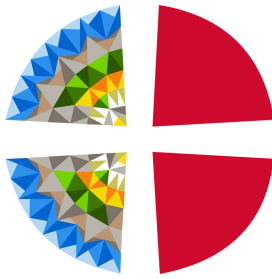


Yorkshire West  
Methodist District



Every  
person's  
potential  
fulfilled

# THERE IS ONLY ONE WORLD: GLOBAL RESPONSE

*A free worship resource - please use, adapt and share!*



# THERE IS ONLY ONE WORLD: GLOBAL RESPONSE

*Italics are not to be read out, they provide guidance as to what to do.*

*Materials needed:*

*- Acorns (or similar) – enough for everyone in congregation  
- All We Can giving envelopes – can be pre-ordered from [allwecan.org.uk/resources](http://allwecan.org.uk/resources)  
- Various (depending on which interactive activity you choose, see below – if you are buying honey, make sure it is organic where possible and ethically sourced, and note that vegans in your congregation may choose not to eat honey. You may wish to note that, in the context of beekeeping in Uganda, this is provided as an adaptation to the impact of the climate crisis and a way of ensuring local people don't starve or fall further into poverty, and all Buba's beekeeping is done locally, sustainably and ethically – e.g. only harvesting twice a year to ensure the bees have plenty for themselves!).*

## Call to worship

Plant in me a green heart, O God,  
That I might blossom and grow  
And that together we might form a forest of  
love and hope and grace and peace, That  
brings all people together, in Jesus' name  
Amen.

## Opening prayers

### A prayer of adoration

In your creation, we find wonder, O Lord.  
We marvel at the mountains, reflections of  
your power;  
We wonder at the rivers, overflowing with  
your love for us;  
We gaze on the trees, swaying in the wind,  
We celebrate the buzzing of the bees,  
Dancing with all your creation, in praise of  
you.  
All things are yours, O Lord.

### A prayer of thanksgiving

O Lord, our God, we are truly blessed  
And you find us truly thankful.  
Thank you for the world we live in,  
Thank you for the sunrise this morning,

For the grace to be here together,  
For the opportunity to meet in your name.  
Thank you, O Lord, our God,  
For we are truly blessed.

## Opening hymn choices

STF 186 – Tell out my soul

STF 136 – Morning has broken

STF 108 – In the beginning God played with  
the planets

STF 499 – Great God, your love has called us  
here

## Other hymn choices

STF 100 – All things bright and beautiful

STF 699 – God of Justice

STF 693 – Beauty for brokenness

STF 696 – For the healing of the nations

STF 708 – O God of hope, your prophets  
spoke

STF 92 – Think of a world without any  
flowers

STF 130 – We plough the fields and scatter

STF 503 – Love divine all loves excelling

STF 313 – Thine be the glory

## Opening prayers (contd)

### A prayer of confession

Forgive us, Lord,  
For the damage we have done to your  
creation,  
For the moments we have not shared in the  
dance of your spirit,  
For the opportunities we have missed to  
share your love with others.  
Forgive us, Lord,  
For the hurt we have caused our fellow  
human beings,  
For the times we have led others astray,  
For the moments we have been selfish and  
self-centered.  
Forgive us, Lord,  
For we have fallen short of your glory.  
*[A moment of quiet]*

And so, loving God, we find in you the  
acceptance of us, just as we are, broken as  
we are. We come to you, hearing the words  
of love and grace: 'your sins are forgiven'.  
Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer

*In a version or translation with which you are  
familiar.*

## Introducing the theme

Today we are celebrating All We Can's work  
around the world – All We Can is the  
international development charity of the  
Methodist Church with a vision statement  
of 'every person's potential fulfilled'. They  
work towards helping people overcome the  
barriers of poverty and injustice, in some of  
the poorest parts of the world. One of the  
countries where they have been working for  
many years is Uganda, Africa, where one of  
their partner organisations is the local  
community group BUBA – Bukedi

Beekeepers Association.

As part of our worship this morning, we'll hear  
about Buba's dream for a better, fairer world,  
and how their work is also having a positive  
impact on the local climate in Uganda. As  
beekeepers, Buba's main focus is on training  
and supporting people in the local  
communities to build, maintain and care for  
bee-hives, producing honey for people to sell  
for profit and to help invest in local  
ecosystems.

*You might like to try a number of honey-related  
activities as part of your worship today, as we  
celebrate the gift of abundance in God's  
creation, as well as notice the need to change  
and transformation in our world, as we adapt to  
the climate crisis. Here are a few ideas you  
might like to try, depending on your context and  
what you have available:*

### 1. Honey and pancakes

Let's celebrate the sweet taste of honey, and  
God's abundant love for us – the gifts and  
fruits of God's creation!  
*You could invite the children or young people to  
'serve' a scotch pancake and some honey to  
anyone who would like one. Set up a table at the  
front like a breakfast bar, and invite people to  
come forward, or indeed have a 'delivery' to  
their seat, along with paper plates and/or  
kitchen roll for sticky fingers!*  
*As people are eating, get them to share words to  
describe the flavours and textures of the honey.*  
*You could award points for the most creative  
descriptions!*  
*After all the fun, and once everyone has eaten,  
settle everyone down again and share in this  
prayer:*

God of abundance, God of all creation,  
We praise and thank you for your many gifts,  
including the gift of honey and pancakes that

### Introducing the theme (contd)

we have shared in together – a kind of communion, but with more sugar! We thank you that as we do so, we are connected to the people of Uganda and the communities Buba is working in – may our actions, and our response to the climate crisis, be a blessing to them, just as the sweet taste of honey has been a blessing to us.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

#### 2. Making honey cakes

*If you have access to a kitchen as part of the church, you could make these in advance or even get a small group to bake them as part of the service, or carry out the final few steps of the recipe and put them in the oven – they should be ready just in time for the last hymn!*

*Line a muffin tray with 12 paper-cake cases and pre-heat the oven to 160C.*

*Sift 125g plain flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, ¼ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda into a mixing bowl.*

*Mix together 75g melted butter, 75g light muscovado sugar, two beaten eggs and 2 mashed ripe bananas, then add the dry ingredients.*

*Divide between the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until risen and gently firm to the touch.*

*Transfer to a cooling rack and drizzle honey over each cake.*

Let's celebrate the sweet taste of honey, and God's abundant love for us – the gifts and fruits of God's creation!

#### 3. Bee tag

*Buy or make a pair of bee wings (or a headband with bees, or some other way of*

*identifying who is 'it').*

*Take it in turns for one person to be the 'bee', who is chasing other people who want to play around the church (walking only, no running allowed!) and trying to 'sting' them (a light touch with one finger, please!). When someone is caught, they get the bee wings, and start chasing the others!*

*Enjoy sharing in the energy and joy of the game!*

#### 4. Decorating the church

*Invite everyone to use crayons, pencils and papers to draw bees, beehives, honeycomb and other bee-related images during the service. Just before the last hymn, pause and invite people to share their creations, and to hang/stick/place them around the church as appropriate!*

### Readings

**Genesis 1:9-13; Revelation 22:1-5, Psalm 1:1-3**

### Reflections on the readings

The Bukedi region of Uganda is situated between the towns of Mbale (pronounced Em-bal-hey) and Pallisa. It used to be almost entirely covered with trees, and some of the local people will still tell you about Bukedi forest.

Bukedi is also one of the two poorest regions of Uganda, impacted by many social and political challenges, but also by the reality of the climate crisis. Most people in the region are subsistence farmers – they grow the food they need for themselves and their families in the land attached to their homes. Any extra food is sold to cover the cost of school fees, books, medical bills, etc. But the climate is not as practicable as it has been for generations – even in the last five years, farmers are reporting dramatic changes in weather patterns, rendering generational wisdom

### Reflection (contd)

about planting seasons and farming techniques useless.

*Visit the All We Can website and/or social media sites to find some videos or photos of Buba's work and the making of honey, which you could play at this point.*

Issac (the Executive Director of Buba) and his team believe in the potential of beekeeping to transform Bukedi – in terms of income, but also in terms of responding to the climate crisis. As Issac puts it: 'if I give these people bees, if I train them in how to keep beehives in a way that means they can support their families, then they will need to plant trees. Bees need shade in this country, they need trees...and the forest of Bukedi will return. One day, this whole region will be covered in bees and trees again.'

Buba's work is enabling people like Patrick to regain their dignity, a chance at earning a living and to thrive, despite the impact of the climate crisis and his disability. Patrick lost the use of his legs due to receiving a faulty vaccine as a child – sadly badly administered vaccines in the 1950s and 60s affected thousands of people in Uganda and other parts of Africa. Patrick is not, however, limited by his disability – in fact he chairs an amazing group of people who meet in his community, all of whom are affected by what Patrick has asked us to refer to as 'physical impairments'. In this context, he is a leader, an advocate for Buba's work and facilitates a space where people are part of a mutually supportive community.

Patrick himself has 18 beehives, which he cares for and farms, with help from the Buba team, to produce enough honey to sell to support himself and his family. He talks about the challenges of farming for someone in his condition – the time it would take to manage the land makes it impossible for him to be an effective farmer, but he can keep bees, and is proud of his little glade, where the hives are thriving!

The trees Patrick has planted to provide shade for his bees are being replicated in the gardens of all the people in his group, and across the region, as Isaac's dream of returning to Bukedi forest starts to become a reality.

Which brings us to our readings for today – each a reminder of the role of trees in the Biblical narrative, in God's big story. The creation story makes room for trees – right from the third day of the story of 'God's creative week'. We read: 'Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.'

Whilst this poetic beginning to life on earth is not intended to be an accurate description of how the world came to be made, it is meant to show us something about what mattered to the early Hebrew people, and what they felt was important to God. From the very beginning, trees have a part to play – and of course, a few verses later, the trees in the Garden of Eden end up driving the narrative forward. How humans interact with the natural world, with creation, and specifically with trees, has been important from the very beginning.

### Reflection (contd)

At the other end of the Bible, too, we find a tree. A tree many Biblical scholars accept is there intentionally to echo and restore the tree involved in the 'fall' at the beginning of the Bible. For here stands 'the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.' Could the Bible be any clearer: it is through trees that the healing of the nations is achievable. A tree with regular fruiting and that is somehow 'either side' of the river, which calls to mind our Psalm for today too: the 'tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season.' And, at the heart of the gospel narratives is the figure of Christ, crucified upon a cross, made of wood. Often, we refer to this moment as 'Christ nailed to a tree'.

Human beings, God, and how they interact with trees, ends up being an important Biblical theme – if not the Biblical theme. Have you planted a tree recently? Or cut one down? Have your actions led to health and thriving for the trees and forests near you, or around the world, or have you been involved in their destruction? Whose side are we on?

The Biblical trees are an invitation into seeing life in all its fullness – I can't read Psalm 1 without longing to be that kind of tree: one planted by streams of living water, one that flourishes and thrives and is 'well watered' like the garden the Psalmist refers to. That sounds ideal to me! Can we heed that invitation today?

Noel Moules, the activist and theologian, has written about the analogy of seeing the

spiritual world as that which is 'underground' (lots of processes going on, out of sight, that we can't see but without which life cannot survive) and the physical world as being 'above ground' (we can see it and touch it and feel it). For most beings, the transition between above and below ground is traumatic and even impossible – but trees are able to occupy both spaces. The physical tree that we see (the impressive trunk, the climbable branches, the gorgeous blossom, the leaves dropping in autumn, the fruit) are all a result of the deep roots, reaching down out of our sight, providing stability and nutrients. Can we be the same: rooted so deeply in God's love, in the spiritual, in the grace we receive from the Holy Spirit, that our 'above ground' selves can flourish? And, most importantly, the tree doesn't experience the physical and spiritual as different, as separate – they are both an equally important part of its existence and the tree barely distinguishes between above and below, between physical and spiritual, it simply seeks mutual thriving. What does that look like for you, in your spiritual life?

All We Can's work in Uganda is creating opportunities for people's potential to be fulfilled, but it is also shifting the narrative about climate, ecosystems and the importance of trees. Isaac and the Buba team have found a way to help protect, preserve and enhance Bukedi's ecosystems and the planet's climate, whilst also enabling people living in poverty to have a way of thriving (not just surviving) and rebuilding the local economy. They are proving that growth doesn't have to be extractive, just as being eco-friendly doesn't have to be an act of charity. It's this kind of thinking that might just save us, our climate and our whole world.

### Reflection (contd)

All around the world, and in different ways, led by different people in different contexts, All We Can is enabling this kind of creative thinking and responding to the climate crisis. From solar-powered irrigation systems and flood-resistant crop planting in Malawi to tree-planting in Ethiopia, the overlap between seeing every person's potential fulfilled and investing in the future of our planet is aligning through locally-led development. Solutions aren't imposed from the outside, they emerge from the local community – a truly sustainable way of seeing change. And All We Can are looking for you to be a part of that change today!

### Responding

*Provide everyone with an acorn (or a seed for another kind of tree or bush, if not available)*

Today, you have heard something about the dream for a forest in Uganda, we have enjoyed hearing about All We Can's work in some of the poorest parts of the planet, and we have begun to dream of what life as a tree might look like, planted in the living waters of God's love.

As you look at your acorn, what do you hear God inviting you to do in response?

How will we respond, to God's call, to the recognition that all is not as it should be in God's world?

All We Can have two simple invitations for us today, and I want you to think about whether one or other of these is appropriate for you.

Firstly, to consider becoming an All We Can Champion. All over the country, All We Can's work is made possible by people who are prepared to champion that work, tell stories, share resources, host fundraising

events and organise meetings that mean more people find out about All We Can, know how to support, and stay in touch. If that could be you, then you can sign up today – by visiting All We Can's website ([allwecan.org.uk/champion](http://allwecan.org.uk/champion)) or calling the All We Can office: 02037587660.

If you don't have the time to take that on, but could spare a few pounds a month, then a regular gift to All We Can enables this valuable work to continue – sign up today at [allwecan.org.uk/give](http://allwecan.org.uk/give) (or you could hand out All We Can giving envelopes – available to order from the website or by calling the number above).

Take your acorn home – plant it in a pot or leave it somewhere where it will remind you of your own potential. Use it as a prompt to respond, to act, to play your part in responding to a global crisis, with a global lens.

### Prayers of intercession

Let us turn now to a time of prayer for our world – recognising the Biblical tradition of lament. Where do we need to lament with God? Where do we need to recognise our complicity with the injustice present in the world? And where do we need to be empowered by God's compassion and healing to bring restoration?

Let us pray.

God of all love, all grace, all creation  
You made your creation with a vision of fullness of life and flourishing for all.  
In each of us to see the potential for goodness.

In all creation you see the potential for restoration and regrowth.

## Intercessions (contd)

We lament that this vision of flourishing is threatened by the brokenness of the world. We lament that conflict, injustice, pain, grief and suffering limit the potential of your creation.

We lament that fullness for some people is held back by the selfishness of others.

We lament that preventable illness causes people pain.

We lament that we are at war with one another, and that violence is seen as a solution.

We take a moment in silence now to hold a situation of injustice or conflict in our minds.

God of healing, we know that you join with us in our lament.

You hold the brokenness of the world in your heart and long for healing and restoration.

God of forgiveness

We know that we have played our part in the injustice and conflict we see around us.

We confess to the way in which our lives have held up unjust structures,

And our choices have prioritised our needs above the needs of others.

We confess that our lifestyles continue to contribute to climate change.

We confess that we have not always used our money and resources in the service of others.

We confess that we have not always stood up against racial injustice.

We confess that we have not always welcomed the stranger.

We confess that we have closed the door on those at the margins.

God of restoration, you meet us with compassion.

You invest your life-changing salvation in us,

that we might be empowered to be agents of change for your kingdom.

Call us into action God, that we might work with you for the healing of your world.

Help me, help each of us, to be an answer to prayer today,

Amen.

## Dedicating the offering

God of the whole world, we offer you these gifts, the gifts of money, but also the gifts of each and every one of us in this room.

Bless these gifts, that they might germinate, take root, grow, blossom and bloom – spreading justice and joy in this community and around the whole world,

In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Blessing

May you go out with peace and be sent forth with joy – and may the mountains and the hills be blessed by your presence. The Lord your God, the God of all creation, is calling you to care for Her beautiful world – how do you respond?

We respond in love, as you first loved us, O God. Amen.

## Your response

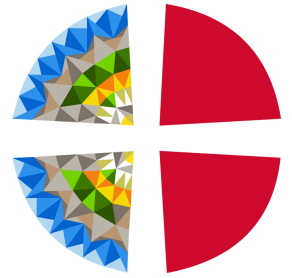
**Become a regular giver today and play your part in seeing every person's potential fulfilled. Sign up at [allwecan.org.uk/give](https://allwecan.org.uk/give)**

**Are you the next All We Can champion for your local church, circuit or community? Find out more about what is involved, the support you'll receive from All We Can, and sign up at [allwecan.org.uk/champion](https://allwecan.org.uk/champion)**

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Yorkshire West  
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The District wishes to thank Anna Bland, Tim Baker and the All We Can team for their work on and contributions to these resources.



**Isaac, Exec Director of BUBA - All We Can's partner in Uganda**