

25 October, Wimborne Service Order, Revd David Le Poidevin

Call to Worship

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. God saw all that he had made and it was very good. (Genesis 1/1,31)

In Christ God chose to reconcile all things, whether on earth or in heaven, through him alone. (Colossians 1/20)

Bidding Prayer

God our Father you have set before us the great hope that your kingdom will come on earth and you have taught us to pray for its coming; make us every ready to recognise the signs of its dawning and to work and pray for the day when your perfect will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Partners in Learning 1999 October 24th page 61)

Adoration

Creator God, you formed this world and you saw that it was very good. We rejoice in all that you have made. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Sustaining God you continue supporting all your creation. You continue bringing good wherever evil has taken hold. Into our despair you breathe hope. You transform our anxieties by your peace. In the life of Jesus you have shown us your glory in human form. In him we see how love can transform all things. Through his mighty resurrection you have declared that life is stronger than death. (Townsend page 98, Sayers page 52)

Confession

We confess to you the creator of all things good that we have not always used what you have given in the way that you intended. We have plundered finite resources and have polluted land, sea and air. We have not always been as concerned as we should be for the well-being of creation. We have sometimes been excessive in our styles of living and we have desecrated your creation. So we confess our failures and ask for your forgiveness and for opportunities to make amends.

Thanksgiving

Father we thank you for putting us in such a wonderful world where there is so much to make us glad to be alive within it. We thank you for all the colourful beauty that you have included in it all. We thank you that you continue to embrace us in your love and given us a promise of even more wonderful things to come. We thank for the amazing discoveries that you open up to us, to make our lives the richer. (roughly based on oceans of prayer pages 58 and 59)

Hymn No 107 I sing the Almighty Power of God

I sing the almighty power of God,
that made the mountains rise,

that spread the flowing seas abroad,
and built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained
the sun to rule the day ;
the moon shines full at his command,
and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord,
that filled the earth with food ;
he formed the creatures with his word,
and then pronounced them good.

Lord, how your wonders are displayed
where'er I turn mine eye,
if I survey the ground I tread,
or gaze upon the sky !

God's hand is my perpetual guard,
he guides me with his eye ;
why should I then forget the Lord,
whose love is ever nigh ?

Isaac Watts (1674–1748)

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Intercessions

Creator God in hope you made the world and it was very good.

Sustaining God, in hope you continue the work of creation and restoration and you keep making all things good again.

Saving God in hope you bring good out of evil and prove that love is much stronger than hate.

We bring our prayers to you because we care about this world and its people.

We pray for those who suffer from famine and lack adequate food as crops fail and animals die. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer**

We pray for those who work for justice and peace to prevail and for those who seek to alleviate famine and hunger. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who suffer illness, anxiety and loneliness as we pray for doctors and nurses and others who have a caring ministry and seek to bring healing and wholeness. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are the victims of waste and injustice; those who seek to care for the environment, fighting against pollution and waste.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.

We pray for those who aim by every means possible to use the world's resources wisely. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.**

We pray for those people who are burdened with worry and troubles and who long for signs of hope and comfort in their distress. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who proclaim your message of 'Good News' in situations of despair. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.** (Townsend pages 98/99)

Petitions

Lord, we are your people, who want our lives, our hopes and our vision to reflect your glory. May the vision of your kingdom of justice, love and peace always be uppermost in all that we think or say or do. **Lord in your mercy hear our prayer.**

Stir our hearts good Lord, with new hope for the future, open our eyes to new horizons

Lord in your loving care, all things are made new and even we can become the people that you want us to be. Through the power of the Holy Spirit working within us may we be filled with new life in Christ in whose name we pray. (Odell page 159)

Hymn No 103 God is love; let heaven adore him

God is Love : let heaven adore him ;
God is Love : let earth rejoice ;
let creation sing before him,
and exalt him with one voice.
He who laid the earth's foundation,
he who spread the heavens above,
he who breathes through all creation,
he is Love, eternal Love.

God is Love : and he, enfolding
all the world in one embrace,
with unfailing grasp is holding
every child of every race.
And when human hearts are breaking
under sorrow's iron rod,
then they find that selfsame aching
deep within the heart of God.

God is Love : and though with blindness
sin afflicts each human soul,
God's eternal loving-kindness
holds and guides and keeps them whole.
Sin and death and hell shall never
o'er us final triumph gain ;
God is Love, so Love for ever
o'er the universe must reign.

Timothy Rees (1874–1939) (*alt.*)

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Isaiah 11vv1-9

11 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
⁵ Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling^[a] together;
and a little child will lead them.
⁷ The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Romans 8vv18-25

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that^[b] the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Hymn no 106 God whose almighty word

1 God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,

and took their flight,
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light !

2 Christ, you have come to bring
on your redeeming wing
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
O to all humankind
let there be light !

3 Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy Dove,
speed forth your flight ;
move on the waters' face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light !

4 Blessèd and holy Three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might,
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the world far and wide
let there be light !

John Marriott (1780–1825)

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Lord, all around us we are aware of a suffering world. There is warfare and disease, persecution, famine and drought. Many people are fearful of what may be coming on the world, through pandemics, global warming and changing climates. In the midst of it all help us to be both realistic and optimistic, through our living hope in Christ who brought hope and love into the world. Grant us your hope in our hearts, along with doing all that we can to make this world a better place for all. (Sheasby page 13)

Sermon Our hope of a new world order in Christ

The organization 'Extinction Rebellion' has a popularity today which is world-wide and quite strong among young people. They have a future to be concerned about and do not care to think that it might all be destroyed because of the way that we live our lives.

The Apostle Paul looking at the world of his day, was aware that there was so much that appeared to have gone wrong with this lovely world that God had created. So much so, that he wrote of creation itself groaning for something different. He even uses an analogy, with which he would obviously have no personal experience, namely the experience of a woman approaching child-birth.

Today we are living, as 'Extinction Rebellion' would want to remind us with the threat of Climate Change and what that could do to our planet, not to mention the damage to human life and society caused by Covid 19. What then is our way forward as Christian people to a new normal, which may or may not be like the old normal. What adjustments do we need to make if we are to avoid the disasters that climate change could bring. How do these words of St. Paul relate to it all.

Above all else these words of Paul convey hope and perhaps this is what is so often missing in the words of the prophets of doom. Is it all doom and can we like Paul see a real sense of hope as we look forward?

Just as anxiety and stress have become prevalent factors of so much of human life, so Paul recognises very much the same happening in the natural world. The whole of creation is crying out or groaning for deliverance. The whole universe is looking for something. Everything and everyone has fallen short of perfection and completeness.

Isaiah's vision is one of a Universal peaceful co-existence, in which the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the goat, the calf and the lion, the cow and the bear live peacefully side by side. He expresses in Hebrew poetry what Paul is proclaiming in the letter to the Romans. In God's Kingdom, life takes the place of death. Health replaces sickness, love replaces hatred. God will be among his people as their deliverer.

Amidst the inevitable sense of decay and destruction that affects so much of life on earth, both Isaiah and Paul were able to live in anticipation of a new order. As Christian people, we are already a part of that new order. We, like Isaiah and Paul can be inspired by a hope and a promise of something far more wonderful than any of us has ever known completely. We have in Christ a vision of history in its entirety and beyond. Christ is the centre of our humanity and the basis of our hope. He has come among us bringing about a new way of living which can affect the whole of creation.

Paul had this vision before him, which makes everything else sink into oblivion. As we ourselves begin to experience our freedom in Christ, so our hope for creation itself reaches out striving towards the victory of which we are clearly assured.

Our own nature is closely tied up with that of the world. What we are and what we do in life affects the whole of life around us. God has placed in our hands a high degree of responsibility for the whole of nature.

Our Christian hope therefore is not one that encourages us to just sit back and wait in the hope that it will all get better. It is a creative hope, which seeks to make, even at this present moment in time a new and better world. Ours is not a faith which tries to escape from the

hard and cruel facts of life, but rather seeks to bring the love of God in Christ into it all. It is a vivid sense of the future that adds a sense of urgency to the present..

We believe that God has an over all plan and purpose for the world and for ourselves and the death and resurrection of Jesus is the key to it all. This is the true basis of our hope and without it life can only end in meaninglessness and despair. The ultimate promise of God is for the transformation of the entire universe and a splendour as yet to be revealed. God's hand is there present in it all. The last word, just as the first word is God, who promises that the whole creation will be rescued from its present chaos and restored to the order that has always been God's design for it.

We live by that faith, hope and love which are indestructible and will find their central place in a restored creation and a redeemed humanity. The Kingdom of God is the only one that cannot be shaken or destroyed. We rejoice therefore in a hope that is certain, for the God whom we worship is the Lord of all life and of all things in heaven and on earth.

His promise to us is of a world in which creation finds its true fulfilment. We catch glimpses of that promise every time that we see his love working out among us in his world.

God has no plans to abandon his world but to find a fulfilment for it. So Paul suggests that the whole creation will be liberated from its present enslavement to the forces of decay and death. You don't liberate something by destroying it, or abandoning it. Neither therefore can we imagine God doing so with the world that he made and loves. We therefore boldly proclaim that God, who made this world, still loves it and in Jesus he seeks to renew and reshape, not only our lives but the entire creation.

We therefore have this vision that can bring love and hope in places where there is only hatred and despair. We anticipate God's glorious future here and now. God himself goes on redeeming the waste places of life bringing renewal and hope through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian attitude to the future is always one of hope. We have God's promise that the best is yet to be. This hope is one that determines the way that we presently live our lives and it cannot be isolated from the world of nature all around us. It means that we act responsibly where we can, while leaving the ultimate outcome of all things with our loving, caring God.

Amen.

Give us Good Lord the vision which recognises your loving hand still active within this world today. Give us that faith and the courage that will allow you to rebuild our own lives as part of your new creation. Show us what each of us can do to play our part in your purposes of redeeming the world.

(Partners in Learning 1999 October 24th page 61 and Castle 748 – Frank Borman from Apollo 8 1968)

Hymn no 696 For the healing of the nations

For the healing of the nations,
Lord, we pray with one accord ;
for a just and equal sharing
of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom ;
from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred,
all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned ;
pride of status, race, or schooling,
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, creator –God, have written
Your great name on humankind:
For our growing in your likeness
Bring the life of Christ to mind;
That by our response and service
Earth its destiny may find.

Fred Kaan (1929 – 2009)

Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn no 639 Through the love of God our Saviour

Through the love of God our Saviour
all will be well.
Free and changeless is his favour ;
all, all is well.
Precious is the blood that healed us,
perfect is the grace that sealed us,
strong the hand stretched forth to shield us ;
all must be well.

Though we pass through tribulation,
all will be well.
Christ has purchased full salvation,
all, all is well.
Happy still in God confiding,
fruitful, if in Christ abiding,
holy, through the Spirit's guiding ;
all must be well.

We expect a bright tomorrow ;
all will be well.
Faith can sing through days of sorrow
all, all is well.

On our Father's love relying,
Jesus every need supplying,
then in living or in dying,
all must be well.

Mary Peters (1813–1856)

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Closing Prayer.

Give to us Lord, the joy that sings of freedom. Give the hope that trusts in your promises,
Help us to proclaim that hope, to those who see no hope and the joy of Christ to those who
live in sadness and despair.