

REVIVE!

**Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him.**

Psalm 37:7

Psalm 46:10 gives us this amazing invitation to 'Be still and know that I am God', in the context of nations in uproar. Deep down we long to know God better. St Augustine has said, 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.' This verse says that we can know God better when we are still, which is not easy to do when we are bombarded with 24/7 news channels that pour out a constant river of wars, despair, and all that is not right with the world. Social media can keep our phones pinging, and anything can be bought at any time through online shopping or shops that are open 24/7.

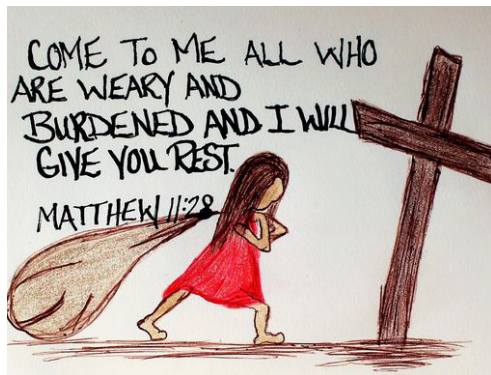
Psalm 23 reveals that there is a Good Shepherd who longs for us to find 'quiet waters,' and for our souls to be restored (v2,3). In this issue of 'Revive!' we shall be reflecting on a few of the 'paths of righteousness' that He desires to show us to help us find stillness, peace and indeed healing. (The original word for 'Be still' in Psalm 46 has the root of healing in it.)

I have been very much struck by Richard Carter's book '*The City is my Monastery*.' Richard lived for 15 years as a Melanesian brother on the Solomon Islands, where it would naturally be easier to know God's stillness in such beautiful natural surroundings. He was later called to live and work in the heart of London, in St Martin-in-the Fields. Was he able to maintain his relationship and inner stillness with God in such a noisy, 24/7 non-stop environment? His book explores how it is possible!

Brother Lawrence practised the Presence of God whilst washing dishes or taking out the garbage, and we would do well to learn from his example. However, Martha was distracted by her busyness in the kitchen, and that is why the Lord commends Mary as choosing the one thing worth being concerned about – to sit still at the Lord's feet and listen. Be encouraged to follow her example too.

With love from us all at CCHC, David

Decluttering



We all know the peace and new sense of perspective when we declutter our living spaces. To get to a place of stillness in God's presence, we do need to let go of the things that distract and weigh us down, and the first thing we need to do is to declutter!

The image of stillness in Psalm 23 changes from a shepherd leading to still waters, to sitting down at a banquet feast ... but in the presence of enemies. I wonder what 'enemies' stop us being still?

The Bible doesn't say when David wrote his most popular Psalm 23. Was he young, despised by his family, out in the fields, encountering danger? Was he older, hunted and persecuted by King Saul, fighting rejection? Was he already King, fraught with busyness and responsibilities? Or was he in his old age, knowing he had blown things, as he had with Bathsheba, with his kingdom and family divided ... fighting off a cloud of 'what ifs'?

Here at CCHC we have a Freedom Garden where people can place a stone representing a deep burden, which results in their freedom. Sometimes they have burnt a sheet of paper at the chiminea where they have written concerns to God. Ask God to suggest to you a symbolic gesture as a way of letting go of cares and distractions – decluttering – so that you can enjoy His presence more.

Bathe in His love

Psalm 23:6 says 'goodness and love will follow us all the days of our lives.'

'Goodness' is the word meaning beauty – that which delights. Zephaniah 3:17 says 'He takes great delight in you and rejoices over you with singing.' The image is (amazingly!) of God vigorously dancing in a circle around us, such is His delight! And His love is the affectionate and unconditional kind that will not let us go; it is committed and generous.

To be still means to take time to receive, to bathe in His delight and extravagant love.

Anyone in need of a shower today? Bathe in His love!

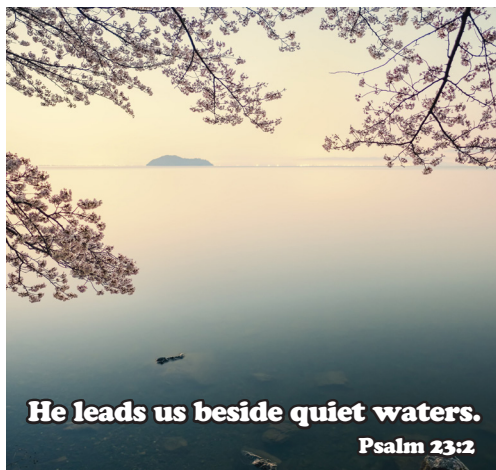
*Into the space beyond the clutter
Into the depths of your heart
As though lowering a bucket
to draw fresh water*

*Like the discovery of the well,
crystal clear below the ground
Or becoming the wellspring ...
Like walking into a shower of light
The warmth replenishing you
through the pores of your skin*

*Like being unwound
Like being healed
Like being loved*

At the very centre of your existence.

Richard Carter



Nature

Because we can buy a variety of fruit and vegetables in our supermarkets at any time these days, it is very easy to lose touch with the cycles and seasons, and indeed nature.

Yet the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23 leads us to *'quiet waters'* and invites us to *'lie down in green pastures'*. We can know God better through the amazing handiwork of His creation (Romans 1:20) and He speaks to us through nature (Psalm 19).

Anthony, the third century Desert Father who founded one of the earliest monasteries, was an illiterate former swineherd who couldn't read Scripture. He said, *'My book is the created nature, one always at my disposal whenever I want to read God's words.'* Monty Don from BBC's *Gardeners' World* has recently said he got into gardening because *'it heals my troubled brain.'*

God's nature is a place that leads us to stillness and healing, through which He can speak. Take a moment today to contemplate His creation, and listen to what He'll say.

**When despair
for the world grows
in me and I wake in the
night at the least sound
in fear of what my life
and my children's lives
may be, I go and lie down
where the wood drake rests in
his beauty on the water, and the
great heron feeds. I come into the
peace of wild things who do not
tax their lives with
with forethought of grief.
I come into the presence of
still water. And I feel above me
the day-blind stars waiting
with their light. For a time I
rest in the grace of
the world, and am free.**

Wendell Berry

Sabbath

When we think of stillness, Sabbath is the forgotten jewel that leads us to rest. When I was a boy growing up in Northern Ireland, it meant a day when I wasn't allowed to play football! We refer to keeping the Sabbath as one of the Ten Commandments, but in Jewish theology, they are called the Ten Words ... and if they come from God, they are words that give life!

When God rested on the seventh day, three Hebrew words are used:

- ▶ **'shavat'** which means to cease or stop;
- ▶ **'nuach'** which has the idea of settling into or delighting in, and
- ▶ **'nafash'** which is to do with refreshment.

Sabbath means stopping all the things we normally do and taking a 24-hour break in Eden, to which it looks back! God has provided so abundantly up until now. His goodness and love have indeed followed us and will continue to do so into the future. So we can let go of our fears and worries and trust that He is in control – which is His Sovereign work, not ours!

There is sufficiency, and indeed, generosity in God's world. Life is a gift and a mystery, so we can take delight in it. Sabbath is a day to let go, turn to Him afresh with gratitude and love, and enjoy the delights He has given us. It is a time set aside each week to enjoy Him and His creation, the creativity He has given us, good food and quality time with others. It is a day to rest!

Are you benefiting from your own Sabbath days? If not, what needs to change to increase the benefit of this wonderful gift from God?

*By the seventh day
God had finished the work he
had been doing; so on the seventh
day he rested from all his work.*

Genesis 2:2

Crowhurst News



We are looking forward to welcoming you to our annual Thanksgiving Day as we give thanks to God for another amazing year and for His faithfulness as He leads us on!

Not only will we worship together but after a hearty Ploughman's lunch we're rededicating the Prayer Rooms and the two Wing Flats. This is in line with our sacred space endeavours and increasing Volunteer accommodation, particularly for Chaplaincy.

So, please come and join us in glorifying the Lord in praise, worship and service! Tea and coffee are available from 10am and our Thanksgiving Service starts at 11am. This will also be available via Zoom for those who can't attend in person (please contact the office for the Zoom codes).

Come along and enjoy the presence of God in this thin place where in stillness, worship, ministry, hospitality and creation, He is tangibly experienced!

Contact details: 01424 830204   
Email: enquiries@crowhursthealing.org.uk
Website: www.crowhursthealing.org.uk

Prayer Requests

Please pray for:

- ▶ a great celebration on Thanksgiving Day;
- ▶ healing and God's glory to fall on us;
- ▶ wisdom in seeking and serving God;
- ▶ to be single-minded in our following Jesus;
- ▶ discernment in recruitment;
- ▶ thanksgiving and protection for all our Team and this wonderful work;
- ▶ programmed events – that the Lord brings those He wants to meet here and that we're faithful to God's purposes in planning the programme.

May God give us the courage, the wisdom and the strength always to hold the kingdom of God as the number one priority of our lives.



PERSONAL DETAILS

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