



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday, March 6th, 2026



“I will give you rest; Come.”

Reflection

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Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ ‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’

We’ve been hearing today of the burdens carried by our brothers and sisters in Nigeria, young and old - systemic oppression, religious persecution, poverty and despair, economic hardship and mental health struggles, injustice. Their lives are very different to our lives in Scotland – but we carry our own burdens.

I’m sure you’ve all seen pictures of celebrities arriving at the airport in all their finery, laden down with excess baggage – expensive, matching, excess baggage.

As we reflect on our own situation we have to confess that we travel through life with a mismatched assortment of excess baggage of our own – not literal bags and cases but baggage none the less, some that we’ve just got used to lugging about, some we’re perhaps oblivious to, some that gets in the road and can really weigh us down.

It may be riches. We may place our trust in material things. Material things that give us comfort or status.

It may be hardship. The worry of never having enough to pay the bills, to care for the family, to enjoy the odd treat now and then.

We may feel burdened by a feeling of helplessness as we listen to the news each day, as we hear of hunger and despair, war and destruction, abuse and persecution.

It may be emotional baggage. We may be stressed out by life and living, caught up in the messiness of events and relationships, struggling to cope.

We may be weighed down by something that has a hold over us. Something we’ve done, a habit we just can’t kick, something we know we have to do, and it’s always there, always weighing us down.

Our baggage, our burden may be loss, grief. Struggling to take steps forward, to rebuild our life, life that is now different. Struggling with loneliness and emptiness.

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We may be carrying a hurt – something done, or not done, something said, or not said, someone who has let us down. Perhaps we are angry and we're nursing that anger.

Or it's illness or pain – our own or someone else's. And with it fear about what lies ahead, of what the future holds, fear of suffering, fear that we're not strong enough, not brave enough.

We all carry baggage, excess baggage, which can weigh us down, limit us, burden us.

Jesus says, 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.'

Jesus takes our burdens from us, the things that weigh us down, the things that limit us, the things we struggle with. As he lifts each burden from us -

He assures us of the love of God. He assures us that each one of us is precious in God's sight, loved by God, a child of God.

He assures us that God knows all about us, our hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, highs and lows, right down to the number of hairs on our head.

He takes away all the messiness of our life, he forgives us, he gives us a new start, he gives us a clean sheet.

He gives us the strength to break the bonds that bind us.

He gives us comfort and consolation in our grief and pain, takes away our hurt and our anger.

He fills our hearts with joy and peace.

He re-orders our priorities. Refocuses our eyes on the treasures of the Kingdom of God.

He gives us the power of the Holy Spirit, the fellowship of his church.

So lay your burdens down at the feet of the risen Lord – and leave them there.

Jesus says, 'I will give you rest. Come.'