



TOGETHER

only physically apart

NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk



On eagles' wings

Waiting on God | Revd Nathan Falla

I know that I can be really bad at waiting; when big events are due to take place I often have a special countdown on my phone., because I long for the day to arrive; there is excitement and anticipation in the waiting! However, waiting can be one of the hardest things, especially when we have no idea how long we will be waiting for. Waiting can be uncomfortable and unsettling, it can make us anxious and impatient, and it can make everything so much harder, but there is a different side to waiting too.

The Bible offers us an invitation to wait on God, to really spend time in God's presence that we may find in the waiting renewal and transformation. In Isaiah 40:28-31 we find these words: *"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."* (NRSV)

We are in a period of waiting at the moment, waiting for the vaccination, waiting for the end of lockdown, waiting for the time when we can gather and see loved ones again; it seems like we are endlessly waiting. Isaiah speaks words of comfort and hope at a really difficult time, and gives this most amazing picture of renewal and restoration. This is a picture that I am holding onto at the moment.

There are different types of waiting, with a marked difference between them; passive waiting and active waiting. Passive waiting is when we can get frustrated and annoyed, it is an impatient waiting when we twiddle our thumbs and the time is unfruitful; like when you are stuck in a traffic jam. Or there is active waiting when we make the most of the time, using it to prepare, to reflect and to grow, so that even in the waiting time we may be changed, transformed and renewed.

I will admit that some days I wait passively and others I wait actively. Sometimes being impatient can drive us to action and other times it can be unhelpful and unproductive.

How are you going to wait?

May we be open to the God of renewal, change and transformation, that in the waiting and longing we may know God's strength, peace and hope.

Keep safe, take care & God bless

Nathan



1. Online Service

Join us from 10:30am on Sunday 17th January for our Circuit Service led by Revd Nathan Falla.

Find it on the 'Newark and Southwell Methodist Circuit' YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/NewarkSouthwellMethodistCircuit>) why not invite a friend to watch it with you and share the link with them on your social media or by email!

2. Circuit 'Zoom' Coffee Time

Join folk from across the circuit from 11:30am each Sunday morning - you provide the coffee - we'll provide the fellowship! pop in for 5 minutes or half an hour - we'd love to see you!

If you'd like help to 'Zoom', please get in touch!

Please join us afterwards

Come with a drink and a biscuit to share in conversation after the service.

www.zoom.us

Meeting ID: 885 3100 7185

Password: Tog3ther

Phone: 0131 460 1196

Meeting ID: 885 3100 7185

Password: 48647472



3. Radio Services

BBC Radio 4 (Also [online](#).)

08:10am – 17th January

I will sing with the Spirit

Sunday Worship visits the parish church of All Saints Leighton Buzzard where Alexander, BBC Radio 2 Young Chorister of the Year 2020 originally comes from. The preacher is Revd Cate Irvin

4. Radio Nottingham

Listen every Sunday, at 8am, to a live church service on BBC Radio Nottingham. (Online or on 95.1-103.8 MHz FM for free.)

If any of this baffles you – call your minister



Service and stewardship

Caring for creation and all God's gifts

Our Sunday Sermon | Genesis 1:26-31 | Revd Nathan Falla

In the words of Louis Armstrong we live in a wonderful world, a world of amazing colour and diversity; the changing seasons, the different landscapes, the beauty and wonder of creation. But our world will not be so wonderful if we continue to misuse and abuse what we have given.

Climate change or the need for climate action is often in the news; world leaders make promises to change, or we are challenged by the passion and action of younger generations such as Greta Thurnberg. This week as part of the One Planet Summit, the UN Secretary Antonio Guterres has reminded us about the fragility of the world, and the importance for us to act now saying: *"2021 must be the year to reconcile humanity with nature. Until now, we have been destroying our planet. We have been abusing it as if we had a spare one. Our current resource use requires almost two planets but we only have one... We have been poisoning air, land and water – and filling oceans with plastics. Now, nature is striking back. Temperatures are reaching record highs. Biodiversity is collapsing. Deserts are spreading. Fires, floods and hurricanes are more frequent and extreme. And we are extremely fragile. Meanwhile, COVID-19 has taken more than 1.8 million lives and devastated economies. For the first time in this century, poverty is increasing. Inequalities are deepening. As we rebuild, we cannot revert to the old normal. Pandemic recovery is our chance to change course."*

We hear time and time again that we need to change, that we need to make a difference, that patterns need to be altered. In theory we should not need the reminder because caring for God's creation should be an integral part of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, it is part of our service. So, how are you caring for God's creation?

The first chapter of Genesis gives an account of the creation narrative and after God creates, he declares that it was good, then at the end, God declares that it was very good. Our God is an awesome creator who made an amazing world, but God has entrusted the world to our care. In verses 28-29 we have God charging humanity: *'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'* God said, *'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.'* (NRSV)

The language of subdue and dominion has been understood by some to mean the world is ours so we can do what we want with it. Whereas most people interpret these verses as a call to stewardship, recognising the important role that we have to look after our world and to enable the flourishing of creation. We need to be good stewards of all that God has given us, but so often we are not. In our recent Covenant Service as part of the prayer of confession we asked for God's mercy and forgiveness "for the sin that has led us to misuse your [God's] gifts, evade our responsibilities, and fail to be good stewards of your creation." So how can we better care for God's creation and be good stewards of the gifts that God has given us?

The key to being better stewards is tied up with recognising that we (all of humanity) are made in the image of God, and as such we are called to represent God in our world; to act towards the world in the same way God does. God cares for, nurtures and loves. God doesn't give up on creation when things look dismal, but instead finds a way for re-creation. Therefore, our job as image-bearers is to be looking at how we can restore creation, and help creation to flourish.

We are part of the problem, but we are also part of the solution if we take the call to be stewards of creation seriously. As individuals and churches we need to consider what our resources are, and are we using them wisely? We need to know what our carbon footprint is, and explore how can we reduce, reuse and recycle more. As a family we are trying to reduce our use of single use plastics, and have moved to wooden toothbrushes, bamboo toilet paper, glass milk bottles, changed to a green electricity supplier, and bought an electric vehicle.

Back in 2019 the Methodist Church recognised that we are in a climate emergency and called for the UK to achieve net zero carbon emissions well before 2050. The then President of Conference Revd Dr Barbara Glasson said *"As a Church we believe in the possibility of transformation. Our church has heard the voice of communities around the world that are already suffering severe consequences of climate change... Our response must be both individual and corporate to do all we can to tread more lightly on the earth."* Central to the Gospel is the God who creates and recreates and in Jesus and through the work of the Holy Spirit brings transformation and renewal, this can be personal but it can also be with creation.

As part of what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ and understanding service as a way of life we need to hear the call to be more proactive in taking care of our planet; it is the world that God made in love and there is no planet b. As part of our stewardship we also need to hear the call to use the resources and gifts that we have as individuals, as churches, as a circuit wisely; recognising what we have and be willing to use our gifts and share our resources for the benefit of others.

May all our actions declare "The Earth is the Lord's."

Prayer Space

All powerful God,
you are present in the universe
and in the smallest of your creatures. You
embrace with your tenderness
all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with your peace,
that we may live as brothers and sisters,
harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and
forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not
prey on it,
that we may sow beauty,
not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those
who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover
the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle, for
justice, love and peace. **Amen.**

"A Prayer for the Earth" by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*

EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN

*If you would like to join the prayer chain
and receive prayer requests or have a
prayer request (with permission of the
recipient) please get in touch with Colin...
Colin Beckett colin1244@gmail.com.
It is for those in any church or none!*

Dial-a-sermon

Can't get onto the YouTube Service? Want to
hear the Sunday sermon? Dial up at any time of
the day or night at the cost of a local call.

Press option 3 for the Sunday Sermon
(Sermons go live each Sunday.)

Dial a Sermon

01636 552255

Listen to the circuit sermon
each week.

Newark and Southwell
Methodist Circuit
helping you stay connected
whilst we're apart.



Hymns for the service

Songs chosen for inclusion in the YouTube service...

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder (StF 82, SOF 425)

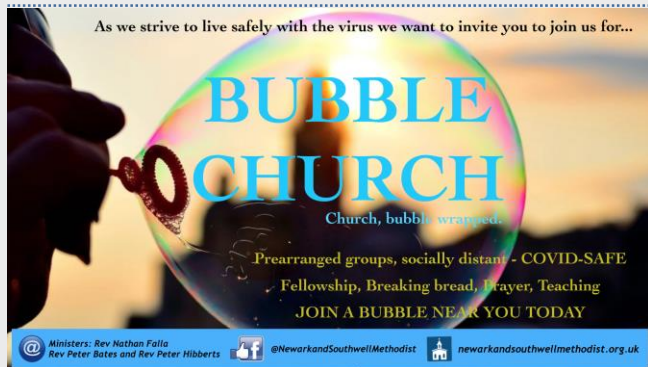
God in his love for us lent us this planet (StF 727, H&P 343)

Touch the earth lightly (StF 729)

Lord of creation, to you be all praise (StF 449, H&P 699)

Click hymn / song title to access YouTube clips of each song.

Bubble Church Resources



Would you like to join a Zoom bubble (online or on the phone) then please get in touch with your minister. Or why not telephone a friend and discuss these questions:

The following questions are designed to get you thinking and, if you're involved in Bubble Church talking about the topic!

- 1) What is your favourite part of God's world?
- 2) How are you caring for God's creation?
- 3) What changes could you make to enable you to care for God's world more?
- 4) How are you using God's gifts?
- 5) Why is caring for God's creation and using God's gifts such an integral part of service and discipleship?

For more information checkout the Bubble Church guide with risk assessment on the Circuit Website:

<https://www.newarkandsouthwellmethodist.org.uk/newsroom/bubble-church.html>

Next week...



We continue to explore *Service... a way of life* with Revd Peter Hibberts looking at challenging injustice.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES by Katie Hibberts families4SMC@gmail.com

God created an amazing world for us to live in. Here are some simple activities you can do as a family this week to help you reflect on the miracle of Creation. There are also some suggestions of things you could do to have a positive impact on the world around you:

- Keep a weather chart over the course of the week and think about all the different types of weather God blesses us with
- Go on a walk and collect some natural items to make a creation collage or take photos of things that inspire you and give you a sense of awe and wonder
- Use an old inner tube from a toilet roll or kitchen towel. Use peanut butter as glue and roll in bird seed. Hang the roll on a string or thread directly onto a branch. Practice sitting quietly and watching for visiting birds together!
- Bake some planet biscuits together, make simple circular biscuits that you can decorate. As a quick alternative you could decorate biscuits from a packet.
- When you go out for your daily exercise, why not take a litter picker with you and collect litter as you walk (taking care not to touch the litter with your hands)
- Listen to worship songs and praise God for His amazing Creation. 'Creator God' by Nicky & Becky Drake or 'Lovely Jubbly' by Doug Horley both have a creation theme.



**Make your own
Bird Feeder**



Planet Biscuits

Can you contribute to TOGETHER?

We're looking to produce this Newsletter as a Circuit and would like to widen the team as far as possible. Perhaps you could contribute a prayer, a short article, an encouraging piece. Maybe you would be willing to be part of the editorial team? Perhaps you'd like us to advertise something in your church.

If you would like to join the team or make a one-off contribution, please get in touch with Revd Peter Hibberts by email (Peter.Hibberts@methodist.org.uk) or telephone (01636 812166).

Contributions must be received by Monday of each week for Tuesday editorial and Wednesday distribution.