

## Opening Worship and Prayers

Reading: John 1:5, 10-14

We are gathered today in the presence of Christ

**who knows our needs,  
hears our cries,  
feels our pain,  
and heals our wounds.**

Lord, we are your gathered people,

**drawn together by our care for refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people ...  
and all whose lives have been dislocated by war, famine and injustice.  
By our presence here today may we express our solidarity with them  
in their search for a new life, a new home, a new promise.**

As we begin, we put aside

the many cares and distractions of our daily lives,  
the programmes we've watched, the stories we've read,  
the work still undone at the end of the week,  
the things that need doing when we get home.

Each has value, but we put them aside,  
Bringing only what is needed for now.

And as we still our bodies and minds,

We focus on our brothers and sisters seeking safe haven,  
And on You, Lord,

Who still the wind and the waters

Who call Your people to welcome the castaway and stranger,

Who was seen as a stranger

By many You created

Who walked with Your disciples in the guise of a stranger

Before being revealed as the One who knew them best.

(Time of silence)

As we journey today,

**Reveal us to ourselves,**

**Reveal Yourself to us,**

**Reveal that which You are calling us to see and hear**

**So that we may live more fully**

**As Your followers in the world**

**Alongside the neighbours**

**You have given us.**

(Time of silence)

And we say together the Lord's prayer, in whatever version feels most comfortable.