

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022**  
**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**  
**‘I Know the Plans I Have for You’**



*Shortened Service*

**WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Leader** Welcome to our World Day of Prayer service, celebrated today all over the world in seven regions. This is reflected in our service as we light seven candles.

And warmest greetings from the women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland: three countries which form part of the United Kingdom. Together with Scotland, they are known as the British Isles, which is situated in north-western Europe.

We rejoice that, although they have many things in common, they are a diverse people. Over the years the British Isles have welcomed people from all corners of the Earth, some who have chosen to come, and others who are refugees fleeing from persecution in their own lands. Today the country is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-faith society. England, Wales and Northern Ireland are proud of the diversity and anxious to preserve the differences of language and culture and we rejoice with them in this.

We rejoice in the variety of natural beauty found in the British Isles: its mountains and craggy moorland, its fertile fields and pastureland, its rolling downs and spectacular coastal scenery; its small islands.

The theme of our service today is God's promise, found in the book of Jeremiah: 'I Know the Plans I Have for You'. Focusing on freedom, forgiveness, justice and God's peace, let us see how this promise can be a sign of hope for all people.

**HYMN** 'Longing for light.' (CH4 543 / Singing the Faith 706)

**BIBLE READING – Jeremiah 29: 1 - 14**

**Reader 2:** 'These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. This was after King Jeconiah, and the queen mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the artisans, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.' (*Jeremiah 29:1-2*)

**Reader 1:** 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, that they may have sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its

behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I have not sent them, says the Lord.’(*Jeremiah 29:4-9*)

**Reader 2:** ‘For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon’s seventy years are completed will I visit you and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.’(*Jeremiah 29:10-14*)

**Leader 1:** The people of Jeremiah’s time found themselves in a place where they did not want to be: away from their homeland and excluded from their culture, worship and homes.

There are many people who have settled in the British Isles after having fled their homeland and culture. In the land of prosperity there are those who are poor. And in the midst of crowded cities many are lonely. How can we tell all their stories? We cannot. But we can hear voices telling us to listen to what it means to feel excluded in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Let’s pray together the \*Lord’s Prayer.** (*\*Use the version familiar to you.*)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

*Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name;  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread  
and forgive us our sins as we forgive  
those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever.  
Amen.*

#### **REFLECTION /RESPONSIVE ACTION**

**Leader 3:** As we reflect upon God’s promise to the people of Judah, consider the promise of God.

“For surely I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you.” (*Jeremiah 29:11*)

I have here a packet of seeds (or a seed).  
A seed is full of potential and hope.  
Ponder -  
What might God be saying to you?  
What hope does God have for you and your future?

We pray for what is in our hearts...  
*Silence for personal prayer*

**Leader 3:** What stops you from hearing God's call?  
We pray that we might hear God's voice...  
*Silence*

**Leader 3:** Seeds need the right conditions to grow.  
Where do seeds of hope need planting in your life?  
Where do seeds of hope need planting in your community?  
Where do seeds of hope need planting in your country?  
*Pause*

How can these seeds of hope be nourished in your life; in your community; in your country?  
*Silence*

**Leader 3:** Take these thoughts and plant them like seeds as a reminder of God's constant love and your hopes.

**HYMN**     **The day thou gavest, Lord has ended**  
(CH4 220/ Singing the Faith 147)     *John Ellerton*

## **BLESSING**

**Leader:**     God's presence is in and with us.  
Let God guide you, lead you, restore you, and heal you.  
Go with these blessings in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ,  
who is the way, the truth and the life. Amen.

*Please feel free to use alternative or extra hymns as desired. Offerings may be uplifted.  
Please pay into a bank with the giro slip provided, or send cheques (payable to **WDP Scottish Committee**) to the Treasurer: Suzanne Foster, Delnapot, Blacksboat, Banffshire AB37 9BQ*

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