

## Tuesday March 16 Psalm 100 – we also sang this on Sundays

1 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

2 Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

5 For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

When the first lockdown began a year ago, we made some decisions in our house about negotiating it as best we could. One of those decisions was that we would continue to set the alarm for seven o'clock each morning. Our internal 24-hour clocks were already programmed that way, so by half past six we're always stirring. At the first signs of life our cat might jump on the bed and walk all over us, purring loudly and dropping hints that he would like his breakfast served up, please, at our earliest convenience. About that time each morning, a car turns out of a side road next to us, and accelerates fast up the hill. The owner has fitted one of those exhausts that make a frightful amount of noise, and you can still hear it when it reaches the top of the hill half a mile away.

Now the world might not be as noisy during lockdown as it normally is, but there's still plenty of it about. It's still not easy to find a place where there's silence. That's one of the things that people appreciate about the way we worship, especially in a large church; there's something sacred about quietness, something precious in silence. So when we chant the psalms, as some of us do, its restraint and dignity work nicely. But what about Psalm 100, which Anglicans call the *Jubilate*? It starts like this:

*"Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. "*

*Shout to the Lord! Psalm 95, the Venite, says the same thing: "Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation". In a lovely paraphrase called 'The Message', Eugene Petersen writes about 'raising the roof'! Nothing about dignity and restraint here.*

So as we continue to look forward, to dare to dream of what we're going to do when things eventually return to some sort of normality, perhaps we're going to need at least one act of THANKSGIVING in each church or cathedral that lays aside restraint and aims to raise the roof instead. And if we choose to throw off our reserve, and dance in the aisles instead of being rooted to the ground in our pews, then let it happen; and if the Peace at Holy Communion goes on for longer than usual and people want to hug instead of the customary polite handshake, than let them hug. And if people want to weep with joy, then make sure there are plenty of tissues at the end of each row!