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Sermon for Sunday 5th July 2020, on the lectionary reading Psalm 145

Thank you for welcoming me to your church this Sunday. It's still your church, even if it's via Zoom! It will be an interesting exercise for all churches to see what is worth keeping of this brave new online world and what is not. Some disabled people I know have told me 'welcome to our world' - they actually feel more included by the online services than they feel generally in churches. Something worth bearing in mind as we work for the inclusion of all?

When I was looking at the readings for today, I was drawn particularly to the psalm. I think all of the psalms are very human. They combine a very real sense of God's love and compassion with that very human desire for justice. Often this means that a beautiful, poetic psalm about the depth of God's love for every person and *everything* can suddenly turn into a battle cry against the 'wicked'! This psalm is an ode to the wisdom, compassion and faithfulness of God, until in the final paragraph, the psalmist explodes into 'but the wicked he will destroy'! We didn't get to that part in the reading today, but it comes after the section we read. It makes us uncomfortable to hear that line at the end doesn't it? Especially after so much lyricism expounding on God's glory. It feels so violent to suddenly blurt out about destroying the wicked! These kinds of lines at the end of psalms sometimes make me feel like laughing out loud, because they are so discordant; and perhaps also because laughter is one way of dealing with discomfort.

When we feel uncomfortable though, it is often because something has rung true that we are either afraid or ashamed of. There is something very revealing about these final parts of many psalms. In this case, I think

