Vigil

Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre

Opening Music:

Gathering Prayer

We gather at the gates of this Immigration Removal Centre in solidarity with the women (men) who are detained here.
Lord you call each of us here by name today.
You invite us to follow you – not to walk alone, but to walk with you, with each other and with the women (men) beyond this barrier.
Let us walk carefully as we come here for God is here before us.
Let us walk humbly here for many are gathered.
Let us walk softly as we come here,
for the Spirit may speak in the silence of this place.
With grateful and hopeful hearts, we gather here in Medomsley.
God was here before we came, God is with us now.
We ask God's blessing on our Vigil. Amen

Optional Readings (leader can choose readings)

Jeremiah 7:5-7
If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever.

Zechariah : 9-10
"This is what the Lord Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.

Bahai
Baha'u'llah, p.285
Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbour and look upon him with a bright friendly face.

Hindu
Taitiriya Upanishad 1.11.2
Let a person never turn away a stranger from his house, that is the rule. Therefore a man should, by all means, acquire much food, for good people say to the stranger: 'there is enough food for you.'

Islam
Quran 4:36
Do good unto your parents, and near of kin, and unto orphans, and the needy, and the neighbour from Amon your own people, and the neighbour who is a stranger, and the friend by your side, the wayfarer, and your servants.

Sikh
Guru Granth Sahib
None is our enemy, none is a stranger to us, we are in accord with one and all.

Buddhist
Udanavarga 5:18
Hurt not others in a way you yourself would find hurtful.

Jonathan Sacks: The Dignity of Difference.
(Jonathan Sacks was the Chief Rabbi of the United Synagogues in the UK from 1991 to 2013).

The Enlightenment gave us the concept of universal rights, but this remains a 'thin' morality, stronger in abstract ideas than in its grip on the moral imagination. Far more powerful is the biblical idea that those in need are our brothers and sisters and that poverty is something we feel in our bones. ... The great faiths do more than give abstract expression to our shared humanity; they move us to action and give compelling shape to the claims of others upon us.

Christian Aid Panama
To You, O Lord,
on bended knees
our heads we bow in prayer:
that you may hear our cry for blood- drenched lands
and their exhausted people,
who have seen too much death,
and have been afraid too long
to understand your love
comprehend your presence,
acknowledge your goodness
and concern for them, a battered people;
yearning for freedom
as they bear your cross. AMEN

World Council of Churches--from Chile 1985
I believe that behind the mist the sun waits.
I believe that beyond the dark night it is raining stars.
I believe that this lost ship will reach port.
They will not rob me of hope, it shall not be broken....
My voice is filled to overflowing
With the desire to sing, the desire to sing.
I believe in reason, and not in the force of arms;
I believe that peace will be sown throughout the earth.
I believe in our nobility, created in the image of God
and with free will reaching for the skies.

They will not rob me of hope; it shall not be broken, it shall not be broken.

Maya Angelou: Caged Bird
A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wings in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

But the bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
and longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Natalia Ginzburg: The Little Virtues
"Today, as never before, the fates of men are so intimately linked to one another that a disaster for one is a disaster for everybody.”

Dorothy Day: There is Nothing We Can Do But Love
What we would like to do is change the world – make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And to a certain extent, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute, we can change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever-widening circle will reach around the world.
There is nothing that we can do but love, and dear God – please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbour, to love our enemy as well as our friend.

Introduction to the 15 minutes of silence.

There are no words to express the pain and injustice suffered by the women (men) who are detained here. LET SILENCE SPEAK. Let silence bring us together. Let silence reach through and over the walls and boundar-
ies. Let silence be the way love travels. May the God of of love, the God who sees us as ONE speak through the silence. We invite you into the silence for the next 15 minutes.

Silence

Lamentations 3, verses 5-9: the translation is by Robert Alter.
He built up against me,
encompassed me with misery and suffering.
He made me dwell in darkness
like those long dead.
He walled me in, I could not go out,
piled heavy bronze fetters upon me.
Even though I cried out and shouted,
he blocked my prayer.
He walled in my way with hewn stone,
He twisted my paths.
Chapter 5, verse 21:
Bring us back to you, LORD, that we come back,
renew our days as of old.

Lamentations 3, verses 17 to 26: the translation is by Robert Alter.
My life abandoned peace,
I forgot what was good.
And I thought, “My strength
and my hope are lost before the LORD”.
Recall my affliction and my wandering –
wormwood and poison.
My very life does recall
and bends down upon me.
Thus I answer to my heart,
therefore I yet hope.
The LORD’s kindness has not ended,
for His mercies are not exhausted.
They are renewed every morning.
Great is Your faithfulness.
“My portion is the LORD,” I said –
therefore I yet hope for Him.
Good is the LORD for those who look to Him,
for the person who seeks Him out.
Good that he hopes in silence
for rescue from the LORD.

Lamentations 5, verse 21:
Bring us back to you, LORD, that we come back, renew our days as of old.

Intercessions

Response: Oh Lord hear my prayer (2x)
When I call, answer me
Oh Lord hear my prayer (2x)
Come and listen to me.

Closing Prayer

LEADER: We have spent some time in prayer, silence and in solidarity with our sisters who are detained here in Derwentside: and so together we pray: Dear God,

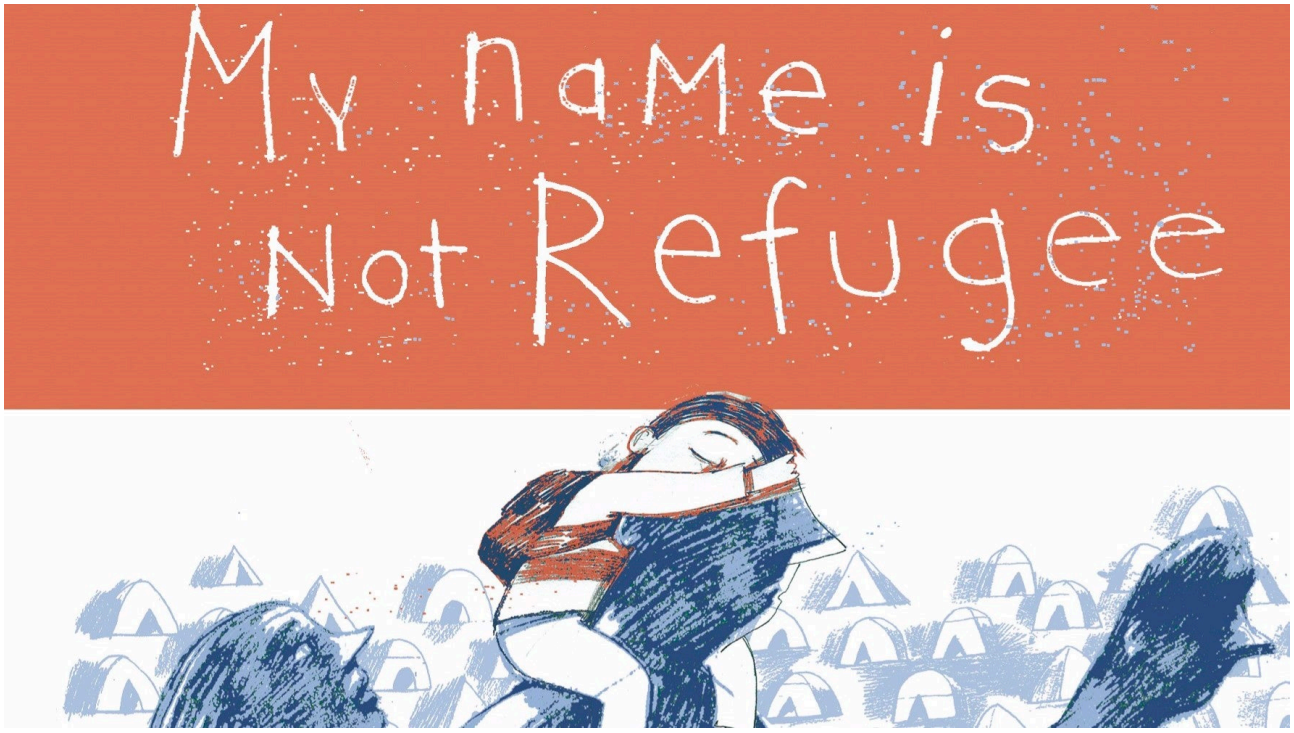
ALL: Help us always to choose the path of love, whether it be in compassion or challenge.
Support us in the small ways we can to ease pain and injustice.
Unite us in our efforts to bring about change in these troubled times.
Encourage us to recognise the spirit of God in all we try to contribute to the building of the Kingdom.

In our waiting, God, grant us patience
In our discerning, God, help us to listen
In our choosing, God, give us wisdom
In the way forward, God, be our companion
In the way of peace, God, protect all who are seeking sanctuary.
AMEN

Sign of peace

Let us stretch both our hands towards the detention centre and send a sign of peace to people detained there and people working there. Then let us offer peace to one another and the world we live in.

Invitation

For those who would like to meet afterwards for a cup tea or coffee, there is the possibility to gather in Lintzford Bridge Garden Centre Lintzford Road, Rowlands Gill, GB NE39 1DG. The cafe is open until 5 pm

For online vigil on YouTube, please click link https://youtu.be/-jmKpVXbm1Q