



# Highcliffe and Bransgore **Methodist Churches**

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 10:30am, Colossians 1:15-22 "Creation Proclaims"

Prepared by Rev'd Phillip Dixon

This written worship has been prepared to bless you and help bring us closer together, as a physically separated fellowship, into the presence of God to worship Him in Spirit and Truth. We gather in separate places but united in love by the Holy Spirit for our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing that we share in this worship of God with each other is hopefully an encouragement to you and can, through the work of God's Spirit, bring us all closer together, as a family of believers and followers of Jesus Christ.



**Good morning church!**

**Opening Prayer:**

Loving God we gather with joy and faith this morning as we begin our celebration for Your glorious creation. Unite us so that we may be of one accord with our spiritual family: our brothers and sisters in Bransgore, Highcliffe, believers in many places around the country, the ends of the earth and the saints in heaven.

We are separated by distance but not in our desire, love and devotion to You. We welcome Your Holy Spirit into our lives afresh this morning as we worship You, may Your beautiful fragrance of peace, love, truth and power permeate our homes and our lives. May all be said and done today for Your glory. **Amen.**

**Proclamation:**

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.  
Day after day they pour forth speech;  
night after night they reveal knowledge.

They have no speech, they use no words;  
no sound is heard from them.  
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world.

**Amen** Psalm 19: 1-4 NIV(UK).

**Hymn: SoF 82 How Great Thou Art.**

Sing/read /pray/proclaim the words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cc0QVWzCv9k>

O Lord my God, when I in awesome  
wonder  
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have  
made  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder  
Thy power throughout the universe  
displayed.

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to  
Thee*

*How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to  
Thee*

*How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

When through the woods, and forest  
glades I wander  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the  
trees  
When I look down, from lofty mountain  
grandeur  
And see the brook, and feel the gentle  
breeze.

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to  
Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to  
Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

And when I think, that God, His Son not  
sparing  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in  
That on the Cross, my burden gladly  
bearing  
He bled and died to take away my sin

*Refrain*

When Christ shall come, with shout of  
acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my  
heart  
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration  
And then proclaim: "My God, how great  
Thou art!"

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to  
Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to  
Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

Stuart K. Hine (1899-1989) vv. 12,2,4 based on O store Gud  
1885 by Carl Gustaf Bobberg (1859-1940)

### **Prayer of Confession:**

*If we say we have no sin, we make  
ourselves out to be perfect and in no need  
of a Saviour. If we repent in sorrow and  
confess our frailty and our weakness, You  
Lord, being faithful and just, will forgive  
our sins and cleanse us from all  
unrighteousness.* 1 John 1:8-10 Amplified Version

Let us confess our sins:

Lord Jesus Christ I confess I often fail You  
as did Your first disciples; I am sorry that  
my good intentions are not always  
followed by a sacrifice of self. My self-  
reliance betrays You and results in me  
being less obedient to You. **Lord forgive  
me, Christ have mercy.**

I am sorry for the times I lack the  
boldness to proclaim You and Your power  
and love particularly with friends and  
family who do not know You. Forgive me  
for the times when I do not proclaim Your  
work of creation and instead assume that  
others do not want me to talk of You with  
them.

**Lord forgive me, Christ have mercy.**

For the times when I have not spoken out  
against the abuse and lack of care for this  
world, for my part in the selfish over-use  
of the earth's resources, the polluted seas  
and the rubbish strewn countryside  
**Lord forgive me, Christ have mercy.**

Forgive me when I have not been loving,  
supportive or encouraging to my brothers  
and sisters in Christ. For the times when I  
have belittled myself thinking that my  
voice is small and unheard, help me Lord  
to know that I am a valuable part of Your  
body, the church on earth, that requires  
my participation.

**Lord forgive me, Christ have mercy.**

## Pause

*In a time of silence and reflection we recall specific instances for which we are asking forgiveness. We listen to what God may be saying to us.*

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us close to Himself and cleanse us from all of our sins so that we may behold the glory of His Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Absolution taken from Common Worship

## Preparation for the reading and preaching of scripture:

Blessed Lord, who has caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wisdom hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of this Holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which You have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen** John Wesley, a prayer to precede the reading of scripture.

## Reading: Colossians 1:15-22

<sup>15</sup> The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things

in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

<sup>21</sup> Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. <sup>22</sup> But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation –

New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

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

### Preaching notes:

The whole of creation proclaims the pre-eminence of Jesus and the apostle Paul's encouraging letter to the church of Colossae makes this fact abundantly clear. The question we must ask ourselves is: are we listening?

This short section of scripture has been described by many scholars as "breath-taking" as it sums up perfectly the unity of God – Father, Son and Spirit, the position of the Son within this divine union (which we call the Trinity), the centrality of the Christian church to creation (meaning that the divide often spoken of between "secular" and "sacred" is false) and finally the purpose of Jesus dying on the cross and being bodily resurrected (the firstborn from among the dead) in order for us to participate in the new or re-creation. The NIV Bible commentary on this passage states: "Christ is supreme over all creation...We must believe that Jesus is God or our Christian faith is hollow, misdirected and meaningless. This is a central truth of Christianity".

In reading these verses you may wish to compare them to the opening of John's

Gospel (1:3) where we hear similar words about Jesus: “through him all things were made (created), without him nothing was made that has been made”.

R.C. Lucas in his commentary on this passage states: “the whole created order, in time and space, owes its existence to Christ”, the repetition of “he is...” and “in him...” gives added weight to this assertion. Jump forward a few verses from our selected passage and we read in verse 27 our participation in this great and wondrous truth: “Christ in you, the hope of glory”, the one who is proclaimed through the indescribable beauty of all creation offers each of us a life, united with him, 2 Corinthians 5:17 reminds us “so if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new.”

The letter to the Colossian church should be read in its entirety, its four short chapters speak directly into situations that we face today. Our selected passages, chosen to begin our series on Creation, give an excellent foundation to our celebration. The proclamation from Psalm 24 says it perfectly “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” and the way we as Christians live our lives must reflect that fact. I am uneasy in the way we prefix “Eco” to church or to Christianity because it implies it not already a fundamental part of our Christian expression.

During this time of pandemic and lockdown one of the positive consequences is that many rivers have become cleaner and the air is better. Why did it take an event such as this to highlight the abuse of God’s creation and the greed, pride and selfishness that

underlies it? Let us hope that more people will see the beauty of God’s creation and that we as Christians will readily proclaim God as the Creator, not in a dogmatic way but with Biblical truth and faith. Please join me during this Creation Time praying that those who do not yet hear God speaking to them will hear His voice by the whole of creation proclaiming Him as Creator. **Amen**

God speaks to us through His creation but many people are in too much of a hurry or are looking in the wrong place for God. This beautiful poem highlights God’s presence.

**And A Meadowlark Sang:**

"The child whispered, 'God, speak to me'  
And a meadow lark sang.  
The child did not hear.

So the child yelled, 'God, speak to me!'  
And the thunder rolled across the sky  
But the child did not listen.

The child looked around and said,  
'God let me see you' and a star shone brightly  
But the child did not notice.

And the child shouted,  
'God show me a miracle!'  
And a life was born but the child did not know.

So the child cried out in despair,  
'Touch me God, and let me know you are here!'  
Whereupon God reached down  
And touched the child.

But the child brushed the butterfly away  
And walked away unknowingly." Ravindra  
Kumar Karnani

**Song StF 553: I am a new creation**

Sing/read /pray/proclaim the words.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Yvw\\_eV36sQ&ab\\_channel=sanders2378](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Yvw_eV36sQ&ab_channel=sanders2378)

I Am a New Creation,  
No more in Condemnation,  
Here in the Grace of God I stand.

My Heart is Overflowing,  
My Love just keeps on Growing,  
Here in the Grace of God I stand.

*And I will Praise You, Lord,  
yes I will Praise You, Lord,  
and I will Sing of all that You have done.*

A Joy that knows no limit,  
a Lightness in My Spirit  
Here in the Grace of God I stand.

Dave Billborough (b 1965)

**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 the evil one.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**A Prayer for the suffering church:**

Bring hope O'Lord,  
To Thy suffering people,  
In their anguish and pain,  
Be Thou their hope.

Bring hope O'Lord,  
To Thy persecuted people,  
In their despair,  
Be Thou their hope.

Bring hope O'Lord,  
To Thy needy people,  
In their hunger and thirst,  
Be Thou their hope.

Bring hope O'Lord,  
To Thy dying people,  
In the hour of their death,  
Be Thou their hope.

In the name of Jesus, our hope. **Amen**

Patrick Sookhdeo 2020

**Prayers of Intercession:**

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

*(Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)*

We pray for persecuted Christians around the world, caught in the unfairness and repression of discriminatory regimes.

For the Christians of Syria who face discrimination in the provision of aid. We pray protection for those who support them and ask Lord that many more from a Muslim background would come to know You as their Lord and Saviour.

We pray for our Government, local and national leaders and those with influence to exercise wisdom and integrity as they make decisions about easing restrictions.

Bless the young people who are attending school after a long absence, and for the teachers who must adapt to new ways of

working, give them guidance Lord to support the most vulnerable children.

We continue to pray for our Health Service as they work hard to arrange treatment and operations.

We pray against the inequality that exists in Your creation and for an end to racism in all its forms.

Compassionate Father, we pray for the relief efforts ongoing in Beirut, for the many thousands homeless, the grieving families and the injured, we pray for Your hand to be upon them bringing them comfort. For all of those involved in supporting the population we pray for unity of purpose, strength and wisdom.

Loving and merciful God, we bring to you those who we know are suffering the pain of illness, those awaiting operations and those recovering from surgery. Be with them Lord in their times of trouble and pain and give them your peace.

For those of our fellowship who are caring and supporting family members who are sick, be with them Lord and give them the strength to preserve and provide encouragement particularly during times of frustration and tiredness.

For our family members who do not know you yet Lord; brothers, sisters, wives, husbands, children, parents, we bring them all to you in name and ask that you soften their hearts and put believers in their path who they will listen to and who will tell them the truth of your love and desire for them to know you as their Saviour.

We bring these prayers in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

**Hymn: StF 347 Crown Him with many crowns** Sing/read /pray/proclaim.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuMh\\_ept-Js&ab\\_channel=Lily%26River](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuMh_ept-Js&ab_channel=Lily%26River)

Crown Him with many crowns,  
the Lamb upon His throne.  
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns  
all music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing of Him  
Who died for thee,  
and hail Him as thy matchless King  
through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of life,  
Who triumphed over the grave,  
and rose victorious in the strife  
for those He came to save.  
His glories now we sing,  
Who died, and rose on high,  
Who died eternal life to bring,  
and lives that death may die.

Crown Him the Lord of love,  
behold His hands and side,  
those wounds, yet visible above,  
in beauty glorified.  
No angel in the sky  
can fully bear that sight,  
but downward bends His burning eye  
at mysteries so bright.

Crown Him the Lord of years,  
the Potentate of time,  
Creator of the rolling spheres,  
ineffably sublime.  
all hail, Redeemer, hail! For Thou has died  
for me; Thy praise and glory shall not fail  
throughout eternity. Matthew Bridges (1800-1894)

**Blessing:** We go in peace to love and serve  
the Lord, in the name of Christ **Amen**

Phillip Dixon September 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