



Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

Sunday 19th April 2020, 10:30am, 1st Sunday after the Resurrection (Easter 2)

Prepared by Rev'd Phillip Dixon

This written worship has been prepared for you to use as we gather in separate places but united in love for our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing that other people are sharing in this worship with you in their own homes is an encouragement to us and brings us closer together. We are in the days of resurrection and our proclamation is:



Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Opening Prayer:

Loving and faithful God, we join together this morning in prayer as a body, a church, united in our love for You. May our worship, in our own homes this morning, be pleasing in Your sight, may we enter into worship with thankfulness, gladness and singing, praising You for all You have done for us.

In these resurrection days we pray that we may be a people filled with the hope of new life, new beginnings and full of joy and expectancy for all You are doing, and will do in the days ahead, in our land and in our churches.

Come by Your Holy Spirit to my home this morning, fill me afresh and help me to worship You in Spirit and in Truth. Strengthen me and uphold me for the days ahead, may I be a holy presence in an unholy world, a witness who takes every opportunity to proclaim You in words and works. May everything I do, from this day forward, be to Your glory. Amen.

Hymn: SoF 736 God sent His Son.

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

God sent His son, they called Him Jesus
He came to love, heal and forgive
He lived and died to buy my pardon
An empty grave is there to prove my
saviour lives.

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow
Because He lives, all fear is gone
Because I know He holds the future
And life is worth the living, just because He
lives.*

How sweet to hold a new-born baby
And feel the pride and joy He gives
But greater still the calm assurance
This child can face uncertain day, because
He lives.

Refrain.

And then one day, I'll cross the river
I'll fight life's final war with pain
And then, as death gives way to victory
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He
reigns.

Refrain x2

William & Gloria Gaither C1971

For those who can connect to the internet, this Matt Maher version in collaboration with the Gaither's is well worth including in your morning worship.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LwBqG7uXbY>

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

I believe in the Son
I believe in the risen One
I believe I overcome
By the power of His blood
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive
Because He lives
Amen, Amen
Let my song join the one that never ends
Because He lives

I was dead in the grave
I was covered in sin and shame
I heard Mercy call my name
He rolled the stone away.
Refrain

Because He lives
I can face tomorrow
Because He lives
Every fear is gone
I know He holds my life my future in His hands.
Refrain

Chris Tomlin / Daniel Carson / Ed Cash / Gloria Gaither / Jason Ingram / Matt Maher / William J. Gaither Because He Lives (Amen) lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC.

The Collect for Easter 2:

God of the prophets, You fulfilled Your promise that Christ would suffer and rise to glory. Open our minds to understand the scriptures that we may be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord who is alive and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen

Introduction to our prayer of confession:

If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is Faithful and Just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John)

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, you were called the friend of sinners, be my friend, for I acknowledge that I have sinned. Forgive the wrong that I have done and the right that I have failed to do; my secret and my more open sins; my sins of ignorance and my deliberate sins; sins to please myself and sins to please others; the sins which I remember, and the sins which I have forgotten; forgive all these, for it was for me also that you died. My Lord and Saviour. Amen (written by John Wesley)

We name the things for which we are asking forgiveness.

Time of silence

Thank you Lord, for the gift of forgiveness for sin, I pray that Your Holy Spirit will fill me afresh with light and love so that I may reflect your wondrous glory. Amen.

Reading: Acts of the Apostles 2:22-32

²² "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— ²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. ²⁴ But God raised him up, having

freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵ For David says concerning him, *'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;*
²⁶ *therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope.*
²⁷ *For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption.*
²⁸ *You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'*

²⁹ "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.'

³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. NRSV

A time to pause, read again and reflect.

Preaching notes: Peter has been filled with, and anointed by, God the Holy Spirit. He has been changed from one who would not even admit his faith in Jesus to a servant girl to a bold preacher who has to be heard, proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus to the large crowds of Passover gathered in Jerusalem.

In the coming six weeks leading us to Pentecost Sunday (May 31st) we will be encountering what happened on the day of Pentecost and beyond, recorded for us in the Acts of the Apostles.

Preceding the coming in great power of the Holy Spirit on that Pentecost day we learn that the believers were told by the risen Jesus; "not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the Promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4 and Luke 24:49). Jesus has told them; "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

In recognition of this promise and with great expectancy we learn that they (the apostles), the women, Mary the mother of Jesus and His brothers gather together "with one accord" for prayer, in one place (the upper room), not just once but continuously. Peter does not "pull his punches", he just speaks the truth; he makes it clear that this was God's plan from the beginning, not the beginning of the gospel, but way back to the time of the fall of humankind. Peter is not separating himself from his fellow Jews, but through the Spirit of Truth and Unity joining all who are hearing him; "fellow Israelites", "our ancestor David" in a fresh move of reconciliation. God has raised Jesus from death and "all of us are witnesses".

One hundred and twenty people all crammed into the upper room would not be possible in today's "social distancing" world. However, 120 in their own homes, praying with one accord, is possible. Praying for the coming in power of the

Holy Spirit that in these days of fear and anxiety, we, as believers (the description of Christ's followers most commonly used in Acts) may both receive, and make the most of, opportunities to witness to our friends, families and neighbours of our faith and trust in Jesus Christ to bring healing and peace to our world. With the filling of the Holy Spirit, Peter became bold and courageous for Christ – and so can each of us. Amen

Holy Spirit come powerfully into my life today, fill me with Your supernatural love so that I can forgive those who have hurt me in the past, those who have judged me unfairly or have cheated me. Set me free today from all the unforgiveness that binds me, release me into Your tender care so that I may today move into Your glorious light. Holy Spirit fill me to overflowing with joy and hope for a better today. May I be Your witness to Bransgore, Highcliffe, the UK and to the ends of the earth. Amen.

We pray together our Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Hymn: StF 306 Now the green blade riseth.

Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVduVQustWw>

Now the green blade riseth, from the
buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has
lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has
been:
Love is come again like wheat that
springeth green.

In the grave they laid Him, Love who had
been slain,
Thinking that He never would awake
again,
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps
unseen:
Love is come again like wheat that
springeth green.

Forth He came at Easter, like the risen
grain,
Jesus who for three days in the grave had
lain;
Quick from the dead the risen One is seen:
Love is come again like wheat that
springeth green.

When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in
pain,
Jesus' touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare
have been:
Love is come again like wheat that
springeth green.

John Macleod Campbell Crum (1872-1958)

(with much love at this Easter time to
Brian and Mary Killick)

Prayer of Intercession:

Let us pray to God, for the needs of our world and those we know and love.

For all who are affected by coronavirus, through illness or isolation or anxiety, that they may find relief and recovery:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who are guiding our nation at this time, our Prime Minister, our Government, our Queen, our advisors and scientists, shaping national policies, that they may make wise decisions:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers, that through their skill and insights many will be restored to health:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For the vulnerable and the fearful, for the gravely ill and the dying, that they may know Your comfort and peace:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray for the bereaved, although we cannot attend funerals and give comfort in the way we would normally do, we thank you Lord that You connect us even when we are separated physically.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,

to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

for the sake of Your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen. (Church of England)

Closing Prayer (from times past):

O God our Father, who sent Your Son to be our Saviour: renew in us day by day the power of Your Holy Spirit; that with knowledge and zeal, with courage and love. With gratitude and hope we may strive powerfully in Your service: may He keep our vision clear, our aspiration high, our purpose firm and our sympathy wide; that we may live as faithful soldiers and servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

William Temple 1881-1944 Archbishop of Canterbury 1942-44

Blessing:

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ You have assured Your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with Him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in Your love,

in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Anglican CW

Notices:

Local Preacher Dr Christopher Slade was due to lead the service at Highcliffe this coming Sunday 19th and he has provided us with the full text that he has prepared. His sermon is based on John 20: 19-31 so it is an excellent accompaniment to this Worship at Home service and also the many John passages that we encountered during Lent and our Bible study. You can view and download this service at <https://www.candwmc.org.uk> May I suggest that you use this as your evening service.

Regular morning and evening prayer are an excellent way of beginning and ending each day. You may find these prayers useful, either in the form I have presented to you or adapted as you feel most meets your need.

Morning:

O Lord our God, at the start of this day give me/us wisdom to perceive You, diligence to seek You, patience to wait for You, eyes to behold You, a heart to meditate upon You, and a life to proclaim You. I pray for all those who are waking this morning fearful and anxious, I pray for Your Holy Spirit to give them the peace that comes from a relationship with You. Be with me/us in all we will do today and those we may encounter. I/we ask this in the name of our risen saviour Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Based on the prayer of St Benedict.

Evening:

The Lord almighty grant me/us a quiet night and a perfect end. My/our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. For the things I/we have failed to do or say today I/we ask forgiveness, I lay them down and prepare to sleep, free from worry or concern. Visit this home O Lord I/we pray, drive far from it the snares of the enemy; may Your holy angels dwell with me/us and provide protection. In peace I/we will lie down to sleep, for You alone Lord make me/us dwell in safety, abide with me/us Lord Jesus for the night is at hand and the day is now past. As the night watch looks for the dawn so do I/we look for You O Christ, may Your blessing be always upon me/us. Amen. Based on the Anglican service of Compline CW.



To enable requests for prayer or help we have created two WhatsApp groups; “Highcliffe Methodist” and “Bransgore Methodist”; these are not social media sites that are seen by everyone but are a means for a defined community of believers being able to pray with and for each other.

Anyone with a smartphone that has access to the internet via WiFi or mobile data can join WhatsApp for free, just look for the logo in your Apple or Google store. For me to add you to the group I just need to know that you are a WhatsApp user and your mobile number. If you do not have the means to do this, please telephone someone (perhaps a steward or your pastoral friend) and ask them to place your prayer on WhatsApp for you. These two groups are exclusively for prayer or help and not for general messages or picture sharing. If you are unsure how to do any of this, please call Derek Morgan from Highcliffe on 07921 819713 or 01425 277838.

I have copies of the new updated “Word for Today” (May-June-July). I will be placing them in the “please take one” baskets that are in the front of the churches. Please collect one for yourself on your exercise if you live nearby and perhaps also a few extras for your neighbours? UCB will be happy to post a copy to you (free of charge) by calling 01782 911000 or email ucb@ucb.co.uk.

Using scripture to encourage ourselves in our daily lives is one of its many purposes. I find in times of fear Philippians 4:6,7 is excellent, may I suggest that you try to memorise it: “Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

Until we meet again, God bless. Phillip 01425 673350 or text 077 942 33325 phillip.dixon@methodist.org.uk.