

Poole Bay Methodist Circuit worship
Sunday 7th June 2026

“From Black & White to Colour.” - Led by Dr Julian Tawn

This service can be found on my YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/CPMp8CEoyzA>

Good morning, folks! It's me, Julian Tawn here with online worship for Sunday 7th June 2026.

When we think we are beyond hope:
God's restoring love offers a fresh start.
When life is too messed up, beyond hope:
God's restoring peace gives hope in our darkness.
When we think we are not good enough:
Jesus comes offering hope beyond hope.

Let us pray.

Jesus saw Matthew sitting in his tax collector's booth.
He knew the man needed his help.
'Follow me,' he said. And Matthew did.
Lord, however beyond hope we might feel,
may we hear your call, unable to resist you.
Would we do as Matthew did
and follow you.
Amen.

So, let us begin our worship as we sing a hymn of praise, “Crown him with many crowns”, which is number **347** in Singing the Faith. There is an organ track on the video, and a YouTube link for those who wish to use it:

- https://youtu.be/FiJYgC_6AFc?si=zWwRuw1yF55l5dMY

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne,
while heaven's eternal anthem drowns all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died to be
your Savior and your matchless King through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of love, behold His hands and side,
Those wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends his burning eye at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of peace; his kingdom is at hand.
From pole to pole let warfare cease and Christ rule every land!
All hail, Redeemer, hail, for you have died for me.
Your praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For Thou has died for me;
Thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

Let us pray:

God of many surprises, we come before you now.
We marvel as we see Matthew follow,
the woman healed, the girl raised from the dead.
God of wondrous healing, no one is beyond hope with you.
Your people believed and you healed.
Grant us the same ability to come to you in simple trust.
How marvellous are your ways, O God.
We worship you.

Lord, you always had time for people.
Forgive us that so often we misuse time.
We miss opportunities to serve you.

Forgive us, Lord, and make us ever hopeful.

There are times we don't have enough faith to hope in you.
We don't believe you can heal us in the way we need it most.

Forgive us, Lord, and make us ever hopeful.

There are times we write people off, decide they're
beyond hope.
Stay within our own four walls, not venturing out to serve you.
Forgive us, Lord, and make us ever hopeful.

Lord Jesus, our living hope,
you came to call sinners, not the righteous.
As we stand in penitence before you,
we have the assurance that we are forgiven.
Your powerful restoring love,
the hope of new life ever present.
Life in all its fullness follows
as we come to you with hope in our hearts.

Thank you, Lord, that you never turned your back on anyone.
You actively sought out those who were hopeless and helpless.
You gave them help, you gave them hope.
Thank you that, even when we are at our lowest,
we know there is always hope.
We praise you, Lord.

Amen.

Our Bible reading is from **Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26 – The calling of Matthew**

⁹As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. ‘Follow me,’ he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’

¹²On hearing this, Jesus said, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill. ¹³But go and learn what this means: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.’

Jesus raises a dead girl and heals a sick woman

¹⁸While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, ‘My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.’ ¹⁹Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

²⁰Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹She said to herself, ‘If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.’

²²Jesus turned and saw her. ‘Take heart, daughter,’ he said, ‘your faith has healed you.’ And the woman was healed at that moment.

²³When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house and saw the noisy crowd and the people playing pipes, ²⁴he said, ‘Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep.’ But they laughed at him. ²⁵After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. ²⁶News of this spread through all that region.

Our second hymn is a hymn of thanks, “Now thank we all our God”, which is number **81** in Singing the Faith. There is an organ accompaniment on the video and also a

- YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/iLjJBFIXR0?si=VpUIxLiX6q-xl3WV>

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
 Who wondrous things has done, in Whom this world rejoices;
 Who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way
 With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
 With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
 And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed;
 And free us from all ills, in this world and the next!

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given;
 The Son and Him Who reigns with Them in highest Heaven;
 The one eternal God, whom earth and Heaven adore;
 For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

Reflection

I remember, as a lad, watching our first television. It was an old black and white set. My father and I used to enjoy watching a programme about snooker called, “Pot Black.” However, as I am sure you will appreciate, following a frame of snooker in black and white, when only the cue ball and the black ball could be easily identified, reduced the excitement somewhat! All the coloured balls appeared as a uniform grey. Imagine my joy when my father rented our first coloured television. Yes, the colours were not particularly lifelike, but at least you could appreciate the difference between the yellow ball and the pink ball! Pot black became a completely different experience!

Was it like that for Matthew, the tax collector, I wonder? Was he sitting there at his booth feeling the resentment of every Israelite who slapped down a hard-earned coin to pay Roman taxes when Jesus stepped up? And did Matthew, who had learned to avoid eye contact, finally look up only to see Jesus looking down with eyes that knew him through and through and loved him anyway? “Follow me,” Jesus said, and for reasons that even he didn't understand, Matthew did. He got up from his tax collector's booth and followed, leaving the coins on the table. And something happened as he did. He felt a freedom he had never felt before, as if the invisible chains he had been wearing his whole life had just fallen from his wrists and ankles, as if the prison door had swung open on its rusty hinges, and he stepped out into a brand new world, a world that had gone from black and white to colour in an instant. In the time it took him to get up off his stool and follow, his world had changed forever!

Now of course, I am using my imagination to fill in some blanks here. I don't know how Matthew felt about his call, but I do know how I felt about mine. I know what can happen to your life when you open the door to let God in, how light can fill up the dark corners and colour can flood the room. As I read the gospel lesson, I could picture Jesus moving across the stage of this drama, lighting up one life after another. He called Matthew to follow him, he ate a meal with sinners and tax collectors, he healed a woman who had been haemorrhaging for 12 years, and he raised a man's dead daughter. It was all in a day's work for him, but in his work, he brought people back to life and health, he brought them back into relationship with God and with each other. It was as if, everywhere he went, the world changed from black and white to colour behind him, and swirling rainbows followed in his wake.

But not everyone was happy about that. The Pharisees, for instance, seemed to prefer a world where everything was black and white. When they saw Jesus eating with the wrong crowd they asked his disciples, “*Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?*” In their black and white world, it just wasn't done. The world was divided into those who were sinners and those who were righteous and the two had nothing to do with each other. So, for Jesus, who was apparently some kind of holy man, to sit down and eat with the obviously unholy was inconceivable. Why did he do it? Didn't he know that God wanted his people to be holy even as he was holy? Didn't he know that true holiness required separating oneself from all that was unclean? That's what the word ‘Pharisee’ meant, to separate, and that's why the Pharisees wore it like a badge of honour.

But Jesus wasn't separating himself at all. He was in there mixing it up with the tax collectors and sinners as if he had no fear of contamination. “*Why does your teacher eat with those people?*” they asked his disciples. But Jesus overheard them and said to the Pharisees what they were always saying to others, “*Go and learn what this means.*” The Pharisees would usually follow that phrase with some quotation from scripture, some passage about holiness, about purity, about keeping oneself unstained by the world. But Jesus said, “*Go and learn what this means,*” and then he quoted from the prophet Hosea, the one who had married a prostitute as a way of showing God's

unconditional love for and unfaithful people. “*Go and learn what this means,*” he said again: ‘*I desire mercy and not sacrifice.*’ *For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.*”

I want you to imagine how hard this was for the Pharisees to hear, and maybe you can imagine it, because in the church, too, we often put a lot of emphasis on purity. We insist that being Christian means living a certain kind of life, a life free from the evil influences of a sinful world. It stands to reason then that those who are the ‘best’ Christians among us are those who do the best job of keeping themselves free from these influences, the ones who don’t curse or smoke or drink just to name a few. But do you see how quickly Christianity can become a religion of rule keeping? Pretty soon we’ve forgotten that we were saved by grace, and all we can do is keep score.

Can you imagine how all of that would make Jesus want to jump off the pinnacle of the temple? “Listen,” he says. “I didn’t come to pat you on the back for being good Christians, for keeping yourself free from the sins of the world. The truth is people all around you are drowning in sin and you won’t even stick out a hand to save them! You’re afraid you might get dirty.”

Where did we learn that kind of behaviour? From the Pharisees, the ones who were so concerned about keeping the rules of righteousness, about keeping themselves separated from the world. And what did Jesus say to them? “*Go and learn what this means. I desire mercy and not sacrifice.*”

In other words, “I want you to look on the suffering of a sinful world and feel the pain of its people. I want that pain to become your pain until you have to do something about it, until you have to shrug off the robes of righteousness and dive into that dirty water to see if you can save somebody. That’s what I’ve done,” Jesus might say. “I’ve come not for the righteous, who are standing on the riverbank, clucking their tongues and saying, ‘I told you so,’ but for the sinners who are going down for the third time gulping for air, who need all the help they can get.”

And then he shows us what that kind of mercy looks like.

While he is sitting there eating with tax collectors and sinners a man comes to Jesus begging for his help. His daughter has died and he thinks Jesus may have the power to bring her back to life again. This man is a leader of the synagogue, so it is remarkable that he comes to Jesus while he is in the home of a tax collector. The tax collectors were considered sinners, and sinners weren’t allowed in the synagogue, but the leader of the synagogue goes into the house of a sinner because he is desperate, and if you are desperate enough you will do anything. In a moment like that none of your so-called righteousness seems as important as getting your little girl back. Can you understand that’s just how God feels about the world, and can you see that he is determined not to let the rules of righteousness stand in the way? He sent his own son Jesus, who seems perfectly willing to break the law for the sake of love.

As Jesus goes, he is approached by a woman who has been haemorrhaging for 12 years. According to Leviticus 15, she was ceremonially unclean; She couldn’t enter the synagogue as long as her impurity continued, and anyone who touched her or anything she had touched would be considered unclean. And so, she sneaked up behind Jesus, thinking, “If only I can touch his cloak I will be healed and he won’t have to know about it.” But he did know about it, and instead of saying, “What have you done to me, you sinful woman? You have made me unclean!” He turned to her and said, “Take heart, daughter, your faith has made you well.” And just like that she is healed, and her world changed in an instant from black and white to colour and Jesus went on his way, rainbows swirling in his wake.

When Jesus came to the leader’s house, the professional mourners were already at work wailing away, with the flute players playing their mournful dirges. Someone had died, and they wanted everyone to know it. But Jesus said, “Go away. *She isn't dead, she's only sleeping.*” And they laughed at him. But he ignored them. He went on into the house and sent everyone else away until it was just him and the body of that poor girl. She lay there on the bed like a black and white drawing, a shadow of what she had been before. And Jesus, looking on, was moved with compassion.

According to Numbers 19, anyone who touched a dead body would be unclean for seven days. Jesus knew that, but it didn't stop him from reaching out to take this girl's hand. If anyone had been there, they might have seen the life coming back into her body like a flame creeping up a piece of newspaper, they might have seen the colour rushing back into her pale cheeks. They might have seen her eyes flutter open and the look on her face when she saw Jesus. And they might have seen that, as far as he was concerned, even one life was more important than all the rules in the world.

Strange things happen when you let God into your life. Things that once seemed so important to you might not seem so important anymore. You might come to understand that it's grace and not being circumcised or keeping the commandments that saves you, as Paul, the former Pharisee, did. You might look up from your day job to find Jesus looking back at you with love and understanding, as Matthew did. You might discover as these people did that when you let God into your life things change. His light reaches into all the dark and dusty corners, fills you with a sense of unlimited possibility, and sometimes even before the end of the sermon, you find that your world is changing from black and white into colour!

Amen

And now we come to our...

Prayers of intercession

Holy God,
send us out to go beyond our comfort zone to places where hope is lost.
Send us to need and not places of comfort; to the rebels and the protesters;
to the despairing and the questioning.

Send us:
to people who need healing in our own community and beyond;
to the desperate and the difficult and, even though we feel our own inadequacy, help us to trust
that you are with us.

We pray for the ability to make time for situations we might try to avoid and attention to hear your
call to us as we watch the news.

We pray for the grace we need to put others first,
the desire to help others to grow in your love,
and for a sense of adventure as we try to live our one precious life fearlessly and joyfully.

Holy God,
send us to make peace.
Send us to bring together what has been broken.

Send us:

to the failed and failing;
to the angry and argumentative.

We pray for honesty about our own mistakes;
for a calm mind and a gentle way of relating to other people and of attending to people whose views are not our own.

We pray for the bravery to bring people together
although it is often painful to reconcile differences.

And we pray for the political courage and leadership that is needed to bring warring factions together.

Holy God,
send us to speak your message.
Send us to live out our faith.

Send us:

to the lost and loveless;
to the excluded and powerless to draw them into your love.

We pray for welcome to be the lived experience of our church community, showing the all-embracing love of our God to everyone.

We remember people in our society who feel on the margins of society and for everyone who feels overlooked.

And we pray for the generosity that includes and affirms others.

Holy God,
send us to bring healing.
Send us to care for the sick.

Send us:

to the suffering and the silenced;
to the distressed and despairing.

We pray for the week ahead that you would lead us to do what we can to meet the needs of others.

We ask that you would be close to everyone in need of your love and remember the ongoing suffering caused by the spread of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Uganda.

And in the quiet we name to you the people we are most concerned about today.

(Pause)

Holy God,
send us out with peace, hope, kindness, patience,
generosity, faithfulness and self control.
But above all send us out with love,
trusting that you will be with us now and always.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. **Amen.**

After a reflection that contains images of chains falling off and light shining into darkness, our final hymn can only be, “And can it be”, which is **345** in Singing the Faith. I have provided the usual accompaniment and

- YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/dC8HSEKtuio?si=X7xKI0JD36ZyWvL9>

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain-
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me? x2

'Tis mystery all: the Immortal dies:
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
Let angel minds inquire no more. x2

He left His Father's throne above
So free, so infinite His grace-
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O my God, it found out me! x2

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray-
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee. x2

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,

And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own. x2

A sending out prayer

May God, who is never-ending, put his hope around us.
May Jesus, the hope of the world, be known as he goes with us.
May the Holy Spirit, our great enabler, empower us to bring
hope to others.

Amen.

Thank you all again for choosing to spend some time with me in this act of worship. I wish you all well for the week ahead and may you feel and reflect God’s presence with you, each and every day.

*May the Lord bless us and keep us;
may the Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us;
may the Lord turn his face toward us and grant us his peace.*

Amen

Julian Tawn

1st June 2026