

# Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 16 April 2023

Preacher: Rev. Thomas Davis

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, for a few moments tonight, let's turn back together to the passage that Dahl read for us. And we're going to read again at verse 16, Colossians chapter 3 verse 16, where we have the words, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Now, tonight's sermon is a little bit different to what we would normally do. And the reason for that is because those of you who are here this morning will know that we as a group of elders have taken the decision to move from what we call exclusive Samadhi to what we call inclusive Samadhi. And these are two positions which shape how we worship in our church services. And the Free Church of Scotland recognizes these two positions and congregations have the choice as to which one they want to follow. We for many years have followed exclusive Samadhi, which is what you've seen tonight, singing the Psalms unaccompanied. Inclusive Samadhi is where this continues. You continue to sing

Psalms, but Psalms are accompanied with hymns, spiritual songs and musical accompaniment. And we've made this decision as elders after many months of discussion and prayer. And we've reached the point where we've made this decision by a clear majority and we'll be implementing it in our congregation bit by bit from next week onwards. I wanted to take the opportunity tonight just to talk a little bit about the basis for our decision. This morning you received an update which gave you an outline of the reasons that we felt were a biblical basis for this decision. And I'll just be going through these with you together this evening. So it's a little bit of a different sermon tonight, but I hope it's still helpful nevertheless as we think and talk about this together. Change is always a difficult thing in any part of life, families, individuals, whether that's your job, your home, leaving school, change is always difficult. It's also true in a church setting. Change is a difficult thing and it's something that we want to handle very, very carefully and sensitively. In regarding this position on worship, we are in the slightly unusual position whereby in our setting here in the islands, the majority position has been exclusive of Samadhi. And yet it's the case that globally that's actually the minority position. And in the free church, it's the minority position. The majority of churches in our own denomination have included hymns and music alongside the Psalms. And so we have this sort of slightly interesting situation where at one level we feel like we're doing something very different by changing, but yet at the same time we're actually stepping in line with what really is the majority position in our own denomination and worldwide. But regardless of these things, it's still never easy to make change and that's why we wanted to just take the opportunity tonight to talk about it a wee bit together. And the main thing that I want to do this evening is just to show you that we have based this decision on what we believe the Bible teaches. And that's the really important thing I want to emphasise. That our basis for this position is that we think we believe that it has a strong and clear biblical basis.

Now as I go through these things tonight and as we chat about it together, I don't actually want to persuade you if you don't agree. I'm not actually trying to persuade you. That's not what I'm aiming to do and we recognise that not everybody thinks the same on this issue. And that's okay. It's okay if we disagree and I am not saying, oh, you must agree with everything that I'm saying on this. I'm not trying to do that tonight. What I'm simply trying to do is to say these are the reasons that we believe the Bible presents as to why this is the right choice. And I hope that in doing that these things are clear to you, whether you agree or not, at least you can see, well, we're basing this decision on the Bible. I want to say one more introductory point which has two sub points within it. And that's to emphasise what this decision is not. And there's a couple of things that I absolutely want to make clear, so clear. The first is that this decision is not about hymns versus Psalms. And in absolutely no way are we saying we're going to stop singing Psalms. For a start, we're not allowed

to do that, but we would never want to do that.

Psalms have been and will always be a massively important part of our worship. The Psalms are amazing. They are absolutely amazing. They speak of all the different experiences that life can bring and they've got such powerful expressions of praise and thanksgiving to God. They've got incredibly moving words of lament and questioning towards God. And they're full of beautiful prophecies pointing towards the Lord Jesus Christ. So Psalms are amazing and we're not in any way saying that we don't like Psalms. We love and adore and cherish the Psalms and we will keep on singing them. And I hope that in the months and years to come, our Psalms singing becomes the best that it has ever been. Psalms are such a massively important part of our worship. And so we're not in any way moving away from that.

[ 6 : 46 ] Second thing I want to emphasise, and those of you who've read the paper will have seen me saying this already, that this decision is also not about what we think is popular. And the popular question is one, well, you never know what's popular or not. Sometimes doing one thing is popular, sometimes not doing it. Doing the other thing is popular.

Some churches have exclusive Samadhi and they're thriving. Some churches have included hymns and music and they're thriving. It's not about saying, oh, if we do this, if we don't do this, it's popular. And some might think, oh, well, if we do change, it'll be good. Some people might think, if you change, it'll be bad. None of those things are actually what we base this decision on. It's not about trying to be popular or anything like that. It's based on what we believe the Bible is teaching regarding how God wants us to worship Him.

And that's the key thing that I want us to emphasise. We are trying to base it on scripture. And that's incredibly important because our worship every week is the most important thing that we do. When we start a new week on a Sunday and when we come together publicly to worship God the Father in the name of God the Son and in the presence of God the Holy Spirit, that is the most important thing that we do every week. It is the biggest privilege that we have that we can come together as a community that collectively we can say Jesus is our Lord and we come and we offer our worship to God. We hear His voice speaking to us through His Word. We're fed and nourished by Him through His Word and through the sacraments when we share these together. Worshiping is such an amazing thing to be able to do. And sometimes

I look at my own life and I've often lost sight of that. I've often come to church just maybe out of a sense of duty and I've often sometimes thought, oh well I'll do that and then I'll get on with the rest of my week. And whenever I think like that I'm forgetting just what an incredible thing it is to be able to come and worship God together.

It's the single most important thing that we do. And for that reason it's absolutely crucial that when we come to worship God we come in the way that He wants us to come. So we don't come to God and say, oh this is what we like so this is how we'll do it. No, we look at God's Word and we strive to understand as best we can what God is saying to us about how He wants us to worship Him. And that's the way that we come. So that's why in many ways that's why our services are really very simple and very straightforward. We haven't added all sorts of different things because we don't want to do that. We don't want to add our own ideas. We want to come according to what God has taught in His Word. And so for that reason if we want to move to a position where we do sing Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and we do use musical accompaniment that must be based on a biblical foundation.

[ 10 : 19 ] And we believe that it is and I want to just outline some of the reasons of that together with you. First reason is a broad one. It's recognizing the fact that God is our Creator.

God as our Creator is one of the single most important doctrines of earth theology. And it recognizes that everything that exists comes from Him. And that's one of the amazing things about being a Christian, about knowing God is that you can study and examine any part of life and you can see the handy work of God. So you go into to look at science and you look at science at the molecular level and you start studying, you look at a microscope and you look down and you look at cells and you look at DNA and you look at all sorts of things like protein and all sorts of other things that I don't really understand. But what you see is amazing and it's the handy work of God. And then you put your microscope to one side and you take out a telescope and you look to the stars and the galaxies and all the incredible discoveries that we are making and you see the handy work of God. You look at anatomy, you look at your own body, you see the fact that I can look at my hand and I can think I want these fingers to wiggle and they'll wiggle. And you look at the fact that I've got a

wee cut on my leg there and in a few days it'll have healed itself without me doing anything. I can't get my toes without doing this. You look at the fact that we can think, the fact that we can communicate, that I can talk, you can understand, we can relate to one another and that humanity can achieve so many incredible things. Two weeks ago, a week ago, I drove over the Queensferry crossing. Amazing, what an achievement. You see the Forth Rail Bridge even more amazing. So many things that humanity has achieved. It's all the handy work of God. It all comes from God. And of all the incredible things that comes from God, one of them is music. The beauty of melody, rhythm, harmony is the handy work of God. And I remember once having to look into this for a project I was doing with some school children, looking at how you take a note, say the note C, and it's got a certain frequency that it follows. And then you take the note E, which is part of the C chord, and it's got a higher frequency, but it matches at certain points. And then you take the note G, that is also part of that chord. And it's got an even higher frequency, but it also matches at certain points. And you're like, that's why those C notes sound so nice when you play them together. It all just lines up so perfectly. It is the handy work of God. And we marvel at him, the creator of beauty, of music, of melody, of song. And

Scripture speaks about this. You've got this fascinating verse in Job chapter 38. And it speaks about music accompanying God's creative work. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth, God says? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements?

Surely you know, or who stretched the line upon it, or on what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone. So he's talking all about the world being formed. He's saying to Job, were you there when I made the world? And then he says, it was when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. You've got this image of music accompanying God's creative work. Later in the Bible, you've got this amazing description of the creation itself making music. I've always loved this verse in Isaiah 55. It speaks of the mountains and the hills singing, and the trees clapping their hands.

[14:53] The noise that we have in creation is reverberating praise up to God. And Psalm 96, you have the same thing, the trees of the forest, seen for joy before the Lord. At one level, that's figurative language, but at another level, it's speaking of the fact that creation, as God's creation, is resounding back to him in praise. And so it's reminding us that music is a key part of creation. In fact, music is one of the great evidences of the fact that the world we live in is not an accident. There's design, there's order, there's beauty.

You can take three notes on the scale, the first note, the third note, the fifth note, you can play them together, and it doesn't sound all clashy and horrible. It sounds beautiful. It's because God has made it that way. And so if you are a lover of music, which I think everybody here will be, where does that come from? Is it an accident? Of course it's not. It's all the handiwork of God. He gave us music, and he delights to receive our praise back to him in song and music together.

Second thing I want us to think about is what we call biblical theology. Biblical theology is referring to the fact that the Bible starts in Genesis 1 with the creation of the world, and it runs right through to Revelation 22, which speaks about the new creation, when God will recreate the whole universe and restore things to the way that he wants them to be.

And so biblical theology is speaking about how God's plan of salvation has been worked out all across the ages of history throughout the Bible. Now that biblical theology is separated in the Bible into two eras, what we call the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Also, maybe more commonly we talk about Old Testament or New Testament. It doesn't matter which word you use. So there's a big separation in those two areas. At the institution of the Old Covenant you have creation here, so just write that there. And then here you have new creation, which is coming in the future and what's described in Revelation. Now the Bible gives us descriptions of worship across these different eras. In the Old Covenant period here, the Old Testament period, there's absolutely crystal clear biblical evidence that there was both musical instruments used in the worship of God and that God was worshiped using the Psalms, but also using more than just the Psalms. So here's just some examples. Psalm 33, sing to God a new song, play on the strings with loud shouts. Deuteronomy 31 speaks of a new song written for the people of Israel, which is recorded in the following chapter. And 2 Kings 3, 14 to 15, you have this fascinating incident with Elisha the prophet who says, as the Lord of hosts lives before whom I stand, were it not that I have regard for Jehoshaphat the king of Judah,

I would neither look at you nor see you. Now bring me a musician and when the musician played, the hand of the Lord came upon him. So you've got this clear evidence that in this Old Testament period worship of God involved Psalms, songs alongside Psalms and the use of musical instruments. We also have biblical evidence for what this period looks like, the new creation and we get that from the book of Revelation, which prophesies this very powerfully. I'll just whiz forward a couple of slides. There's various examples of this that in the update I gave you, I've just taken one for our sermon tonight. Revelation 14, 1 to 3, then I looked and behold on Mount Zion stood the Lamb and within 144,000 who had his name and the Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had redeemed from the earth. Now Revelation contains a lot of figurative language and we looked at this a year or two ago and when you see numbers, when you see imagery, all of that is part of the genre of the book of Revelation which uses very figurative, very dramatic language to give an indication of God's purposes both as history unfolds and ultimately in the new creation when God comes and takes all his people to be with him forever. What these verses reveal within that figurative language is the fact that in heaven we will sing more than just psalms. There are new songs that will be sung, songs that praise and worship Jesus as the Lamb who was slain.

[ 20 : 19 ] And that's the evidence for that and in my own view is very, very strong that Revelation reveals that in the new covenant era we will sing more than just the psalms and there will also be musical accompaniment to that singing. So what that means is if we go back to this slide we've got very clear biblical evidence in the old covenant era that worship involves more than just psalms and musical instruments. There's very clear evidence that in the new creation there is more than just psalms and there will be musical instruments. My own view and the view of those of us who felt this was the right decision to make is that there is no reason for us to conclude that it should be different in this section here.

This is the era that we live in, the new covenant era, the era of the New Testament and the church and there's nothing in scripture to say that it should be different. There's nothing to say, oh no for this part you don't do what was in the old covenant and you don't do what will be in the new creation. It's just not there, it just doesn't say that.

And I would argue that that continuity between these things is extremely important in recognising that God wants us to worship Him with both psalms and with hymns and with music to honour Him. Moving on, this is just a very brief point. Going back to the psalms similarly there's just so many explicit commandments to sing to the Lord and so many explicit commandments to use musical instruments. Psalm 150 which we'll sing at the end of the service is just such a clear example of that and again that's just such a strong, clear biblical basis that God has commanded this, God wants this, this is what He expects of us.

Moving forward into the New Testament, there's two key verses that I want us to just mention. They are in Ephesians 5 and in Colossians 3 which we read earlier. Ephesians 5 18-20 says, do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery but be filled with the spirit addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then Colossians 3 16 says something very similar, read the word of Christ dwelling you richly teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Now, looking at that you think well that's six straight forward isn't it, it just says, singing psalms hymns and spiritual songs, it's just very straightforward but it's not as straightforward as that unfortunately because there's differences of opinion as to how these verses should be understood.

Some are of the view that this phrase psalms hymns and spiritual songs is a collective term referring just to psalms. And so when it says psalms hymns and spiritual songs it's actually just referring to the psalms and these are different titles given to different types of psalms. And I fully respect that view that people have but my own position is that I wouldn't agree with it. I think instead that there is stronger evidence to say that it says what it appears to be saying at first glance, that it's referring to the psalms that are crucial but also they are complemented by hymns and spiritual songs. And my reason for saying that is because the rest of the New Testament doesn't restrict

these terms simply to the psalms. And I think that's an incredibly important thing to recognize. So let me emphasize it here. The word that's used for spiritual songs in Greek appears elsewhere in the New Testament. It appears in Revelation several times. So it's the word, spiritual songs is one word in Greek,

[ 24 : 43 ] I think it's the word ode but I can't remember exactly. And it appears in several places. It appears here. They sang a new song in Revelation 5.9. It appears here. It sang a new song before the throne and it appears here, the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. So same word gets used. Now here, here and here, the word is not referring to psalms. It's referring to different songs which are described before you there. And I think that's why it's very difficult to say, oh no, no, no, it only refers to psalms when the rest of the New Testament doesn't do that. Again, I have full respect for those who would take it differently but just my own position and those of us who felt that this was the right decision for our congregation felt that this was a strong and important point for us to emphasize. You've been very patient and I thank you very much for listening so well. I'm nearly there. I just want to go through another couple of important points that I think are just helpful for us to think about. One is what is known as the Regulative Principle. No, that's a big word. Regulative Principle. This is the framework that has been used in the Reformed Church for how we worship God. And basically what it means is that our worship of God is to be regulated by what God's word teaches. In other words, we don't just make things up ourselves, we don't do what we like, we do what God's word commands. And it's captured in this paragraph of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Westminster Confession of Faith is a summary of biblical teaching that as a church, we subscribe to as an accurate reflection of what God's word teaches. And one of the things it talks about is this Regulative Principle. You can see it just in the last few lines here that the acceptable way of worshiping God is instituted by himself and it's limited by his own revealed will so that he should not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men or the suggestions of Satan or under any visible presentation or in any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture. Now that's got two very important aspects to it. The Regulative Principle restricts us from adding something that's not in Scripture. However, the Regulative Principle also requires us to include everything that is in Scripture. Historically, and you'll have seen this in the update if you read it, a good example of this was the sacraments. So in the medieval Roman Catholic Church, in fact onwards beyond the Reformation, there were seven sacraments recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. In the Reformation, five of these were rejected as sacraments and only two were recognized. Baptism and the Lord's Supper and the reason only two were recognized was because these are the only two clearly set before us in the New Testament. And so the Regulative Principle said, it's not seven, it's two because there's only two in Scripture.

But the Regulative Principle also says it's not one and it's not zero. So we can't add two or three other things alongside baptism and the Lord's Supper, but at the same time we can't just say, oh, we'll do baptism, but we're not going to bother with the Lord's Supper. Or in fact, we're not going to bother with either of them at all. The Regulative Principle tells us we must not include what's not in Scripture, but we must also include what is in Scripture. And that's very important for us when we think about worship because we absolutely want to make sure that we don't add things that are not warranted by Scripture.

We must not do that. But at the same time, we must make sure that we don't restrict things in a way that Scripture doesn't do that. And it's particularly important when we think of music because if we are to say, if we are going to go and look at the Psalms, look at all the commands to use musical instruments and then say, but now we mustn't do that, we can only do that if the Bible says don't do that, don't use musical instruments. And the Bible doesn't say that. There is no command in Scripture that music should be unaccompanied.

[ 29 : 24 ] Now that doesn't mean that it can't be accompanied. Of course it can. There's plenty of times when you sing when there's no musical instruments available and we'll still do that many, many, many times in the months and years to come. But it's very important that we don't impose a restriction that isn't actually there. Instead, we want to make sure that we allow God's word to shape what we are doing. A couple more things I want to say and then we'll just wrap up. It's also important that we recognize that what we're doing with hymns and music actually ties in with what we do in the rest of our sermons, our services.

So when I pray, I don't read out a prayer from Scripture. I say my own prayer as I lead you in prayer. And it's the same in our prayer meeting when someone prays. They don't read a prayer.

Even though Scripture is full of prayers, they don't read out a prayer.

They say their prayer. When I preach a sermon, I don't read out a sermon from Scripture, even though there's loads of brilliant sermons in Scripture that I could just read out. I present the truth as I try to teach it to you as best as I can. And even as I read the Bible, I don't read to you in Hebrew and Greek. I would struggle to anyway, but even though the Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek, we rely on translators, whether that's those who've translated it into Gaelic or those who've translated it into English.

And so in all these areas of our worship, we are benefiting from what others have done, whether it's me or someone else leading in prayer, me or someone else preaching, or the fact that we're using the translation given to us by those who've worked so hard to bring God's word into other languages. And one of the things we're trying to recognize is that, well, we think the same thing is appropriate in terms of how we worship. So instead of just saying, you can only sing the Psalms, we're saying you can sing the Psalms, but we can also sing hymns that accurately reflect God's word. And that allows us to sing about the fullness of God's revelation. And it allows us to sing the name of Jesus. It allows us to sing about all that's been revealed to us in the Old Testament and the New. And in many ways, it's just bringing our singing into line with what we do in the rest of our service. Couple to that is the fact that when we sing, we want to make sure that what we are singing is proclaiming God's word. And that's crucial. We're not going to sing songs that talk about whatever. We're not going to sing songs that teach about things that are different to the Bible. We're only going to sing songs that accurately reflect biblical teaching. And the truth is, songs are actually an incredibly powerful means for teaching us. If I go right back to the start, it talks here in the verse that we have here, it talks about teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom as we sing. And so God's word has got so much to teach us as we sing it together. And to give you an example of that,

I wanted to just put up on screen one of my favorite hymns written about 140 years ago, 150 years ago by a free church minister called Horatius Bonath. And it's a hymn that many of you will know. What I want us to recognize is that although this hymn was written by Horatius Bonath, it is actually saturated in God's word. I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest. Lay down thy weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast. That immediately echoes Jesus's words in Matthew 11. Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. You go to verse two. I heard the voice of Jesus say, behold, I freely give the living water. Thirsty one, stoop down and drink and live. That's John four. When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well, he said, whoever drinks the water that I drink will never thirst again. I give living water. And verse three, I heard the voice of Jesus say, I am this dark world's light. That, in God's providence, was our passage this morning as we came to John chapter eight. And Jesus said, I am the light of the world. And so although these words aren't taken word for word from scripture, they are absolutely conveying the truth of God's word. And we're actually singing to Jesus, thanking him for all these amazing realities, the fact that we can come to him and rest, the fact that he quenches our thirst, the fact that he brings light in a dark world.

[ 34 : 26 ] And then the last thing I want to say in terms of the reasons we've based it on is just a final important point to recognize that we have sung hymns for many, many years in our church, not in our services, but in fellowships, whether that's in the church or whether that's in homes. And that's something that all our congregations do. And we read hymns, we sing them together, we benefit from them. And we've had this sort of situation where we've done that in everything except a church service. And in order to do that, we've made this kind of division between what a church service should be and what everything else should be. And so we've had this situation where, you know, if it was before the benediction, it wouldn't be okay to sing amazing grace. But if it was afterwards, it would be. That is not. That just makes no sense. There is not a basis in scripture for that kind of distinction. There's no way in scripture where you'll be able to make that kind of distinction. And I'm not saying that to sound harsh, but yeah, I feel very strongly about that. Worship is worship. When we're together, we are worshipping. And we can't make these kind of distinctions. So these are the reasons that we've based our decision upon. As I said, not asking you to agree with them. You don't have to agree with them. And I fully respect it if you don't. And if you want to chat about it, please do. If you have questions, if you're not sure, please, please ask me. That's okay. You know, we fully, I have got so many friends who I love who are on either side of this position. I've got so many preachers who I love who are on either side of this position. That's okay. That's part of a church family.

But I simply wanted to take this opportunity tonight to explain the biblical basis for the decisions that we've taken. Last thing I want to say is to ask probably one of the most important questions. How do we respond to this kind of thing? How do we respond?

How do we react when a change is made? Well, I want to say three things very briefly. One is we do, we respond to this with great care and respect. And we, we respect every viewpoint on this question. Our church family has people who, who, who are on either side of this decision and it's also full of people who are probably like, I don't really know. We respect all of these. We respect other congregations that haven't changed. We respect congregations who have changed. And we just have a deep care and respect towards one another. There are going to be times in a church family when we don't agree on stuff that does not stop us from respecting one another and helping one another. It's also important that we recognize the second thing I want to say that although change can be daunting, change is really positive and healthy. It's a good thing in the life of a congregation. And sometimes it takes a lot of courage to make changes, changes can sometimes be costly, but a change that, that is based on what we believe the Bible is saying is a positive step for our congregation.

Change can be difficult, especially when it means, you know, moving away from what we've grown up with. And I can understand the question that gets asked, where are forefathers wrong?

You know, where are the people who came before us wrong? And, you know, and nobody wants to say yes. You know, nobody wants to say, you know, and it's a very, that's a very sensitive question because, you know, we're not trying to condemn people who've done things differently and people for whom we owe such an enormous debt in terms of the church. I think to ask the question, where are forefathers wrong is the wrong question to ask. A better question is, where are they perfect?

And of course, the answer to that's no, in exactly the same way that we are not perfect. None of us are perfect. None of us have everything right. And because of that, we're always trying to examine ourselves, whether it's in our individual lives as Christians, or whether it's collectively as a congregation, we're always trying to think about how God's word should shape us. And if there are areas where we need to make changes, we want to make them those changes if they're going to bring us in line with God's word. And so we're not kind of setting ourselves against those who've come before us. We're just part of the same journey that they went on because, you know, they've made or changed things themselves. 300 years ago, there wasn't a church in Carlyway.

[ 40 : 09 ] So at some point, something massive changed, you know, and that's part of the life of the church. And it's good to recognize that change is a positive part of the life of the church.

The last thing I want to say is this. There are differences of opinion about what verse 16 says. We looked at that already, that the word of Christ, when you're literally teaching and admonishing one another, with all wisdom, singing Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God, there are differences of opinion on that. I've outlined my own opinion, but I fully respect it if you have a different opinion. There are no differences of opinion on these verses. And there is no question about what these verses mean. They say, put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another. And if one has a complaint against one another, forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. Whatever our view on verse 16, it can never ever, ever be an excuse to ignore verses 12, 13 and 14. And so we go on together as a church family. We go into a new chapter together and for some it will be very exciting, for some it will be an adjustment.

But this is the journey that we're on together. We do this together as a church family. And as we go on together, we will be supporting one another, bearing with one another, helping one another. And one of the things that I am looking forward to and that I'm so excited about is that we will be able to stand together and we will be singing Jesus' name as a family.

And the name Jesus is going to ring out in this building in song and in melody. And people are going to be able to come here and see that we love Jesus. And that's what we want more than anything else. Amen.