

Welcome and Notices

A warm welcome to our service this morning. As you can see later on, we will be gathering around the Lords table in celebration and obedience. All songs and hymns will be on the screen. Today we are continuing our theme of The Eco-Church and this week we are looking at another great passage of the bible in relationship to creation.

Before that there is an issue with our 5th Sunday giving that we need your approval on Noel can you explain why and what this is about please.

Can we have a quick show of hands are people happy to switch our October 5th Sunday giving to the Christian Aid Youth.

Sadly, the church family has been hit by two deaths in the one week that of Alan Gilkes and Roger Hales, both long standing members of the church. I know we will miss them both so let us take a minute to recall the good times with them, bring to mind their family and friends praying that our God will be with them and sustain them at this time and that we the wider Christian family will be there for them physically and spiritually and of course we especially pray for Linda and Carol for the loss of their life partners.

Call to Worship

“Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.” (Revelation 4:11)

Opening Hymn/Song: Here I am to worship

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaUTv1pXRyU>)

Light of the world
You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore You
Hope of a life spent with You

Here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God

You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

King of all days
Oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came to the earth You created
All for loves sake became poor

And here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God

You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross (x3)

Here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God
You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me (x2)

I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross (x2)

Opening prayer

We meet in the presence of God, who knows our needs, hears our cries, feels our pain, and heals our wounds.

Since we believe that Jesus our Saviour has ascended into heaven, and opened the way into God's presence for us, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith; let us hold fast to the hope we profess; and let us consider how we may spur one another on to love and good deeds.

Faithful one, whose word is life, come with saving power to free our praise, inspire our prayer and shape our lives for the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Confession

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed. Let us then seek forgiveness for the sin by which we have denied God's claim upon us. Shall we say the words of the confession together.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your constant love; in the fullness of your mercy blot out my offences.

Wash away all my guilt and cleanse me from my sin.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Give me the joy of your help again and strengthen me with a willing spirit. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

Those who are in Christ are a new creation: everything old has passed away, see, everything has become new!

All this is from God with whom we have been reconciled through Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17-18)

Amen. Thanks be to God.

The Offertory prayer

(Gift Aid envelopes are available)

Generous God, creator, redeemer, sustainer, at your table we present this money, symbol of the work you have given us to do; use it, use us, in the service of your world to the glory of your name.

Amen.

Prayer for Sunday Club

Lord we pray for the Sunday Club for our youngsters and leaders. May their time together open young hearts and minds to your glory and saving grace. May their activities be enjoyable as well as instructive. We thank you for the

preparation and prayer that has gone into it and ask your blessing will be with them as go their activities. **Amen**

Hymn/Song: In Christ alone

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENtL_li4GbE)

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! who took on flesh
Fulness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones he came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied -
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave he rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine -
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath.
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Reflection Eco-church(4) - Jesus

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Lord be with each one of us as we prepare to hear your word this morning may our hearts and minds be stilled and able to block out interruptions and concentrate on you this morning. **Amen.**

Not always what we seem?

In Harry Potter, Harry thinks Prof. Snape is against him. Later on, we learn Harry is wrong about Prof. Snape who was actually trying to help him at various time and in numerous ways. Many have mistaken who Jesus is in the same way. Today's reading goes some way to addressing any misconceptions we might have. We often say things and people aren't always as they seem.

There is a story told of a pastor who asked the Sunday school class what is brown, furry, lives in trees and eats nuts. One boy put up his hand and said I know it should be squirrel but I'm going say Jesus because in church Jesus is always the right answer. Mm... what do we think? Surely it depends on what the question is doesn't it? Lets have a look at our reading this morning.

Reading: Colossian 1: 15 - 20

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 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. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 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. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Christ's supremacy

Our reading from Colossians answers some of the big questions about life in these few sentences. And in these instances, the lad is right Jesus is the right answer. What are those big questions:

Source of creation

Who made the earth? Answer Jesus as we read in v 16. For in him all things have been created...all things have been created through him...When Jesus healed the sick, the lame, he was not just showing his compassion for the individual he was also showing his compassion for all humanity. He was fixing his creation, not that he made it imperfect in the first place but rather through the Fall man had made it imperfect. Christ came not only to heal the sick in mind or body to reconcile us with the father. To bridge the gap that had been opened through sin and the fall from grace. As we read in v 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things...notice all things. Christ had dominion over all things in creation, think of the incident on Lake Galilee when he calmed the storm. Even the winds and the waves obeyed him.

Jesus often used creation in his teaching, many of the parable refer to birds, animals, fig-trees, vines... of course in doing so he points at familiar things to his audience and uses them to outline spiritual things. But in doing so he also demonstrates his intimate knowledge of creation since he is after all talking about the things he has created. And I am with Christ who instructed his disciples to study the birds of the air or the lilies of the field in Matthew 26 I think there is much we can glean from creation. For me, the intricacy, and the interrelatedness we see in biology reflects the glory of God's creation in all its splendour, the more we get into the detail the greater is my sense of awe for the creator.

Sustainer of creation

What is life/ the world for? Answer for Jesus as we read in v 16 all things have been created through him and for him. Creation is the expression of the love of God, it is the love-gift of father for the son. Who is not moved by the splendour of a lovely sunset or sunrise, over the mountains or lakes or sea? When we are moved by such sights, we are reacting to the love of God that is at the heart of creation. Colossians not only puts Christ front and centre in creation but says he holds it all together, 7 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Jesus holds the tensions of creation, they are held in balance by him. There is just the right amount of O₂ for us and the animals to breath producing CO₂. There is just the right amount of CO₂ for plants to photosynthesis producing O₂. There is just the right narrow temperature range for life, the right amount of water in the cycle, etc. It is utterly amazing that all things come together to be just right. And then we come along and change all that. Jesus has chosen to work in partnership with mankind, we are to be his arms, his legs, his body here on earth. We are to be stewards of his creation, fellow workers, if you want, servicing and sustaining the earth. The Gaia hypothesis that treats the earth as single organism lack the centrality of Jesus and the fact that he is holding creation together. If anything, recent events show the limits of the Gaia homeostatic mechanism are being breached by the actions of mankind. As we are stewards, we need to play our part as co-workers in holding creation in balance by not pushing the boundaries as far as to burst the envelope. We need to ask ourselves if our own actions are compatible with worshipping the creator or if indeed, they are contrary to worshipping and praising the creator.

Saviour of creation

What hope is there for the world? Answer Jesus. The world was perfect when it was created but through sin and the fall it was spoiled as we read in Genesis chapter 3 two weeks ago. But through Jesus there is hope for his creation, all of his creation not just mankind but all creation. In John 3: 16 we read, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal

life." Notice it says world, which is all of creation not just mankind or people. The final verse of reading today makes it clear that Jesus was sent by the father for all creation to be reconciled with the father. In v20 we read, "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."

All creation not just mankind Romans 8: 19

In Romans 8: 19 we read, "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..." that is by us. Creation is waiting for us to get on board to get with the programme, so to speak longing like us for Christ's return.

Still not an excuse for doing nothing!

I said two weeks ago that just because God is in control is no excuse for not doing anything about the climate crisis largely based on Genesis 2: 15, The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And I return to that theme. Yes, Christ is creation's saviour just as he is our saviour, he will at some point return and restore the balance, but I also contend that in the meantime we are his stewards, his co-workers and we need to take care of it. I say we are stewards not least because a little further on than our reading this morning in v25 we read, "25 I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness" we have been commissioned way back in Genesis 2 v 15 to look after God's creation.

We know God cares for his creation, if we look at the story of Noah, we can see that the animals were selected for the ark not just because could provide Noah with meat but because God cared for the animals. We are to be trustworthy stewards of what God has given us. In 1 Peter 4: 10 we read As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. As stewards we will be held accountable, I think these two go hand in hand. Take for example the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 the lazy servant/steward was thrown out into the darkness. Or the warning in

Luke 12: 46 the master of that servant (i.e., the one who abuses his position) will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful. Or in his letter to the church in Rome Paul wrote, "So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God."

We are to follow Christ's example. In 1 John 2: 6 we read, "6 The one who says he resides in God ought himself to walk just as Jesus walked." Jesus is the creator, sustainer and saviour of creation because he cares for his creation, he is not like an absentee landlord who goes away and forgets about his tenants. He is actively involved and interested in what happens to his creation. He is holding in balance all the tensions within creation as we read this morning.

If we know we should be doing more to follow Christ's example particularly this morning thinking about climate and our impact on it then let us not forget the warning in James 4: 17 If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them." The only way to blot out our sin is through faith in Jesus Christ that through his sacrifice on the cross we might be reconciled with the father and our sin washed away. May we all strive to walk closer with Jesus and to walk where he walked.

CofE 5 Marks of mission

What is the wider church doing about climate change? Two weeks ago, I set out several overtly Christian responses and today I want to pick up on one initiative from the CofE. They have set out five marks of mission. The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ...

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation

The fifth is, "To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the

earth." The church's mission could therefore be shown like this the church engaged with the wider community, engaged with all of creation and Christ is to be found at the heart of it all. The open question to each of us is are we that church? What more might we be doing? Perhaps the A Rocha eco-church audit or the CofE one might be a starting point. Perhaps we need to look at drafts in the church and how to prevent them (perhaps not an issue while we have doors open at present), do our windows and walls offer enough insulation? Other denominations have or would claim similar mission statements.

Summary

Jesus is always the answer to the right question

Jesus is the answer to many of our problems:

- Our problems with the meaning of life (created by him and is for him)
- Our problems with sin (he has paid the price of our sin)
- Our separation from God (he is the bridge back to God)
- Our guilt and condemnation (removed through his sacrifice)
- Our hopelessness and despair (he is our only hope of salvation)
- Our despoilation of creation (he will reclaim his creation).

Until Christ returns, we are the stewards of his creation it is up to us to look after it, tend it, nurture it, do what we can to follow Christ's example of caring for all of creation. Bishop Desmond Tutu put it this way ...till it and keep it, not abuse, and destroy it. Some people see creation is there for us to take advantage of, but Genesis says we are to work it and tend it. Are we really tending it? The way we are treating creation is to put us before all other creation rather than lagging behind creation as in Romans 8:19. I will leave you with something to think about and it is this model for our role as a church not in isolation but as part of the bigger picture. The church needs to be in the community taking out and living out Christ's word including that of caring for all creation, the church needs to be

involved with creation as stewards of God's creation as he instructed Adam and at the centre of it all is Christ and the redemption he brings us, closing the gulf between mankind and God that resulted from Adam's disobedience in Genesis 3.

Prayers of Intercession

Peter doing prayers

Hymn/Song: Jesus be the centre

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EG-I1kK-BpU>)

Jesus, be the centre
Be my source, be my light
Jesus
Jesus, be the centre
Be my hope, be my song
Jesus

Be the fire in my heart
Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live
Jesus, Jesus

Jesus, be my vision
Be my path, be my guide
Jesus (x2)

Be the fire in my heart
Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live
Jesus, Jesus

Be the fire in my heart
Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live
Jesus, Jesus

Jesus, be the centre
Be my source, be my light
Jesus

The Peace

'Where two or three are gathered together in my name,' says the Lord, 'there am I in the midst of them.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also, with you.

Let us offer one another a virtual sign of peace.

The Act of Breaking Bread

When we share the cup of the Lord and break bread together, we express our common participation in the benefits of Jesus' death for us. So, we should examine ourselves before we eat the bread and drink the cup, we have confessed our sins to God, acknowledging the need to care for one another, and renewed our trust in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. As we prepare to gather around the Lord's table let us take a few moments of silence to clear our hearts and our minds and remember why we do this.

We come to this table not because we must, but because we may.

We come not because we are strong, but because we are weak.

We come not because we have perfect faith, but because we have questions and even doubts. But we come nonetheless because Jesus invites us to come and we will never be turned away.

The apostle Paul tells us of the institution of the Lord's Supper:

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, 'This is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance 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 remembrance of me.'

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

(1 Corinthians 11: 23–26)

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.**

Distribution of the Bread and Wine

If you require a gluten free wafer, please ask.

If you do not wish to receive communion, you are welcome to receive a blessing.

Parents, if you believe your children are ready in understanding to take communion, please indicate that they can receive the bread and wine.

Prayer After Communion

Shall we say together:

**Gracious God, we praise you for what you have
given and for what you have promised us here.**

**You have made us one with all your people in
heaven and on earth.**

**You have fed us with the bread of life,
and renewed us for your service.**

**Now we give ourselves to you; and ask that our
daily living may be part of the life of your
kingdom,**

**and that our love may be your love reaching out
into the life of the world; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn/Song: What a beautiful name

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GV9pQo4wZo>)

You were the Word at the beginning
One With God the Lord Most High
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ

What a beautiful Name it is
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King

What a beautiful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

You didn't want heaven without us
So Jesus, You brought heaven down
My sin was great, Your love was greater
What could separate us now

What a wonderful Name it is
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King

What a wonderful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Death could not hold You, the veil tore before
You
You silenced the boast, of sin and grave
The heavens are roaring, the praise of Your glory
For You are raised to life again

You have no rival, You have no equal
Now and forever, God you reign
Yours is the Kingdom, Yours is the glory
Yours is the Name, above all names

What a powerful Name it is
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King

What a powerful Name it is
Nothing can stand against
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Closing Prayer and Blessing

The love of the Lord Jesus draw you to himself;
the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his
service; the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the
Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and
remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.