

4 In heaven

We reflect on God's presence in the glory of heaven

Singing

Leader Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.
(Philippians 4:8)

Keeping Stillness

Make your body still and use your breathing to help you become attentive to the existence of heaven. As you breathe in, think of breathing God's eternal life into your body. As you breath out, think of expelling everything in you that is selfish and self-seeking. Say God's name to yourself on the in-breath and 'self' in the out-breath to remind you.

Leader Great Spirit of God,
All heaven is lit with your glory
 and bathed in your love.
 Heaven sings with the music of your holiness
 and the depth of its silence is your peace.
 Our God in heaven, though we are human
 and creatures of earth,
 you welcome us into this place of your dwelling,
 and invite us to walk in the paths of your presence.

Leader How can anyone describe in human terms what heaven is like? As the poet T. S. Eliot said, 'words slip, slide and perish, will not stay in place . . .'. Hear these attempts by Daniel and St John the Divine to describe heaven.

Reading Daniel 7:9-14

Heaven is a little like this.

Thanks be to God.

Reading Revelation 4:1-11

Heaven is a little like this.

Thanks be to God.

Leader Hymn writers have also tried to catch the sense of heaven. As we sing, may the harmony of words and music aid our understanding.

Singing

Leader Let us join together with the angels and the whole company of heaven in singing God's praise.

All Holy, holy, holy Lord
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

Keeping Stillness

God uses our experiences and imagination to tell each of us about heaven in language we can understand. So imagine a door in a wall marked 'Heaven'. Open the door and walk through it into the place you find. Perhaps you will experience it as a beautiful garden, a vast landscape, or a place of beauty and peace you have loved on earth. Wander around this place, sensing the all-pervasive love and peace of God.

Leader Jesus has opened up to us the possibility
of sensing the life of heaven
even while we walk this earth.

All Blessed be God for ever.

Women For all that is good and holy, just and true

All blessed be God for ever.

Men For all that is filled with peace and love and joy

All blessed be God for ever.

Women For the 'thin' places where heaven and earth brush against
each other and God feels specially close.

All Blessed be God for ever.

Men For the shining of heaven in earthly places, which takes us by
surprise, and reminds us of God's presence.

All Blessed be God for ever.

All Our Father in heaven . . .
(pause to remind yourself of this environment of holiness)
hallowed be your name.
Our Father in heaven . . .
let your kingdom come and your will be done.
Our Father in heaven . . .
give us today our daily bread
and forgive us our sins
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.
Our Father in heaven . . .
lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Singing

Leader

As in heaven, so on earth

All

may your kingdom come.

Leader

As in heaven, so on earth

All

may your glory shine in lives of love and holiness.

Amen.