



Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

Sunday 25th April 2021 "Jesus commissions his church" Matthew 28: 16-20

These written worship sheets are for you to use as we gather, as one, in our homes to worship God. We are in the time between Easter Sunday and Pentecost and this is the perfect time to be considering the role of the Church: in our lives, our community and the world, to "make Jesus known." I believe and trust that this series, "Jesus builds His renewed Church" will really help us, as followers of Jesus, to learn some important truths. May God's Holy Spirit guide and unite us in these weeks ahead.

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

Good morning church!

Opening words: Sing a new song to the Lord!
Let the whole earth sing to the Lord!
Sing to the Lord; praise his name.
Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.
Declare his glorious deeds among the nations.
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.
Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise!
Psalm 96 NLT

Prayer: Loving and faithful God, we join together this morning in prayer as a body, the 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 and continue to do 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 fellowships.

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 deeds. May everything I do, from this day forward, be to Your glory. **Amen.**

We sing: Build Your Kingdom here
Sing/read /pray /proclaim the words.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqZX08DDWiA&ab_channel=FellowshipWorship

Come set Your rule and reign
In our hearts again
Increase in us we pray
Unveil why we're made.

Come set our hearts ablaze with hope
Like wildfire in our very souls
Holy Spirit, come invade us now.

We are Your church
We need Your power in us.

We seek Your kingdom first
We hunger and we thirst
Refuse to waste our lives
For You're our joy and prize.

To see the captive hearts released
The hurt, the sick, the poor at peace
We lay down our lives for Heaven's cause.

We are Your church
We pray revive this earth.

Build Your kingdom here
Let the darkness fear
Show Your mighty hand
Heal our streets and land
Set Your church on fire
Win this nation back
Change the atmosphere
Build Your kingdom here
We pray.

Unleash Your kingdom's power
Reaching the near and far
No force of Hell can stop
Your beauty changing hearts
You made us for much more than this
Awake the kingdom seed in us
Fill us with the strength and love of Christ.

We are Your church
We are the hope on earth.

Build Your kingdom here
Let the darkness fear
Show Your mighty hand
Heal our streets and land
Set Your church on fire
Win this nation back
Change the atmosphere
Build Your kingdom here
We pray.

Songwriters: Llewellyn Christopher Dean / Gilkeson Gareth Andrew /
Herron William performed by Rend Collective.

Prayer of Confession:

He (Jesus) is the One all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in Him will have their sins forgiven through His name. (Acts 10:43 NLT).

Lord Jesus, it is easy for us to become distant from You and others and to harden our hearts. For some of us it is a way of coping with the pain of separation from friends and family. For the times we purposefully distance and separate ourselves even further. **Lord forgive us.**

Thank you, Lord that You have promised to be with us, You are never distant or apathetic, as we ourselves can be. You never grow weary of loving us. When we harden our hearts, You breathe Your love over us in ways we don't understand. When we do not pray, fail to read Your Word, lash out at others and don't speak and share with others of our love for You. **Lord forgive us.**

For the times when we have done the easy, and selfish things instead of following Your perfect example and Your great commission to make disciples, baptise and teach **Lord forgive us.**

When in thought, word and deed we have not glorified You but instead harboured unforgiveness or resentment. For times when we have made idols of our positions, buildings, processes and our preferred ways of doing things **Lord forgive us.**

For the times when we highlight the faults in others and ignore or minimise our own faults, when we think that we must put down others to elevate ourselves **Lord forgive us.**

Lord Jesus, we name the specific things for which we come now repenting of and asking Your forgiveness...

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

Words of Assurance: God of love and power, thank You for Your forgiveness from my sins, strengthen me by Your Holy Spirit so that I may walk, this and every day, the path of righteousness and holiness with You. I am forever Yours, a redeemed child of light, bought with Your sacrifice and blood on a cruel yet now empty cross, I am dead to sin and fully and gloriously alive in You. **Amen.**

Song: The Church of Christ in every age StF415
Sing/read /pray/ proclaim the words.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBUAQKGyc5A&ab_channel=JamesBiery

The church of Christ, in every age,
beset by change but Spirit led,
must claim and test its heritage

and keep on rising from the dead.
Across the world, across the street,
the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live until they die.

Then let the servant church arise,
a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity.

For he alone, whose blood was shed,
can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

We have no mission but to serve
in full obedience to our Lord,
to care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating Word.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000).

Our Lord's Prayer (the Christian family prayer):

Our Father in Heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the Kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. **Amen.**

Prayer in preparation for reading Holy Scripture:

Lord, prepare our hearts like fertile soil for the reading of your Word. Speak to us through this scripture and enable us by your Spirit to hear clearly your message to us today, make us eager to apply it to our life. Keep our minds clear of all the things that crowd in and distract us. May we let these words change and transform us. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28: 16-20

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

New International Version.

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

Preaching Notes:

The prophesy from Isaiah (49:6) states, "I will give you as a light to the nations – that my salvation may reach the ends of the earth," this is the scripture quoted by Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:47) as they preached to "almost the whole city." Verse 49 of Acts 13 goes on to say, "the word of the Lord spread through the whole region." Isaiah lived almost 700 years before the birth of Jesus, yet it was already foretold that at the appointed time the Messiah (Jesus) would fulfil this prophesy.

The words and events we are considering today are the fulfillment of the prophesies of old, as it was in the beginning. Last week's scripture (Luke 24: 26,27) said plainly in the words of Jesus, "did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" Followed by Luke's commentary, "and beginning with Moses and all of the Prophets he explained what was said in all of the scriptures concerning himself."

The apostles (the remaining 11 from the 12 that were called) have faithfully followed Jesus in his earthly ministry. They have seen healings of the blind, nature calmed, lepers made well, demons overcome, the lame have walked and even the dead have been raised. They have at times struggled with understanding who Jesus is and at other times have made bold statements about him. When we read "some doubted" (verse 16) it

is in comparison to “they worshipped him”. For a devout Jew (which is what the apostles were) the first commandment (Exodus 20: 3) makes clear that worship is for God alone. The doubt is perhaps not so much to do with the events they have themselves witnessed, Jesus is resurrected, that is undeniable, but the understanding of what these things mean. Recall the words of the God-fearing Jews on Pentecost morning, in utter amazement, asking each other “what does this mean?” (Acts 2:12).

Thomas, even after hearing from the others that Jesus has risen from the dead, (remembering that he has also seen all the preceding miracles) still wants his own physical proof, yet on seeing Jesus, he proclaims him as God (John 20:28).

The renowned Bible expositor and evangelical Anglican Bishop J. C. Ryle says of these verses, “these are words so remarkable that they demand and deserve all our attention.” These are the words of Jesus before he ascends to the Father, his parting instructions. The “therefore” as the beginning of verse 19 makes so abundantly clear that Jesus has all of the Father’s authority to give this commission to the apostles and onwards to His church including us.

The church is created for this mission, to go into the world to make Jesus known, believed and followed with each disciple then undertaking the same, to continually multiply disciples to the ends of the earth. When the church takes this mission seriously, under the power of the Holy Spirit, it grows at an extraordinary rate. The early Methodist movement with the cry of “transform the nation by spreading scriptural holiness” grew from just a handful of people in the early 1700’s to a worldwide resurgence movement.

The Great Commission is so often overlooked or misunderstood and has been described by some as applying only to those first apostles, yes it was addressed to the 11 apostles, they were the ones there, but it surely passes from generation to generation, that is how we interpret “the apostolic church”. This attitude of misapplication leads the church into decline and a self-serving,

self-sustaining position that is a long way away from these words of Jesus. The Great Commission has never been revoked and it should be the core missionary task of the one, true church.

“Let us never forget that this solemn injunction is still in full force. It is still the bounden duty of every disciple of Christ to do all he can in person, and by prayer, to make others acquainted with Jesus. Where is our faith if we neglect this duty? It may well be questioned whether a man knows the value of the Gospel himself, if he does not desire to make it known to all the world.” J. C. Ryle.

Three verses and three important lessons:

1. The Assurance of Power and Authority - verse 18.
2. The Commission – verse 19.
3. The Promise of Presence – verse 20.

The Commission itself in verse 19 can also be considered as three specific actions:

1. “To Go” as a movement, connected and supported by each other -the church. Previously, when Jesus was with them in person the injunction was always, “follow me” but now the emphasis is on the apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to move forward and undertake the mission task for which they have been prepared, to make disciples of all nations.
2. “Baptizing” new believers undertake baptism as an outward sign of an inward change, the symbolic washing away of sin and the personalization of Christ’s death and resurrection, a new creation.
3. “Teaching” all that Jesus taught in his earthly ministry is provided for us within the Gospels. Without an understanding of what Jesus has taught and commanded makes it impossible to undertake this action. Not that we must all be Bible scholars or teachers but that we must be seeking an understanding and application of what Jesus taught in order that we may help new believers. **Amen**

Offering: Had we been meeting physically this is the point when we would have taken our offering for God's work. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

Prayer: Lord we offer up our gifts, all things come from You and from Your hand we have gratefully received., **Amen**

Participation in God's Mission: In this week's video Phil meets Hendrik Storm the International CEO of Barnabas Fund. Barnabas provide resources to the persecuted church bringing hope to suffering Christians around the world. Christians in Armenia, Cameroon, Egypt, Pakistan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan and India need our help, to know that they do not suffer alone. That help is both practical through our giving and action and spiritual through our prayers and encouragement. You can find out more about Barnabas by visiting their website <https://barnabasfund.org/>

Prayers of Intercession:

Heavenly Father we come before you this morning to pray for the needs of others, in a world of pain and suffering we pray for the unrest in America, for the family of George Floyd as the guilty verdict to given to the one accused of his murder, we pray for reconciliation and a breaking of the shackles of prejudice and racism, we pray for love and respect amongst brothers and sisters of all nations, creeds and colours. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

We pray for countries where Covid-19 cases and deaths are rising out of control, we think especially of India and Brazil where hospitals are finding it difficult to care for the increasing numbers of sick and dying people. Give wisdom and guidance to the leaders and governments of India and Brazil to put in place measure to halt the spread of the virus. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

We continue to uphold the Queen in our prayers as she quietly marks her 95th birthday. Lord be with her and all the Royal family members as they mourn Prince Philip, sustain and comfort them we

pray. We pray thanks for the Queen's and Prince Philip's faithful service to our country and commonwealth over all the many years of our lifetimes, strengthen and be with our Queen in the days ahead. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

We pray for our country as we continue to take careful steps out of full restrictions and slowly introduce greater interaction, Lord help people to continue to be careful, help them to follow the rules and remember that the virus is still present and circulating. Give wisdom to our government regarding the easing of further restrictions. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

We pray for our brothers and sisters in countries where there is continual religious persecution, Christians in some African and Asian countries are refused Covid-19 related aid because of their faith. We pray for Christians facing violence from Islamist militant groups, Lord surround them with your presence and protection, we give thanks for their boldness and courage Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

We pray for our fellowships at Bransgore and Highcliffe, for guidance as we prepare to open the buildings and meet for public services. We pray that your Holy Spirit will show us the way forward, Lord you know our practical needs and we trust you to provide. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

We pray for all those who are recovering from illness or operations, for those who are waiting for results of medical tests or upcoming operations, be with the bereaved, the lost, the depressed and the lonely. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

And finally Lord, we pray for the renewal of each of us and our fellowships, to strengthen us to take up the Great Commission that you gave us, to be your witnesses in the places you put us. Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

Accept these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. **Amen.**

Contributed by Worship Leader Jenny Hutchins,

Frank Houghton was the Director General of the China Inland Mission, the organisation founded by Hudson Taylor and William Berger in 1865. He believed passionately that the true reason for Christian mission is not because the people are any worse than us, but because they, like us, are sinners in need of Christ and how will they know if no one is prepared to disciple them. He emphasised the point that mission and evangelism is the task of the one church, not merely certain individuals within it. He was a prolific writer of poetry, some were set to music and published as hymns. The song, "Facing a task unfinished" provides us with words of both encouragement and challenge for the new days ahead as we consider the ways in which God is renewing His church.

Song: Facing a task unfinished

Sing/read /pray/ proclaim the words.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-YxQok6cPA&ab_channel=KeithandKristynGetty

Facing a task unfinished
That drives us to our knees
A need that, undiminished
Rebukes our slothful ease
We, who rejoice to know Thee
Renew before Thy throne
The solemn pledge we owe Thee
To go and make Thee known.

Where other lords beside Thee
Hold their unhindered sway
Where forces that defied Thee
Defy Thee still today
With none to heed their crying
For life, and love, and light
Unnumbered souls are dying
And pass into the night.

*We go to all the world
With kingdom hope unfurled
No other name has power to save
But Jesus Christ The Lord*

We bear the torch that flaming
Fell from the hands of those
Who gave their lives proclaiming

That Jesus died and rose
Ours is the same commission
The same glad message ours
Fired by the same ambition
To Thee we yield our powers.

We go to all the world...

O Father who sustained them
O Spirit who inspired
Saviour, whose love constrained them
To toil with zeal untired
From cowardice defend us
From lethargy awake!
Forth on Thine errands send us
To labour for Thy sake.

*We go to all the world
With kingdom hope unfurled
No other name has power to save*

But Jesus Christ The Lord. Songwriters: Fionan De Barra / Keith Getty / Frank Houghton / Kristyn Getty / Edward Martin Cash

Benediction: Go forth into the world in peace;
be of good courage;
hold fast that which is good;
render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted;
support the weak;
help the afflicted;
honour everyone;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you
always. **Amen.** 1 Thessalonians 5:13-22

Response: It is important to remember that none of us, in our own strength and resources, is up to the task that Jesus gives us in these verses we have considered today. We were never meant to do this alone. If anything has stirred within you today please remember that learning and growing in Christ is best done together in groups where we can support one another. Phillip, 01425 673350 phillip.dixon@methodist.org.uk

Phillip Dixon, April 2021. 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.