

**Poole Bay Methodist Circuit Worship  
Sunday 21<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**Sing a new Song – A Reflection for the end of Refugee Week 2026**

**Led by Reverend Sarah Knebel**

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Hello and welcome to this time of worship. As we mark the end of Refugee Week, we will be thinking about God's call to sing a new song, as a church and as individuals, that is relevant and that connects us with all around us.

**Call to Worship (Based on Psalm 98):**

Come into God's presence  
and sing a new song to the Lord.  
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and all who live in it,  
let the hills sing together for joy,  
at the presence of the Lord.

Leave behind prejudice and preference and  
come to God, who accepts all,  
who receives all and who loves all.  
Come and worship the Lord of all.

**[StF 678 - Come all who look to Christ today](#)**

1. Come, all who look to Christ today,  
stretch out your hands, enlarge your mind,  
together share his living way  
where all who humbly seek will find.
2. Come, all who will from every place;  
Find here new powers of unity,  
accept the Spirit's strong embrace  
which binds us in community.
3. Come, young and old from every Church,  
bring all your treasures of prayer,  
join the dynamic Spirit's search  
to press beyond the truths we share.
4. Bring your traditions' richest store,  
your hymns and rites and cherished creed ;  
explore our visions, pray for more,  
since God delights to meet fresh needs.
5. Come, trust in Christ and live in peace,  
anticipate that final light  
when strife and bigotry shall cease,  
and faith be lost in praise and sight.

Richard G. Jones (b.1926)  
Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 678

**Prayer of Praise:**

Amazing God, who created every person and every language,  
 who knows our every question before we even think it,  
 who understands not only our words,  
 but the thoughts, hopes, dreams and fears behind them.  
 We are blown away by your love  
 and we long to share it with all  
 for you are just, generous, merciful and kind. Amen

**Prayer of Confession:**

As we come to worship and to praise you,  
 bless us, we pray with your holy presence and your almighty power.  
 challenge us to respond to you.  
 push us beyond our limits.  
 Here we are in your house, ready to hear your word,  
 ready to do your will,  
 ready to share your love with our neighbours, whoever they may be,  
 ready to have our hearts opened and our minds stretched.  
 Bless us, we pray, good Lord, beyond our wildest expectations.  
 And yet, even as we come into your presence singing,  
 we admit, that there are times, when we see what we want to see, not what you would have us see.  
 We block out the need that is right before our eyes.  
 Forgive us Lord, and challenge us.

We admit that sometimes we question whether others are accepted by you, and whether we are ourselves.  
 We limit and put boundaries around your love,  
 giving too much importance to some and too little to others.  
 Forgive us Lord, and challenge us.

In a moment of quiet we bring to God the things we want to say sorry for.

Forgive us Lord, and challenge us.

Our gracious, all-encompassing God,  
 you know no boundaries, no limits.  
 Come to us and accept our confession.  
 Open the door to your offer of complete forgiveness and healing,  
 that we may thankfully and humbly receive both from you now, Lord God.  
 Amen.

**Lord's Prayer**

**Reading:** Acts 10: 44-48

*Our reading, is set after Jesus 's death. We catch up, here, with Peter who, until recently, has been preaching only to the Jewish people about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, but here something different is happening, God has called Peter to preach the same message to the Gentiles, and Peter is about to be surprised by God ...*

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

StF 331 King of kings, majesty, God of heaven, living in me.

1. King of kings, majesty,  
God of heaven living in me.

Gentle Saviour, closest Friend,  
Strong Deliverer, Beginning and End,  
all within me falls at your throne.

*Your majesty, I can but bow;  
I lay my all before you now.  
In royal robes I don't deserve,  
I live to serve your majesty.*

2. Earth and heaven worship you,  
Love eternal, faithful and true,  
who bought the nations, ransomed souls,  
brought this sinner near to your throne;  
all within me cries out in praise.

*Your majesty, I can but bow;  
I lay my all before you now.  
In royal robes I don't deserve,  
I live to serve your majesty.  
I live to serve your majesty.*

Jarrold Cooper

Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 331

**A Reflection: Sing a New Song – A Reflection for Refugee Week 2026**

When was the last time you got really fired up, really passionate about something that has happened that you just had to speak out about it to friends, family, colleagues? And what was it that caused you to do that? Perhaps you were angry about having to do something. Perhaps you were really excited about something that was going to happen. Perhaps, like the counter anti-immigration protesters in the news recently, you were reacting to an injustice that you perceived was taking place that you simply felt you had to speak out about. Or, perhaps, it was just something someone said, either locally or in a debate on BBC Question Time or some such similar broadcast. I wonder what it was for you, and what did you say as a result, what did you do, and how easy was it to talk about what you were feeling or thinking?

In our reading today, Peter is passionate to share the new insight that he has received from God, that God truly shows no partiality between people, and so he preaches about 'Jesus Christ, as Lord of all,' not just the Jews but 'even' the Gentiles. [talk about use of word 'even'] God is for everyone – even the non Jews. For Peter, this is revelatory stuff. We may ask, today, why Peter was so surprised, but for someone who believed that the Jewish people were God's people, this was boundary breaking news, that challenged Peter's preconceived ideas that were leading him to limit the power of God. And so Peter sings a new song, preaches a new song in fact, to the crowds in Caesarea, because he was convinced of God's love for them also. Peter believed that God wanted to reach out to them to bring them also into a relationship with God.

Is this really ground-breaking news, or is it an expanding of a horizon. Jesus, in the Gospels, was forever singing a new song, ploughing a new furrow, a new path, expanding the horizons of those around him as to who was included within God's love. 'I have come to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind and to let the oppressed go free,' Jesus says in Luke chapter 4 and in John chapter 15 'All who follow my commandments,' Jesus says, 'abide in my love. This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you. You are my friends, if you do what I command you.' Even despite these words, we as human beings have a tendency to limit who those words are meant for; to put up boundaries; to exclude some, to

alienate others and to say surely not them – but God says I have no boundaries, my Spirit is for everyone, 'even them', so let's take those boundaries down. Let's sing a new song.

Sing a new song to the Lord we hear in the words of Psalm 98, which is just one of six Psalms that encourage us to sing a new song in the light of new things that God is doing, but this Psalm is not limited just to us. All of creation sings of the glory of God, we are just one part in the whole of the harmony. In this Psalm all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of God, have recognised that God is for all, that God is good news not just for humanity, but for all of the natural world. 'The sea and all that fills it roars, the world and those who live in it shout, the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord.' What happens then when our vocal, when our part in the harmony is out of line with the rest? When our actions are no longer in tune with everything that lives, on land and in water, and with everything that sounds throughout the immense universe in which we live?

Throughout the ages the message has rung, sing a new song, sing a new song, sing a new song. What is the song that we are being called to sing today that will reach our current age, that will have meaning and relevance and that will speak to the people and the situations in which we find ourselves. Perhaps, today, the new song should be one that speaks of God's love, justice and mercy for all things being inextricably intertwined. As an inclusive, evangelistic and justice seeking church our message, our song, surely has to speak within its verses against the damage the climate crisis is doing, surely has to speak against inequality and poverty, surely has to seek peace and speak of loving one another, whether we share the same faith or not, and surely has to ensure that all people feel valued, safe and of worth, whether that is within our communities or across the world, breaking down the boundaries that separate us and all creation; a reflection of the very values that Jesus modelled to us in his birth, life, death and resurrection. Surely within the verses it would call out the disparate way in which we treat European and non-European refugees, surely it would call out the dehumanisation of the 'undeserving poor', including the lies spread to diminish people in the eyes of others, surely it would call out the unease and pressures felt by our young people today, surely it would call out the conflicts in our world and include a boundary breaking vision that restores right relationships and peace. Surely that is the alternative song of God, that we and our churches should be singing.

If that is the song of the church of today, how do we live it out, how do we sing it out with such conviction that it becomes what the church of today is known for, what we as Christians today are known for, as we walk with and alongside the communities in which we live? Might it even be a song, a message, that will be so catchy, so attractive, that others will want to join in and sing it with us ... to the Lord.

To quote the words of the Refugee Week website, "At a time when division can feel loud, the simple act of bringing people together – through food, stories, and conversation – matters deeply. Because community doesn't grow through messaging alone. It grows when we share space, connect, laugh together, eat together, and build relationships over time. And that matters: because strong, connected communities are one of the most powerful ways we can resist fear, division and misinformation." (<https://refugeeweek.org/showing-solidarity-staying-safe/>)

As God's people we are called to sing a new song to the Lord, with the very same passion that fires us in all other aspects of our lives. We are called to offer hope, to be bringers of hope, even when our voices are choked with tears by what is happening in the world around us. So let us, together, find and sing a new song to the Lord. A song that speaks to the very real issues in the world today. A song that we can live out in all our actions, as we pray for peace, for justice, for freedom and for equality for all. A song that reminds us all, that God's love and God's Spirit knows no boundaries, they are for everyone. Amen.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, we pray for your Church in times of change when it would be easy to become entrenched. May we always be open to new ideas; may we never fear the challenges brought by new people, because their insights might surprise us and inspire us to try new things; may we always seek your guidance and be alert to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Open our hearts and minds, **O Lord – lead us forward**

Lord Jesus, we pray for your world, where age-old conflicts continue to fuel wars in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere, and where conflict between individuals and groups with different ways and ideas has never been greater. We pray for openness of heart, mind and spirit, in order to find solutions to enable peace and harmony.

Open our hearts and minds, **O Lord – lead us forward**

Lord Jesus, we pray for our own community, especially for any new neighbours who have come among us this week. May we welcome them with open hearts, minds and doors and encourage the contributions they bring.

Open our hearts and minds, **O Lord – lead us forward**

In quietness, we pray also for all who are in need of prayer, including all who are unwell in body, mind or spirit, and all who seek to offer help, comfort and support:

We ask these and all our prayers in and through the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**Hymn: [“I have a dream”, a man once said](#)**

(This hymn was written by Methodist minister, Rev'd Pam Pettitt (1954-2005), who took as her inspiration Martin Luther King Jr's famous speech. It is sung to the tune of 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind')

1. “I have a dream”, a man once said,  
“where all is perfect peace;  
where men and women, black and white,  
stand hand in hand, and all unite  
in freedom and in love.”
2. But in this world of bitter strife  
the dream can often fade;  
reality seems dark as night,  
we catch but glimpses of the light  
Christ sheds on humankind.
3. Fierce persecution, war, and hate  
are raging everywhere;  
God calls us now to pay the price  
through struggles and through sacrifice  
of standing for the right.
4. So dream the dreams and sing the songs,  
but never be content:  
for thoughts and words don't ease the pain:  
unless there's action, all is vain;  
faith proves itself in deeds.
5. Lord, give us vision, make us strong,  
help us to do your will;  
don't let us rest until we see  
your love throughout humanity  
uniting us in peace.

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(1954 – 2005), reproduced with permission

**Blessing**

Let us go out into the world,  
and welcome the Lord gladly into our homes.  
As he passes through our world,  
may he stay with us and transform our lives,  
that we may be a source of joy and hope for others,  
acknowledging every day, that, although we are all different, we are all loved by God.  
Amen.

Every blessing to you all.  
Rev Sarah