



# TOGETHER

[NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk](http://NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk)

## *Making Connections*

by Revd Nathan Falla

It was a year ago that the Circuit collaboration of Together began, and you will see that there have been 51 issues (we had a special double issue at Christmas) to cover the year. I believe that *Together* has been and continues to be important to connect people. It was important when we were unable to gather together, and it continues to be important as a way of ensuring that those from our Circuit family who are unable to access in-person worship have resources available so that they can worship at home. It has been encouraging to hear stories of how *Together* has helped people, and if you have a story to share, please do let us know.

We can be connected to different things and in different ways. The multitude of communication devices enable us to connect with others across the world. We are connected to each other, to our families and friends, to God, and we are also connected to our planet. Some connections are stronger than others, and all connections need to be worked at, as there can be breakdowns in communication, in understanding, and some connections can be very fragile. I remember trying to Skype Hannah from South Africa, sometimes it worked and sometimes there just was not sufficient signal.

The worship that we share in, in whatever form it may take, should encourage us to nurture the connection we have with God, with others and with our world. But we do not all have the same perspective, and we can all learn from the rich diversity of the Church locally and globally.

I recently heard Bob Kikuyu (Global Theology Advisor at Christian Aid), who shared that in the global south worship was much more connected with nature. He spoke of the gifts that people bring often being the produce of the farm, and that when the river runs dry then it is not possible to conduct full immersion baptisms. This is due to the fact that when water is imported, the first priority is the cows so milk can be produced. He said that a new relationship with creation is required, we need to stop acting like the son who goes off and spends the family inheritance and return that we may be in solidarity with creation. We need to recognise that nature is hitting back because of what humanity has done and we need to repent which also means changing our ways. Our connection with the Earth needs to be re-established and we need to hear God speaking through nature and creation.

Hearing the perspective of someone from the global south, whose experience is so different from my own, has made me think! It has made me think about the particular issue but to also think more widely:

*I wonder what connection do you and I need to pay attention to, what needs work?*

*I wonder what perspectives we need to listen to, that we may appreciate and understand others better?*

*I wonder what the Church would look like if we listened to the voices that were not present?*

Would we be better connected to one another, to God, to the planet? I think we would be.



# In tune with God, in tune with the Earth

Online Circuit Service Sermon | Genesis 2:15-24 | Revd Peter Bates

## 1. Online Service

Join us from 10:30am on Sunday for our online Circuit Service which this week is led by Revd Peter Bates.

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

If you're feeling isolated, are not ready to be face to face yet, or can't, but are happy to meet on Zoom, there is a weekly coffee time at 3pm on a Monday run by Charles Street but open to all, email Mel Watson for more details: [mellwatson42@gmail.com](mailto:mellwatson42@gmail.com).

There is also still a weekly Zoom fellowship called 'The Gathering' which is part of Southwell Methodist Church and run by Philip and Francine Holmes. You'd be most welcome, contact Philip to connect: [philipholmes8100@gmail.com](mailto:philipholmes8100@gmail.com).

## 3. Radio Services

**BBC Radio 4** (Also [online](#).)  
08:10am – 3<sup>rd</sup> October

### Renewed and eternal hope

From Croydon Seventh Day Adventist Church. Sunday Worship explores renewed and eternal hope amidst the uncertainties of life. This Sunday Worship explores how Christ's gospel provides us with the resilience and peace we need to overcome — as He did. The preacher is: Pastor Royston Smith

## 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.)

As Christians we are aware of our spiritual life, we work hard to be in tune with God. Mentally and emotionally, we are now more aware of our wellbeing in all the pressures of life: and physically we are aware of our bodies and the nourishment it needs. But how much are we aware of the balance in nature and how much this effects our relationship with God?

In our reading from Genesis, God placed man in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. In other words, God gave Adam this beautiful garden to look after and appreciate, but he also had a responsibility to look after it. The two go together. Adam was to respect God's Garden; he could enjoy it to his heart's content but he also had to do the work to keep it in order.

We acknowledge that we live in a beautiful world, there are so many textures and tastes, so much colour and diversity. So many places to go and admire and explore. Even the everyday events can be stunning, like sunrises and sunsets, the clouds in the sky. We so often miss these things because we are too busy. We need to stop and admire God's creation, but we also need to stop and think about how we are destroying the very planet that God has loaned to us.

When things are going wrong in our life, we look for a way to fix it, to resolve a difficult situation. There may be short term solutions or long-term planning but we know there is a problem and we need to be in a position to resolve it. Depending on how big the problem is as to how much time and energy we spend on it. With Climate Change, we know it is a huge problem and yet we keep leaving it to others. We expect our government to solve it, we expect manufacturers to make a difference, we expect Councils to provide us with the resources we need to make recycling easy. But how much do we expect of ourselves.

We want to save the planet but at our convenience. We hope the governments of the world will come up with a super energy to power our cars, heat our homes and enable businesses to thrive. This may happen, but in the meantime, we have to change. Change the way we live, the way we spend our money, and what we spend it on. Change the way we travel.

Adam and Eve were faced with a choice, whether to be obedient to God, or go their own way. With the help of the snake, they chose disobedience, and they were cast out of the garden. God didn't reject them, he helped them to live in a world which was not perfect. It became far harder for Adam to provide for his family. In chapter three of Genesis, verses 17 – 19, God says to Adam. "Through the painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food."

Adam stopped appreciating what God had provided for him and began to think he could go his own way with no thought of God. He was wrong, and

he struggled with this for the rest of his life. Are we in the same position as Adam? Have we stopped appreciating God's creation and decided to go our own way? Does humankind think it is no longer answerable to God. That we have encouraged greed in our society, so that a small percentage of people own eighty percent of all the wealth in the world and the rest is shared out unevenly among the six billion people that populate our world.

We need to find a way where we can live responsibly. Which means we are not only answerable to God but also to future generations. Spiritually we have learned that sometimes we have to deny ourselves to have a right relationship with God, and I am sure the same principle applies when it comes to the world's resources. It is not easy to deny yourself something when others are squandering the world's resources. Greta Thunberg is a role model for the young, and there are many people advocating change but it depends on everyone working together, and that includes all the nations of the world.

We need to learn to value and appreciate things, to build a society that cares about people. As Christians we can set an example of how to live a life that pleases God. Each one of us will have our own preferences in the choices we make but our decisions need to be guided by God. St Paul wrote about being content in all circumstances. Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount said. "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body and what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes." Jesus continues in verses 28 & 29. "See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these." Jesus is saying that in nature there is real beauty, if we look for it: And in human beings there is real beauty. There are some people who seem to look their best whatever they wear. There are also people who shine with inner beauty, they have that presence about them which reflects God's nature.



Wealth and possessions do not make us attractive, not in the long-term. These things are a shallow reflection of what is beautiful. Lasting beauty is in contentment, appreciation and love and care of others, and most of all a right relationship with God. Adam and Eve had all this and they swapped it for superficial advancement. Let us appreciate what we have and learn how to appreciate our planet.

## Prayer Space

### *Opening Prayer*

God of creation, we marvel that you set this world in motion.

You created something beautiful and amazing out of nothing.

We struggle to understand this with our finite minds and yet we know that you are a God of wonder.

Thank you that we do not have to understand everything to appreciate it but by faith we believe you are capable of this and so much more.

We are grateful Lord, for all that you provide for us, the food which sustains, the water which refreshes us, our homes that give us security and comfort, and our loved ones who give us support and encouragement.

We also thank you for the spiritual food you provide for us, your spirit which leads us, and your Son who died for us.

Lord we ask your forgiveness for the times we have gone astray, and we thank you for your love and patience with us, and your free and full forgiveness. Amen

### *Prayers for others*

Lord, we pray for people who have little or no food. We bring before you the countries which have suffered from floods or drought. Help the government to have the resources to provide for their people. We pray for the huge number of refugees around the world, stuck in camps or travelling along the road. We ask that the resources will be available from the Aid organisations to feed and clothe these people.

We pray for charity organisations at this time, when many people are feeling the pinch on their income, we ask that people will be generous and continue to support these organisations so that they will have the resources to meet those who are in desperate need. Lord, as you have given freely to us, help us to be generous to others. Amen

## Circuit Vision Team Report

Have you read the Circuit Vision Team report yet? We're listening to your thoughts and would love to hear your response to it.

Your Circuit Rep has been asked to gather opinions from your church so if you have thoughts, do get in touch with them. (If you don't know who your reps are, get in touch with your minister to find out.) The report is available to all (from the circuit website: [CLICK HERE](#)).

## Hymns and worship songs

Songs chosen for inclusion in the YouTube service:

*Morning has broken* – SOF 393, StF 136

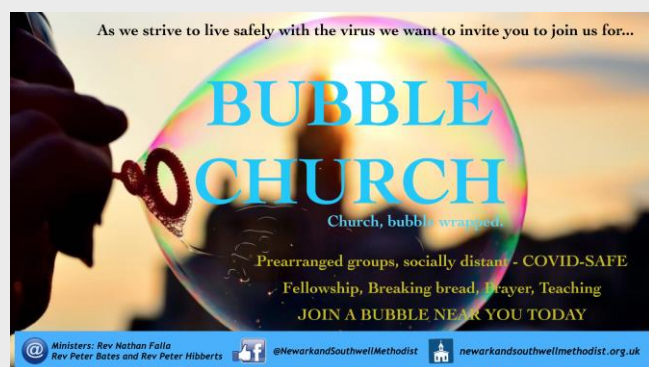
*Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice* – SOF 290, StF 353

*All I once held dear* – SOF 646, StF 489

*O Lord my God* – SOF 425, StF 82

Please click on the song title to access YouTube clip of each song.

## Bubble Church Questions



Would you like to be part of Covid-Safe face-to-face church? Join a bubble today by getting in touch with your minister.

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

1. Are we, like Adam called to take care of our planet?
2. In what ways do you recycle in your own home, give examples
3. In what ways do you recycle in your church and neighbourhood?
4. How would you explain the creation story in chapter 2 to a non-believer?
5. We want to save the planet but at our convenience. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? How can we help people to change and be more caring about our planet?
6. How much do you worry about life in general and do the words of Jesus in Matthew's gospel, chapter 6 help you?

## TOGETHER IS CHANGING

TOGETHER is ready for a rethink. Should we still send it out weekly? What should we include? Could we have more information specific to local churches? What elements don't we need? Do let us know so that we can get it right...

If you have a view on the future of the newsletter, please do get in touch (email Revd Peter at peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk).

If it is to continue, we need to find a way for it to be sustainable. This may well include having a circuit editorial team who can put the newsletter together. Without this, it may not be possible to continue. If you can volunteer, please do get in touch.

## Face-to-face opportunities for worship this coming Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October across the Circuit...

### Balderton

10.30am Revd Peter Bates (Harvest Festival)

### Barnbygate

10.30am Joint Service at Hawtonville

### Charles Street

10.30am Mr Ian Mathews  
6pm Revd Peter Bates

### Collingham:

10.45am Revd Barrie Morley

### Elston (on 10<sup>th</sup> October)

10.45am Revd Peter Hibberts  
(Holy Communion & Church Anniversary)

### Hawtonville

10.30am Dr Tracey West  
(Joint service with Barnbygate)

### Long Bennington

10.30am Revd Kevin Hart

### North End

6pm Revd Barrie Morley

### North Muskham

10.30am Revd Peter Hibberts (Harvest Festival)

### Southwell

10am Mr Eddie Adams  
4pm Revd John Hucknall (Holy Communion)

### Sutton-on-Trent

3pm Revd Peter Hibberts  
(Harvest & Church Anniversary)

### *A Celebration of Local Preaching*

A circuit service to include the re-affirmation of Local Preachers and the admission of Tracey West & Val Fowles as Local Preachers.

at Charles Street & live streamed on [youtube.com/NewarkSouthwellMethodistCircuit](https://youtube.com/NewarkSouthwellMethodistCircuit)

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October at 4pm

*If attending in person,  
face coverings are encouraged*