



Highcliffe and Bransgore **Methodist Churches**

Sunday 18th October 2020, 10:30am, Ruth 2: 10-20 “God in the Hope”

Prepared by Rev'd Phillip Dixon, preaching notes written by Liz Ward

We come together to worship God with joy and hope that through the power of His Holy Spirit we can explore what it means to be known and loved by God. Naomi and Ruth make a physical journey from Moab to Bethlehem and in this passage we see the Spiritual journey from grief to hope. You can feel the resurging and abounding hope in Naomi's words: “Praise the Lord for a man like that! God has continued his kindness to us as well as to your dead husband!” Naomi cried excitedly. “Why, that man is one of our closest relatives!” (verse 20 NLB).



Good morning church!

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand...knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. Romans 5:1-5 (excluding verse 3)

Lord we come into Your presence this morning with hope and expectancy. Within a world of confusion and disagreement You offer us certainty, purpose and love. We come with reverence and expectancy, lift from us the spirit of dissension and uncertainty and replace it with a garment of praise. May all we do and say be pleasing in Your sight and may it all be to Your glory. **Amen**

Song: Living Hope

Sing/read/pray/proclaim words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f2FXxDVO6w&ab_channel=musicmeetsheaven

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness, Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul. The work is finished, the end is written

Jesus Christ, my living hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?

The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven

The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Saviour, I'm Yours forever
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me
free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope *(Repeat)*

Then came the morning that sealed the
promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
(Repeat) Jesus Yours is the Victory!

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me
free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the One *etc.*
Phil Wickham / Brian Mark Jackson -Bethel Music.

For a wonderful acappella version (from
the days before social distancing).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OE13uNCSQ4&ab_channel=TheAcappellaCompany

Prayers of Confession.

*if my people who are called by my name
humble themselves, pray and seek my face
and turn from their wicked ways, then I
will hear them from heaven and will
forgive their sin and heal their land.
2 Chronicles 7:14*

Let us pray: Loving and forgiving God, we
confess to You our errors, our pride, our
self-reliance and our lack of love. Your
word says we must love You and my
neighbour as myself, we are sorry for the

times when that does not happen. For the
times when our good intentions are not
followed by the sacrifice of self. Father
forgive, **Christ have mercy.**

For the times when we have made being a
Christian a comfortable status, a
statement of attendance or belonging
instead of a way of living my life for You
and helping others to do likewise. Forgive
us for the times when we have not been a
good witness to others. Father forgive,
Christ have mercy.

For the times when we have believed or
not highlighted the false teaching that
salvation is something to be achieved, a
rule to be kept, a hoop to be gone
through or a hurdle to be jumped over
instead of a beautiful sacrificial gift that by
Your blood You freely give. Father forgive,
Christ have mercy.

For the schemes and plans of man, our
use of the worlds techniques, thinking
that they will result in the growth of our
gatherings instead of a prayerful
obedience and seeking of Your will. For
the sins of our world, for the aggression,
the pollution, the selfishness, the racism,
the greed and the immorality. Father
forgive, **Christ have mercy.**

Pause

Father, I name the specific things for
which I come to You, asking Your
forgiveness today.... Father forgive, Christ
have mercy.

*A time of silence to hear what the Lord
may be saying to us today.*

God of love and power, thank You for the
forgiveness and freedom You have given
me from my sins, heal and strengthen me
by Your Holy Spirit so that I may walk in

step with You today a path of righteousness with my past life behind me. I am reminded that, as a believer, You are the redeemer and I am Your redeemed child, bought back into relationship with You for a price. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

A memory verse for today: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" Colossians 1:27

Prayer before the reading and Sermon. Lord God as we come to hear your holy word read, and the sermon shared, we pray that our hearts and minds will be open to hear what you are saying to us today. **Amen**

Reading: Ruth 2: 10 – 20

¹⁰ At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, 'Why have I found such favour in your eyes that you notice me – a foreigner?'

¹¹ Boaz replied, 'I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband – how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. ¹² May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.'

¹³ 'May I continue to find favour in your eyes, my lord,' she said. 'You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant – though I do not have the standing of one of your servants.'

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz said to her, 'Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.'

When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. ¹⁵ As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, 'Let her gather among the sheaves and don't reprimand her. ¹⁶ Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her.'

¹⁷ So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. ¹⁸ She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.

¹⁹ Her mother-in-law asked her, 'Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!'

Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. 'The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,' she said.

²⁰ 'The Lord bless him!' Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. 'He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.' She added, 'That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers.'

A time to pause, read again, pray, and reflect.

Romans 12:9-19

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Preaching notes:

Boaz was a godly man, he knew the law and he tried to keep to it, therefore our story from Ruth really starts here:

Leviticus 19 v 9 - 10 "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God."

So, Boaz made sure that the widows, etc. were able to glean the small amount left by the side of the field. But, it seems, Ruth was different. There was something about her which caught his eye. Now we could be cynical and say that maybe she

was more attractive than the others, younger, more personality, but I think it was something else.

Ruth was different because of the way she behaved, her humility was evident, she did not try to take more than she should, she probably helped the other women and she was respectful towards others. Boaz had heard how she had been prepared to leave her own country and family in order to support and help Naomi, her Mother-in-Law. She had put Naomi's needs before her own.

In fact, Ruth had been a true servant of God, her behaviour reflected love, compassion and selflessness.

I think that when we serve God, behave in the way He wants us to behave, the way he created us to behave, then people will notice. When we are followers of Jesus then people should notice, hopefully for the positive aspects of our behaviour, not negative ones.

So, what is that behaviour?

Look at Romans 12 v 9 - 18, very challenging words as they encourage us to rethink how we behave, how we think, how we relate to other people. Look again at the words. Genuine love is one which gives and gives, which puts the needs of the other before our self, encourages harmony, is forgiving and not revengeful, offers blessings - even to those who hurt us, and tries to live in peace with others (with the caveat that we only have responsibility for our actions and attitudes).

If we can manage to behave like that, serving in humility, showing respect to others, being patient with each other, trying to avoid conflict and arguments,

avoiding revengeful thoughts and actions, then people will notice and will begin to ask what guides us, what motivates us.

Our answer, I hope, is that we are followers of Christ and we look to his example and that we can only come anywhere near to that through the guidance and prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Let us not be a church, individual Christians, who are more noticed by how badly we behave, but by how well. **Amen**
Liz Ward

Song: SoF 311: Jesus You are changing me.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkivL_HAbbg&ab_channel=MarilynBaker-Topic

Jesus, You are changing me,
By Your Spirit You're making me like You.
Jesus, You're transforming me,
That Your loveliness may be seen in all I do.

You are the potter and I am the clay,
Help me to be willing to let You have Your way.

Jesus, You are changing me,
As I let You reign supreme within my heart. *(Repeat)*

Marilyn Baker

Words of Hope: "Footprints in the Sand"

One night I had a dream...

I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and across the sky flashed scenes from my life.

For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; One belonged to me, and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of my life flashed before us, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times

along the path of my life, There was only one set of footprints.

I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life This really bothered me, and I questioned the Lord about it.

"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, You would walk with me all the way; But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, There is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why in times when I needed you the most, you should leave me?"

The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child. I love you, and I would never, never leave you during your times of trial and suffering. When you saw only one set of footprints, It was then that I carried you." *Author unknown*

Prayers of Intercession:

Lord we bring before you today your Methodist church at Bransgore. Thank you for answered prayers and for people coming forward to offer their support and help by filling the vacant roles. We pray for the joint Bible studies and prayer meetings on Zoom. We pray for the other churches in Bransgore and in Highcliffe, for their ministers and congregations. Keep them safe, Lord, and free from Covid-19. We thank you for the community spirit amongst them and the willingness to share ecumenically. Lord hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we bring to you the schools, colleges and universities throughout the country, that both teachers and children may be kept safe. All of them having to accept a new way of education. Protect them and

their families. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for everyone in our fellowships who are recovering from, or waiting for, operations. We pray for those who are unwell: place your healing hand on them all, that they know your presence with them. We pray for all who are housebound, frail and elderly, who rely on carers. We thank you for the dedication of all carers, whether family members or NHS staff, who sometimes have to cope with very difficult situations. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we pray for your world: for peace to come to all places where there is fighting, wars and disagreements. We are saddened when we see the results of man's destruction of your beautiful earth with plastic pollution and deforestation, natural disasters of earthquakes, hurricanes and raging fires which have wiped out complete villages. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

A time of silence for our own prayers.

Lord, accept these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts. **Amen.** Pam Sturtridge

Song: StF 41 Blessed be Your name

Sing/read or proclaim the words.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p055bdmh>

Blessed Be Your Name
In the land that is plentiful
Where Your streams of abundance flow
Blessed be Your name
Blessed Be Your name
When I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk through the wilderness
Blessed Be Your name.

Every blessing You pour out, I'll
Turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say:
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be Your name
When the sun's shining down on me
When the world's 'all as it should be'
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be Your name
On the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering
Blessed be Your name

Every blessing You pour out, I'll
Turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say:
You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say
Lord, blessed be Your name
Matt and Beth Redman

Blessing:

We thank You, Lord, for re-igniting the flame of hope within us, for filling our hearts with light and removing the darkness, and for giving a new vision of Your glory.

Amen. Benediction from John van de Laar.

“Hope starts here!” is the theme for this coming Word for Today daily devotional, the new edition will be available very soon to pick-up from church or let me know and I will gladly and safely pop it through your letterbox.

Phillip Dixon, October 2020. YouTube links are external resources and are provided to help you engage with the songs. Singing the Faith and Hymns and Psalms resources are provided under license: CCLI 178182