



TOGETHER

NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.org.uk

THE SECOND REFORMATION

Article by Prof Stanley Chapman of Southwell Methodist Church

The first reformation in the Christian church is the one you learned about at school, when the Bible became more accessible to the lay people, as distinct to the small minority (priests and monks) who could read and understand Latin. Of course, Jesus talked to his popular following in the vernacular and Paul in the ubiquitous Greek of the eastern Mediterranean, but as the only church became institutionalised and hierarchical, this was lost. For 1,500 years or so, the Bible was a foreign language. This was challenged in the era of Luther, Calvin, and other reformers, and here in England, after several distressing setbacks, produced the celebrated King James Bible. The second Reformation is a less familiar notion, little used except by historians and theologians. It refers to the period, largely the twentieth century, when long established Bible traditions and liturgies were in turn challenged by radical scholars and preachers. New translations multiplied and new initiatives in worship blossomed. All this is pretty familiar to us, but it has not been easily accepted, many preferring King James vocabulary and the intonations of the older prayerbooks, even in Methodism.

The story would scarcely be worth recalling but for the continuing experience of hard-to-shift conservatism. Our Bible study class at Southwell has recently been working on the beatitudes (Matthew 5 v3-10), to take just one example. "Blessed are the meek," we read. Really? What is Jesus always *meek*? Not in the modern sense, for the word has changed its meaning over the centuries since the time of King James' translation. Much better to search the 20th century readings for a better feel of the original. My favourite is that in the message (Peterson, 1993). It reads: "you're blessed when you're content with just who you are - no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves owners of everything that can't be bought." Wonderful! Now we really know what it means.

Some years ago, I have a good fortune to teach with Rev Alan Dale, the Methodist minister who translated the Bible for children. We worked in a teachers' training College and took our vernacular prose out to schools in the Black Country to test with the children. Alan was a wizard with words, and familiar passages shone with a new lustre and freshness. Patience with presently published by Oxford University press on *Winding Quest* (1972) and *New World* (1967). I still thrill to remember them, and cherish the early draft versions on my bookshelf.

Of course, when I became a local preacher I used Dale's translations regularly and was always commanding them to my congregations and to friends in my ministry. But it was all very disappointing. I cannot recall a single case of any ministers or preacher reading from Dale in the pulpit and seldom from other of the more striking modern translations. Older members of the church could be deeply suspicious of new formats and would consent to nothing further than the R.S.V. For some, the second Reformation is upon us, but in my view we have not yet progressed far enough with it. Both scholarship under evangelistic mission demands that we take the challenge more seriously.

If you would like to submit a front-page article for the TOGETHER magazine, please get in touch with Rev Peter Hibberts (peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk) or Rev Nathan Falla (nathan.falla@methodist.org.uk) and we would be only too happy to facilitate this. Front page articles are usually around 500 words, fewer if you would like to include a picture.



1. Online Service

This week (7th November) our circuit service will be led by Rev Peter Hibberts.

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! (Also available to watch back at any time).

2. 'Zoom' Opportunities

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.

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.

3. Radio Services

BBC Radio 4 (Also [online](#).)
08:10am - 31st October 2021

A Service for COP26

Live from Glasgow University Chapel with stories from the global south and from multi-faith COP26 events.
Preacher: Rev James Bhagwan,
Pacific Conference of Churches.

Owners or Stewards?

Sunday Sermon | Genesis 1:28; 2:15 Psalm 89:1-9; 11-12a | Rev Peter Hibberts

You would have to have been living in a bunker somewhere to not be aware of the COP26 summit in Glasgow. COP26 is the United Nations Climate Change conference which this year is being held in Glasgow, Scotland between 31st October and 12th November. The conference has several aims:

1. Securing **global net zero** by mid-century (meaning the build up of harmful gases that cause global warming are not growing and the Earth doesn't heat beyond 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels).
2. **Protecting communities and natural habitats** (working against deforestation and supporting the poorest countries hit by the effects of global warming such as a rise in sea level and extreme weather events).
3. **Mobilising finance** (bringing the kind of investment into the kind of green technology that can make our existence more sustainable and ensuring that we factor in the environmental as well as financial costs in our decisions).
4. Increasing **collaboration between countries** (producing a global strategy to tackle a global problem).

It's an international socio-political movement that should inspire those of all faiths and non into action, but as Christians this should particularly be on our heart.

Right at the beginning of our existence, in the first words of the Bible in Genesis, humanity is placed in a unique position in all creation. In two very short passages we are told to, **"Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control."** (Genesis 1:29). Well, we've certainly done that. Genesis outlines how we are made in God's image with the power to procreate and to have dominion. It's clear, however, that humanity has taken this to mean ownership. The world's resources have been owned, bought and sold since civilisations formed and as this capitalism has grown, so has the impact. Resources mined, stripped, plundered at alarming levels and we have reached the point of no return, where the damage done may never be reversed. Is this really what God intended? To answer that question we need to read on a little under a chapter to Genesis 2:15 which says, **"Then the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it."** In this passage the emphasis is altogether different. It's less of an ownership and more of a stewardship. The two words in the Good News Translation are 'cultivate' and 'guard' and they couldn't be further from the way we have taken the former word 'control'. What

would industry look like if our primary aim was not *productivity* and *profit* but instead was *growth* and *protection*?

I you're anything like me, you find this a daunting topic, one where you are not sure what to believe, what to trust, how to understand it and what part you or your church can play in this. It's at times like this that I'm grateful for organisations such as the Joint Public and Issues Team (joinpublicissues.org.uk) who spend time working together to formulate faith-filled an driven responses to some of the biggest issues facing our world, including the environment.

Next time you're out walking, stop for a moment, collect a fallen leaf and study it closely. Look at a flower, a stone, the water in puddle. Look deeply, noticing the tiny details. Look, smell, touch, listen, taste. Think about its place in the interconnected web of creation and then hear the words of the Psalmist: **"Heaven is yours, the earth also;**

you made the world and everything in it." (Psalm 89:11) The Psalmist understood it. That seemingly small and insignificant part of nature that you hold and observe is the property of God. Indeed it's all God's. We may have been instructed to control but we were entrusted with it, it was never ours. Place it back gently, leave it in tact and remember that it is our to enjoy only because God has placed it into our care.

Now consider for a moment the impact of your decisions on our fragile world. This consideration is a real challenge for us when we take an item of produce off a supermarket shelf or switch on a device that is so far removed from the way that the environment gives it to us. When we import our produce, it is so easy to export our blame. It's also difficult to imagine how our choices amidst the millions of fellow humans can really make a difference. But consider it like this, it is not about the outcome (though it's certainly an urgent and important outcome) it's about your relationship with God.

I don't fear climate change as God promises that the Earth will be reconciled to him, "Through the Son, then, God decided to bring the whole universe back to himself. God made peace through his Son's blood on the cross and so brought back to himself all things, both on earth and in heaven." (Colossians 1:20) but for me it's about God's mission, out mission. It's a calling to 'cultivate' and 'guard' and I for one cannot ignore that.

During COP26 and even when the newspapers covering the summit are lining tomorrow's waste paper baskets, should call us all to prayer and action. To examine every decision in the market place, every decision in the home, in the church, at the ballet box is held alongside the calling to cultivate and guard God's creation. And may God forgive us for how long it's taking us to realise that and respond.

Prayers

God of creation, who loves all he has made and all that has evolved, open the eyes of your people, that your love might be reflected in our care for the planet. Through Jesus Christ, who walked this earth and calls us by name. Amen.

Rt Revd Nicholas Baines
Bishop of Leeds

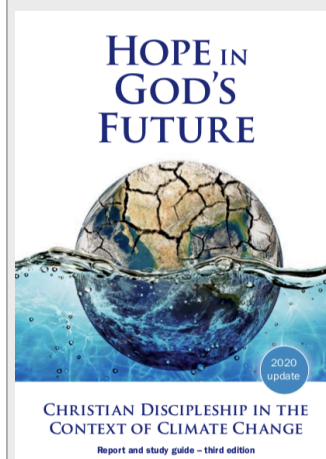
Heavenly Father,
You have taught us, that all creation is your handiwork.
Grant us your grace that we may Exercise wise stewardship of this Earth;
Tread lightly upon it;
And cherish its resources;
That our children may enjoy its riches, throughout all generations,
And your name be glorified through all that you have made.
Amen.

Rt Revd David Walker
Bishop of Manchester

EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN

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

Hope in God's Future



See below for details of how to access this JPIT study guide.

Songs included in this week's online worship **O for a heart to praise my God (StF 507)** [LINK](#)

Lord I come before your throne of grace (StF 58) [LINK](#)

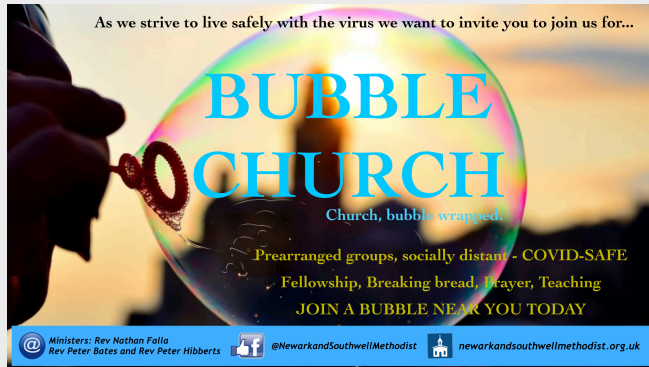
O worship the king, all-glorious above (StF 113) [LINK](#)

Touch the Earth gently (StF 729) [LINK](#)

Over all the Earth, you reign on high (StF 63) [LINK](#)

Click 'LINK's to access YouTube clips 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.

1. What have you heard in the news about Climate change or COP26?
2. What have you discussed with your friends?
3. What do you make of all of the information that you are confronted with?
4. What do you think God intends us to do with **his** creation?
5. How do you connect your own actions with the global issues being tackled in COP26?
6. How can you make different choices to cultivate and guard the environment?

Face-to-face worship across the circuit in the next four weeks...

September - November 2021		7th Nov	14th Nov Remembrance Sunday	21st Nov Christ the King Women against Violence	28th Nov Advent Sunday
Balderton	10:30 am	LA	Falla R	Dalby	Bates HC
	6:00 pm		Bates M		
Barnbygate	10:30 am	at Hawtonville	Winnington	at Hawtonville	Falla HC
	3:00 pm				
Charles Street	10:30 am	Mathews	Hardy	Falla HC	Mathews
	6:00 pm	Falla	Hart HC	Gascoyne	LA
Collingham	10:45 am	Bates	Bates R	Cozens	Hall HC
	4:30 pm				
Elston	10:45 am		Hucknall HC / R / T		L Blatherwick
	4:00 pm				
Hawtonville	10:30 am	Falla	at Barnbygate	Gibson	at Barnbygate
	3:00 pm				
Long Bennington	10:30 am	Castle	Cenotaph R	Bates HC	Hucknall T
	3:00 pm				
North End	6:00 pm	Mathews	Hibberts	Bates	Ward
North Muskham	10:30 am		United Service at MRCC / R		Hibberts
	2:00 pm	Hibberts HC		LA Bubble	
Southwell	10:00 am	Hibberts	LA	Hibberts HC	Hart
	Other	Morley 4:00 pm	Hibberts PicC / HC / 2:00 pm	Ward 4:00 pm	Hibberts Fringe / 6:00 pm
Sutton-on-Trent	10:30 am	Morley US	Hibberts Breakfast / 9:00 am	Pearce	United at All Saints HC / 10:00 am
	4:00 pm		Hibberts HC / R / 10:30 am		Hibberts PicC / PC

For more information on our Worship Opportunities visit the Circuit Website: www.NewarkandSouthwellMethodist.Org.UK

Take it deeper, mine the word of God and investigate the issues with 'Hope in God's Future.'

To have a few TOGETHER articles devoted to this issue and designate a particular Sunday to pray about it is really only scratching the surface. 1,000 can only go so far. If you are moved by God to take this issue seriously, why not use the JPIT study guide 'Hope in God's Future' which can be found through the JPIT website (<https://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Hope-in-Gods-Future-3rd-Edition.pdf>) It's an accessible document which will both open your eyes to the issue s and turn them heavenward for the right perspectives. Download it now and why not study it with a friend for discussion.

To contribute to TOGETHER in any way, please get in touch with Rev Peter Hibberts (peter.hibberts@methodist.org.uk) or Rev Nathan Falla (nathan.falla@methodist.org.uk).