

Poole Bay Methodist Circuit Worship
Sunday 19th October 2025

Running on Empty - Led by Reverend Sarah Knebel

Hello and welcome to this time of worship. Today, through prayer, reflection and song, we pause to think about those times when we run on empty; when we feel tired, worn down, broken and in need of a break, a shoulder to cry on, a supportive arm, space, rest, a way to cope to make it through another day

Call to Worship:

Lord, we come as we are,
that we may be transformed by your grace.
We come with our emptiness,
that we may be filled.
We come with darkness,
seeking your light.
We come with our weakness,
to receive your strength.
We come with our brokenness,
that you may make us whole.
We come as we are,
that we may be transformed by your grace. Amen.

(Adapted from '500 Prayers for all Occasions' David Clowes, p25)

As we prepare ourselves for this time of worship we sing

StF 624 [Calm me Lord, as you calmed the storm](#)

Calm me, Lord, as you calmed the storm;
still me, Lord, keep me from harm.
Let all the tumult within me cease;
enfold me, Lord, in your peace.

Calm me, Lord, as you calmed the storm;
still me, Lord, keep me from harm.
Let all the tumult within me cease ;
enfold me, Lord, in your peace.

David Adam (b.1936). Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 624

Prayer:

Creator God, you are the source of all life, hope and truth.
You are the source of all that is good and right and of value.
You are the source of peace, new life and love
and we have come to worship you.

As we come into your presence,
we lay down before you the heavy burdens that we carry,
knowing that you desire only
to flood our lives with peace,
to bring light into our darkness
and joy into our sorrow.

For filling our lives when we feel empty
 For guiding us when we are lost;
 and for restoring us when we are broken,
 we praise you.

For holding us when we are hurting;
 for giving us life,
 for the utter assurance of your
 total dependency
 and for the constancy of your love
 We praise you.

In Christ, you set your face like a flint
 to face the conflict of life for us.
 Through his life, death and resurrection
 He has shown us the full measure of your love and grace.
 And so we know, through him,
 that no matter what we face
 or what we are trying to cope with
 or what battles we are fighting,
 your love is sufficient for all our needs.

May your Spirit guide, protect and empower us,
 and may all we do and say,
 bring honour to your name, for Christ's sake.
 Amen.

(Adapted from '500 Prayers for all Occasions' David Clowes, pp. 27, 57 & 86)

Reading: Matthew 11: 28-30 (NRSVA)

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

A Reflection: Running on Empty

A few years ago my husband and I went on holiday to Frankfurt, to visit some friends I met when I lived there, and so that I could show him some of the places I often talked about. We travelled by car and broke the journey in both directions by stopping overnight in Bruges, another much loved city of mine.

We arrived in Bruges later than anticipated on our return journey and so we decided to head straight to where we were staying and fill up the car with petrol the next morning ready for our onward journey home. The next morning we went to the nearest petrol station only to find it was closed, as was the next one and the next one, until it slowly dawned on us that petrol stations didn't, at that time, open on a Sunday in Belgium. With that we also then realised that we would need to make it to the French border before we could get any fuel and the car was already running on empty.

In order to get to the first petrol station in France, we crawled that day along the Belgium motorways at a very slow and steady pace, much to the annoyance of the other motorists, eeking out the final drops of petrol we had left and praying that we would make it. We made it across the border and to the first petrol station and filled the

car up with petrol. Then re-energised we raced, as fast as was permissible by French motorway speed limits, to the channel tunnel praying that we would make it in time for train. We did, just!

That journey was a journey of two halves. One half in which we crawled along, using what little energy we had left to reach our destination, and then the other re-vitalised and racing ahead, full of renewed hope and enthusiasm. Life can be a lot like that sometimes, can't it? For many people, I know that life can feel a bit like the first part of our journey. Whether tired and fatigued from being over busy or lacklustre from feeling isolated, and missing the contact of friends, it doesn't take much to lack the energy needed to face each day, to sense our enthusiasm draining away, to find each next step becoming harder to take, until suddenly we feel like we are crawling on our knees, dragging ourselves along by our hands, running on empty without an endpoint, a refuelling station in sight.

For many this is hard, and there is no escaping that. Many are praying for sufficient energy to take the next step, to make it through the day. Many feel broken and in desperate need of repair.

There are so many stories in the Bible of people who find themselves in similar circumstances. Take for example the man at the pool of Bethesda in John 5. For many years he had waited beside the pool for the opportunity to be healed. At first, he would have tried hard to be the first in the waters, but gradually over time with his energy and hope draining away his attempts perhaps became more of a slow crawl. Or there's the woman who touched Jesus' cloak in Mark 5, who tried every other option, draining herself of all of her resources and then, using the last bit of strength she had, she touched Jesus' cloak. The book of Job speaks of Job's physical, social, mental and spiritual suffering. The book of Ecclesiastes is believed to be a collection of insights of the elderly King Solomon, at a point when he is feeling disappointed, disillusioned and hopeless. Yet in each of these situations God turns things around. Jesus brought healing to the man beside the pool and to the woman who touched his cloak, whenever Solomon brings God into his thinking, he becomes more positive, when Job let's go of the need to be in control and accepts that God is control of all things, the text changes and Job becomes happier than he ever was before. In each of these situations God shines a light, God re-vitalises and God re-energises.

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

Today, if you are feeling tired, worn down, broken and in need, rest a while as you listen to the song that follows, called 'BrokEn' by Coldplay, let the words drift over you and become a prayer. If, on the other hand, you are feeling energised and ready to embrace the day may the words of the song that follow become your prayer for someone you know today who is running on empty.

May the Lord, shine a light on you today, and may you know God's peace.

Broken by Coldplay

Lord, when I'm broken (when I'm broken)
I'm in need (I'm in need)
I feel that ocean (feel that ocean)
Swallowing me (swallowing me)
Head is hanging (head is hanging)
So sorrowfully (so sorrowfully)
Oh Lord, come shine your light on me (shine your light on me)

On that morning (on that morning)
Scared and blue (scared and blue)
When I'm hungry (when I'm hungry)
Thirsty too (thirsty too)
Send this raindrop (send this raindrop)
Down to the sea (down to the sea)
Oh Lord, come shine your light on me (shine your light on me)

Oh, shine your light (oh, shine your light)
 Oh, shine a light (oh, shine your light)
 Then I know that in the darkness I'm alright (I'm alright)
 See there's no sun rising, but inside I'm free
 'Cause the Lord will shine a light for me (shine your light on me)
 Oh, the Lord will shine a light on me (shine your light on me)

Sing it now (hmm hmm, hmm hmm, hmm hmm)
 Hmm hmm, hmm hmm, hmm hmm
 Hmm hmm, hmm hmm, hmm hmm
 Hmm hmm, hmm hmm, hmm hmm
 Hmm hmm, hmm hmm, hmm hmm
 Hmm hmm

Source: LyricFind. Songwriters: Christopher Anthony John Martin / Guy Rupert Berryman / Jonathan Mark Buckland / William Champion. BrokEn lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group

Prayer:

Almighty God, you have called us and blessed us, led us and guided us, you have shown us so much love, care and commitment that now in this moment, in this place we bring too you our concerns and our fears for all in need, in pain, in trauma.

Almighty God, bless us;
and bless all for whom we pray.

For the long running, on-going, hard to understand tensions between Israel and Palestine. So many with entrenched views that pass from one generation to the next. May those who suffer as a result of the conflict find some semblance of peace, some chink of light in the darkness of despair, someone who cares in the midst of the pain. May those who seek to ensure that the peace plan holds, be led and guided by your love, care, compassion and wisdom

Almighty God, bless us;
and bless all for whom we pray.

For the conflict in Ukraine, for the fighters and those who stay at home, wondering and worrying, for all who live beyond the violence and feel guilty that they can do little more to help. For all unwillingly caught up in such tragedy in both Ukraine and Russia. For those from other countries who try to broker peace and understanding

Almighty God, bless us;
and bless all for whom we pray.

For asylum seekers as they travel, as they arrive, as they seek to understand the systems and the countries they journey through, as they live with uncertainty and waiting and fear for the future. May they find help, care, support, worth and justice.

Almighty God, bless us;
and bless all for whom we pray.

For the frail, due to illness or old age. For the neglected and unloved. For the lonely and confused. For the ill and the dying.

Almighty God, bless us;
and bless all for whom we pray.

For all those we know and love who are struggling to make sense of their lives, through hardship, illness or age, family strife or rifts, and for ourselves

Almighty God, bless us;
and bless all for whom we pray.

Lead us, Almighty God, to be the best we can be to those we meet along life's way, to give of what we can, of ourselves and of our means, as we seek to serve you and support one another.

Amen.

(Adapted from rootsontheweb.com, 9-15th July 2023, Prayers of Intercession)

Let us say **The Lord's Prayer**, using which ever form or language speaks to your heart.

StF 248 [I heard the voice of Jesus say](#)

1. I heard the voice of Jesus say:
 'Come unto me and rest;
 lay down, O weary one, lay down
 your head upon my breast.'
 I came to Jesus as I was,
 weary and worn and sad,
 I found in him a resting-place,
 and he has made me glad.
2. I heard the voice of Jesus say:
 'Behold, I freely give
 the living water; thirsty one,
 stoop down and drink and live.'
 I came to Jesus, and I drank
 of that life-giving stream;
 my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 and now I live in him.
3. I heard the voice of Jesus say:
 'I am this dark world's Light;
 look unto me, your morn shall rise,
 and all your day be bright.'
 I looked to Jesus, and I found
 in him my star, my sun;
 and in that light of life I'll walk,
 till travelling days are done.

Horatius N. Bonar (1808–1889). Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 248

Blessing

Loving and holy God, you share all our journeying
 and wait ahead of us wherever we go:
 in times of light, may we walk in joyful gratitude,
 in times of darkness, may we walk with faithful courage;
 and as we travel into the unknown,
 may we walk in certain hope.

Amen.

Every blessing to you all.
 Rev Sarah