [NLT]

- 1 I waited patiently for the LORD to help me,
and he turned to me and heard my cry.
- 2 He lifted me out of the pit of despair,
out of the mud and the mire.
He set my feet on solid ground
and steadied me as I walked along.

[silence for 60 seconds]

[Gregorian chant of the sanctus for 2 minutes:]

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he that comes in the name of the
Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.



[silence for 30 seconds]

Matthew 11:28-30 [NKJV]

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

[silence for 60 seconds]

[Gregorian chant - halleluia - for 2 minutes]



Isaiah 40:29-31 [NLT]

- 29 He gives power to the weak
and strength to the powerless.
- 30 Even youths will become weak and tired,
and young men will fall in exhaustion.
- 31 But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength.
They will soar high on wings like eagles.
They will run and not grow weary.
They will walk and not faint.

[silence for 40 seconds]

Song: Living Waters

1. Are you thirsty?
Are you empty?
Come and drink these Living Waters.
Time unbroken,
Peace unspoken,
Rest beside these Living Waters.
2. Christ is calling,
Find refreshing
At the cross of Living Waters.
Lay your life down,
All the old gone,
Rise up in these Living Waters.

Chorus:

There's a river that flows
With mercy and love
Bringing joy to the city of our God;
There our hope is secure,
Do not fear anymore,
Praise the Lord of Living Waters.

3. Spirit moving,
Mercy washing,
Healing in these Living Waters.
Lead your children
to the shore line;
Life is in these Living Waters.

Chorus

4. Are you thirsty?
Are you empty?
Come and drink these Living Waters.
Love, forgiveness,
Vast and boundless:
Christ, He is our Living Water.

Chorus

Conclusion

[Lynda:]

When you are ready, please come back to Earth. No rush!

When you leave your beautiful safe place, and return to your world, keep with you in your hearts God's Holy Spirit, who's been ministering to you in the quiet, the blessing of this quiet time of holiness. Take in God's beauty, His gift of life to you. Take time in the busy-ness of life to look up and around at the beauty of God's creation; the clouds which at times seem to swirl around dancing, just like seeds which fly when you take a dandelion and blow the seed heads. You watch them flutter and fly freely. The warmth of the sun comforts us, the rain renewing and feeding the earth, the cool, fresh breeze refreshing and

waking us up. Take time in the shopping queue to give thanks that we can shop, and we have free choice; time sitting in the car or on the bus, to give thanks for our freedom of movement.

And when you feel rushed and anxious, take time to be: in that quiet place with your heavenly Father, who loves you so much. Just be.

So now a prayer from the book that Ann mentioned earlier, *Walking with God*.

Lord, in Your love, keep us, Lord.

With Your trust, sustain us.

With Your peace, rest us.

With Your joy, lift us up.

You are a God of love.

With Your love You cover all the world.

Enfold us in Your love, which is warmth, protection and light,
so that we feel secure, happy, and part of you, Lord.

Amen.

So, thank you for joining us tonight and we just hope you do feel refreshed. So we now finish with the UK blessing. Thank you.

Song: UK Blessing

1. The Lord bless you
And keep you,
Make his face shine upon you
And be gracious to you;
The Lord turn His face towards you
And give you peace.

Repeat verse 1

Chorus:

Amen

Amen

Amen

Repeat chorus

Repeat verse 1

Chorus x 4

Spoken in rap style:

We pray a blessing,
Manna rained down from heaven:
This isn't second-guessing,
We know we are protected.
May the peace that passes all
understanding be our message:
Grace and favour's in Your nature and
Your essence.

Bridge 1:

May His favour be upon you
And a thousand generations
And your family
And your children
And their children
And their children

Repeat Bridge 1 three times

Bridge 2:

May His presence go before you
And behind you, and beside you
All around you
And within you
He is with you
He is with you

Bridge 3:

In the morning, in the evening
In your coming, and your going
In your weeping
And rejoicing
He is for you
He is for you

He is for you
He is for you
He is for you
He is for you

Amen
Amen
Amen

Amen
Amen
Amen

Repeat bridges 1, 2, 3

He is for you
He is for you
He is for you
He is for you

[Text on screen at the end:

Our buildings may be closed

but the church is alive]

[Transcribed by Hamish Blair with help from <https://otter.ai>]

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Dear Lord and Father of Mankind is a hymn with words taken from a longer poem, "The Brewing of Soma" by American Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier. The adaptation was made by Garrett Horder in his 1884 Congregational Hymns [source: wikipedia accessed on 03/05/2021]. Public Domain. CCLI song no. 4753678

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