

Welcome

Welcome once again to the worship of Tyndale Baptist Church. 'In this building used to the sound of singing...etc, etc' are words that are often used in a call to worship at Tyndale and, like the folk of many churches, we are missing the place where we usually meet and where, routinely, we hope to meet with God.

And as the first Sunday of the month comes round, this comes into special focus at the Lord's table; it is, in our tradition, a celebration of community as much as anything; a coming together and a sharing in one loaf and a common cup - none of which can be done in this format; still, with the gradual easing of 'lockdown' conditions, it will, hopefully, not be too long before we can once again break bread in each other's company.

In the meantime, welcome one and all, as we seek to express *gathering* and *coming together* while we are apart. It all takes on an extra dimension in these times – being together in spirit, though not in the flesh; it's paradoxical and not so different from the paradox of the God who is present in spirit in Christ, who was, but is no longer, with us in the flesh...

Wishing things were otherwise leads us into the longing of our first song – based on Psalm 42

['As the deer pants'](#)

Martin Nystrom

Call to Worship

We are not as we would be; our world is far from how God intended it to be; that's the starting point for all true worship – humility and brokenness before God. But it's only possible because of God's call, his invitation and promise *not* to leave us and our world 'as things are' but to transform all things in Christ. In his name we are called and we come, and by him we worship.

BPW 84 ['Dear Lord and Father of mankind'](#)

Opening Prayer

Lord God who is the very source of all life; by whom all things are spoken into existence; made good and set free to live and grow and become all that your love makes possible. Lord Jesus, the very way of salvation, with and through whom all things were made and by whose loving sacrifice all things are mended. Holy Spirit whose power breathes life into every living thing.

God, three-in-one; maker, saviour, empowerer, first, foremost and last, who was, who is, who is to come; all life begins with you, all love pours from your heart, all hope rises in your power –

All this we proclaim, albeit haltingly, by faith; not because of anything that we are but because of everything that we have heard, have encountered, have believed; all this we confess we have failed often to believe, proclaim, and serve – forgive us, we pray (silence)

Paul writes: *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace*

Thanks be to God. Lord, with thankful hearts we turn to you to worship once again, trusting that such worship will play its small part in letting you in, to transform us, and our world; will bring honour to your name in Christ, will make space for the Holy Spirit to move among us and beyond us –

Now speak to us we pray, make us good again and set us free; help us to live and grow to become all that your love makes possible. Amen.

CG 2 ['Abundant life'](#)

Written and sung by Marty Haugen

['The Lord's Prayer'](#)

The University of the Philippines Concert Chorus virtual choir

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 forever. Amen

['Creation sings the Father's song'](#)

Townend /Getty sung by K&K Getty

Readings

[Genesis 8:13-22](#)

[Revelation 21:1-4](#)

The Grace is said:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore, Amen.

Address: The new world IV- renewing the earth

Prayer; Lord, we give you this time. May what is spoken ring with truth, may what is heard be touched by your Spirit, and may what is decided lead us on towards your Kingdom

Two things from the last few weeks of lockdown highlight environmental issues.

The first is the way nature has renewed, reasserted, itself.

The sea off the south coast – Cilla in Burton Bradstock confirms – on days when it's not churned up by storms, has turned gloriously turquoise:

less pollution, fewer boats – it's happening all over. Don't suppose it's got warmer, but, briefly, you could think you were in the Indian Ocean – staycation anyone?

Animals have been appearing: goats in Aberystwyth, boars in Rome, deer in London, Japan, *dolphins* in Venice's canals. Cleaner air in many parts

Oh these developments aren't always welcome – alligators roam roads in the US, a Puma was seen in a street in Santiago in Chile but in lots of ways as human activity has decreased, nature has renewed and reasserted itself

The second thing is single-use plastic.

It's been a target in recent years; supermarkets have banned plastic bags or introduced charges, recycling has become the norm. But..during the lockdown?

Personal Protective Equipment in vast quantities, much of it disposable; sterile coronavirus testing units, single-use, like so much else in the NHS, hand sanitiser, drinking water, in plastic bottles *everywhere*, Perspex screens, all kinds of sticky-backed signs...plastic tape -

It all comes from oil. It all begins life as various forms of chemical liquid; it's all processed into a thousand different products –

Plastic manufacture is one of few industries that've been thriving, it's been lobbying to roll back pollution controls and one result is vast amounts of waste – disposable masks litter parks all over.

Meanwhile the Trump administration is rescinding pollution controls, allowing mining access to pristine wilderness areas; building in national parks.

Meanwhile they're having to cull out-of-control bands of marauding monkeys in Indian cities..

The complex, interwoven relationship between human beings and the natural world continues;

And as the climate continues to change, and as pollution threatens to cross all bounds, we long, *yearn* for the earth to be renewed..

But we also want, *need*, to be safe, warm and dry, to travel, have good health care, drive cars, ride bikes, watch TV, etc, etc..

a myriad things that have only become possible as we've used, subdued, dominated, controlled, spoiled, polluted, farmed, mined, discovered, designed, manufactured and made our way on the earth.

After the flood Noah emerges from the ark. Let's leave aside the perplexing aspects of the flood story today to concentrate on what happens after .

When Noah and his family and the animals emerge from the ark *everything* is renewed – think of when you go outside after summer rain and everything – air, grass, trees - seems to sparkle, fresh and warm –

And everything starts again – like creation all over again - *Bring out with you every living thing..animals, birds...so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.'*

And the sign is the rainbow – God's 'never again' – some say that a rainbow is like a warrior's bow *at rest* – a sign that never again will

God use a weapon against creation, for the sins and wickedness of humanity.

Perhaps it's an indication from ancient times that *one* faith understood that whatever happened in the future, the earth could no longer be the site of superstition or what might be called 'god-placating religion'

It was, evidently, all around back then – just about every religion had its rituals of sacrifice and magic to persuade its god to refrain from sending storms and pestilence or to make the land more fertile

A similar kind of quasi-religious philosophy is, I think, still on display..

You know the kind of thing? Today's wellness industry – plant-based products and back-to-nature rituals that make human flourishing *dependent* on a supposed harmonious relationship with the natural world.

Therapists and potion-sellers that promote the idea that *some* things are natural and other things aren't..

Initiatives that envisage a romantic relationship with nature for humanity, based on the idea that there's a natural place, almost a habitat for us, like the habitats marked out for birds, lions and oak trees.

Yet the rainbow signs God's grace; the creatures after the flood go forth and multiply in freedom, Noah builds an altar, sacrifices animals – begins to use the earth, you might say –

The contrast between *then* – a few folk taking what they need for food and shelter; log cabins in the woods, clothes from animal skins, rudimentary farming – and *now* – factories, high-rise buildings, large numbers crowded into vast cities, supermarkets and supply chains, roads and cars and trains and planes –

Is a distinction without a difference – or, rather, a difference only in quantity. You could say we are far down a path that began after the flood, under the rainbow, when humanity began *again* to do what it had been commanded to do *before* – to subdue and have dominion over the earth..

Only now we are waking up to the consequences of our actions – fossil-fuel use that's produced vast clouds of greenhouse gases; mining that's produced vast run offs of poisoned water; production that's resulted in mountains of waste metal, plastic, textiles – food, you name it. I was at the Avonmouth tip last week and was reminded of how much we throw away – goodness, *I* was throwing away quite a bit!

But we *are* waking up. I fondly imagine that Noah and his family went out to farm and build and conquer and chop down trees with hardly a thought to the consequences – resources must have seemed endless back then.

Now...we are waking up. We know what happens when you destroy vast swathes of rainforest; we can see the results of decades of over-production and consumption; we can measure sea-level rise, temperature increase, glacier melt..

So that we, creatures of the creator who made everything good, are, in our generation, coming into our full maturity as human beings. Thank God for all the science and engineering and pioneering in every field that got us here – that was all of God, I think, but thank God for today's scientists who are researching the effects of our profligacy; today's engineers who are building the wind farms and hydroponic food farms so that the future might not be so wasteful, for the pioneers who are trying out new farming methods, writing about new holistic lifestyles and, by the way, working faster than ever before on new vaccines and treatments –

That the earth might be renewed - that this generation might come into its own for the sake of us all, that the poor might be lifted out of poverty and the refugee saved from starvation and the coastal dwellers of Bangla Desh or the islanders of the Maldives might not have to cope with rising sea-levels.

And the Bible's vision lies before us; the vision of the new heaven and new earth in Revelation – though please God we're not meant to take too literally the idea that there won't be any sea – who wants to live on an earth without any sea? The Ancient Mariner, perhaps...but not all those punters on Bournemouth beach last week, clearly...

Sea as an emblem of chaos, possibly. The new heaven and new earth won't have any chaos in it, no evil intent – might we speculate as well: no waste, no pollution, no global warming?

Such a vision *could* make us complacent, I suppose – let's use and abuse the earth as much as we want, 'cos there'll be a new one in God's future

Or, more helpfully, it could remind us that in God's future there will be an earth, and a heaven, and God, and a people – that everything will

come together; that this will be a humanity that's discovered and *grown* through the centuries; that this new earth will be – not a bright shiny copy of the unspoiled one after the flood, but, please God, an earth made into the kind of place that only a growing, maturing, caring humanity could have made – with God's help, I'm sure – For now God's home is among mortals – now (please God, soon) that they've discovered what it means to be fully human; now that they've learnt to 'have dominion' over the earth; now (please God, soon) that they've grown into their destiny, as God's highest creature – now (please God, soon) that the earth is renewed. Please God the 'new normal' world will absorb the vision -

See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

CG 17 ['Bread is blessed and broken'](#) –

sung by Jo Westaway

Offering & The Peace

So we make our offering; recognising that it's fundamental to our understanding of the world that it is a gift to us and we give in response – 'these and all our gifts' we say, acknowledging that all we have, all we are, all our skills, ideas, are part of God's blessing - and we give to be aligned with the blessing of God –

Lord, we give with thankful hearts, to commit ourselves once more to your giving, blessing, generous spirit, for the sake of the world, in the name of Christ – and to see in the giving – especially of bread & wine – the transformation of all the things of earth into the things of heaven'

Christ is our peace – we share a spirit of peace with all and with each other, near and far –

The peace of the Lord be with you **And also with you**

Communion

And so to communion. I hope you will feel able to join in with this simple act, with a small piece of bread, a glass or mug of something red – that you will enter into the whole thing; imagine, as you listen to the familiar words and join in, that you are, as has often been the case, together with others. It's frustrating that we can't be together, but as I was saying at the beginning, it mirrors the paradox at the heart of our faith – God is present, by his spirit. So, if you are present, if you can join in the spirit of this service – and if you're sitting comfortably, then we'll begin...

The table of the Lord is spread. Here we remember the sacrifice of Christ for the sin of the world.. Here we encounter the risen Lord, feed on him by faith, and discover together the body of Christ on earth in the Church. And here we look forward in the light of His promise to return to the renewal and reconciliation of all things. Then those who know him a little and long to know him more, those who are seeking him and who are weary of their sin and doubt, are invited to come and share the feast.

Confession and Intercession

At this table, we bring before God the needs of the world, the needs of the church, and the needs of our own lives.

Lord God, everywhere we look we see distress in war zone and under despotic regime; through poverty and injustice, in virus-borne sickness and in environmental damage – Lord God, this is, we believe, your world; and in the small parish of our prayers and concerns we invoke the vastness of your love and restoring power, we call upon your Spirit to stir us up to prayer and action, we look to Jesus who holds your love and our lives together in a dance of salvation.

**Lord of all the world
We would see Jesus**

Living Spirit, everywhere we look we see division, power-mongering, waves of fashion, winds of change, and fear of the loss of power – not least in the Church of God. Living Spirit, we who are part of the Church of God, the body of Christ, recognise that it is made up of the lives and calling of frail men and women and to our shame we admit that often enough it mirrors the frailties and failings of the world. And in the clouded vision of our prayers and concerns we yearn for the holy work of your love to mend us, we wait for your Spirit to unite us, we look to Jesus and his freedom to overcome our captivity to the spirit of the age.

**Lord of all the world
We would see Jesus**

Risen Christ, everywhere we look we see dis-ease and sickness; misunderstanding and awkwardness, skewed priorities and mediocrity, in our lives, in our relationships and communities, in our ambitions and aspirations – Risen Christ, your life fills us with the promise of forgiveness and the hope of eternity; and in the halting whisper of our prayers and the ‘self- centredness’ of our concerns we long for the renewing power of your love, we thirst for the Spirit that brings life, we look to Jesus to overcome all that makes for death in us and in the world

**Lord of all the world
We would see Jesus**

God come to us in bread, Christ refresh us in wine, Spirit lift us as we eat and drink together – make our prayers together with our lives the crucible of your love in the world.

Institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you; the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and said, *take, eat, this is my body which is for you, do this in memory of me.* In the same way after supper he took the cup, saying *this cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this whenever you drink it in memory of me* – for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Thanksgiving

We offer bread and give our thanks, for the bread that sustains us from the good of the earth and that living bread that inspires with the life of heaven.

We offer wine and give our thanks, for the wine that sustains us from the fruit of the earth and the new wine that flows to us from the life of heaven –

Responses

Leader Here is bread

All **The foolishness of God in Christ;**

Leader Here is wine

All **Weakness stronger than our strength**

Leader Who will eat here?

All **Not many are wise; not many have power; few are noble, but we all are called, and we all discover that we have been chosen**

Leader Who will drink here?

All **The foolish, who will shame the wise; the weak, who will shame the strong , the poor in Spirit, whose is the Kingdom of heaven.**

Leader In the foolishness of God, before the world’s flawed wisdom

All **We eat and drink in faith**

Bread & Wine

Prayer after communion

Lord, we pray for ourselves and the world:

May ears that have heard your word listen for whispers of peace. We pray for the peace-makers of the world

May tongues that have sung your praise speak only the truth in love. We pray for the truth-tellers of the world

May eyes that have witnessed the drama of salvation in broken bread and poured out wine look for signs of your Kingdom – we pray for the sight-givers of the world.

May bodies that have been fed with your body work for wholeness. We pray for those who heal in the world

So may lives that have been refreshed by your life rise to meet the day with love – we pray for the strength-bringers of the world.

As sinners called to the way of Christ, leads us with these for whom we have prayed in the way of sacrificial love, which is to be the way of your Church in all the world. amen

[Amazing Grace](#)

50 Countries Affected By COVID-19

Blessing

So may the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us and remain with us always

[‘The UK blessing’](#)

Thank you for being part of this service; thanks to Ians Holyer and Waddington, to Rachel Molyneux, to Keith and Margaret Clements. As the officers and Deacons continue to think of and plan a highly detailed and complex route by which the Tyndale building might be reopened as soon as possible, we wish you all well and express the hope that, please God soon, we will be able to meet up once again.

In the meantime, best wishes; take care and do make contact if you would like to talk about anything.

A ‘together though apart’ time follows, at 11.30am