Traveller

Friday 3rd January

Landscape with Travellers Resting by Nicolas Poussin (Oil on Canvas, c. 1638-9, National Gallery)

Scripture: Psalm 98

Sing a new song to the Lord, who has done marvellous things, *
whose mighty hand and holy arm have won the victory.
2 O Lord, you have made known the victory; *
you have openly shown your righteousness in the sight of the nations.
3 You remember your mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, *
and all the ends of the earth have seen your victory, O God.
4 Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; *
lift up your voice, rejoice and sing.
5 Sing to the Lord with the harp, *
with the harp and the voice of song.

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
shout with joy before our sovereign, the Lord.
7 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
the lands and those who dwell therein.
8 Let the rivers clap their hands, *
and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord, who is coming to judge the earth.
9 In righteousness shall God judge the world *
and the peoples with equity.

To reflect
Today, for many in Scotland, is the first day of work of 2025. Over the festive season many people have travelled, near and far, easy and complicated travels, on-time or late (or perhaps even early). Your travelling recently may have just been from one room where you live to the next or it might have involved long journeys. You may have no journeys planned for the rest of this week or perhaps planned for this year, or there may be longed-for journeys taking place.

We are still travelling through Christmastide, there may be Easter eggs in the shops but the church is still dwelling beside the cradle with Jesus, waiting for the Wise Men – the Magi to travel to arrive and to mark this with Epiphany. We're still travelling through the birth of Jesus part of God's ongoing love of humanity.

What journeys – geographical and of faith do you have planned for this year? Are you being called to explore the spiritual travelling that is pilgrimage? Today you're invited to take a moment and consider theses questions and to pray for those travelling this day. As the Scottish Prayer Book (1929) Second Shorter Litany states: Let us pray for all voyagers and travellers. *Lord, have mercy.*

To Pray – A Prayer for Travellers
May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
The rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

***Freedom** by Olive Runner*
Give me the long, straight road before me,
A clear, cold day with a nipping air,
Tall, bare trees to run on beside me,
A heart that is light and free from care.
Then let me go! – I care not whither
My feet may lead, for my spirit shall be
Free as the brook that flows to the river,
Free as the river that flows to the sea.

[From Poetry Magazine, 12(6), September 1918]

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587)

- 'Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You' by Richard Gillard, one recording is by All Saints Aston Church Choir. One verse begins 'we are pilgrims on a journey'.
- 'Prayer for Travelling' by Gabriel Jackson, one version is performed by St Jacob's Chamber Choir. This is taken from Gabriel Jackson's 'To the Field of Stars' which celebrates the 400th anniversary of Tomas de Victoria's death and the pilgrimage trail to Santigo de Compostella.