**Welcome + Call to worship**

Good morning everyone, welcome to Emmanuel Church Northstowe this morning! After a brilliant time together as a church on our church weekend together it’s great to be gathering together again for our regular Sunday service.

If you’re new or visiting this morning, let me introduce my self – my name’s Nathanael, I’m a member of the church here. It’s really great to have you with us! We usually stand to sing and sit for anything else; hopefully it’ll be clear what’s going on and you’ll be able to follow along (and it doesn’t really matter if something goes wrong).

Christians all over the world gather every week, just like us here, to hear truths from the bible, to encourage one another, to give praise to the one in whom they find hope and peace, and to be changed for the better. One way in which Christians have always done that is by singing songs; and we’re going to do that now. If you’re able please do join me in standing as we sing our first song – “Behold our God”.

**Song**

*Who has held the oceans in His hand (Behold our God)*

Great, do take a seat, and I’m going to lead us in a short prayer of praise to God.

**Prayer**

*Our father in heaven, in the words of that song we’ve expressed the truths that you are the king on the throne, the one who knows all things, the one to whom nothing can compare. And yet you showed your love for us in this – that while we were still sinners, you became and man and took all our guilt on yourself. Christ died for us. To understand this is to understand the greatest gift we have ever received; and our response can only be thanksgiving and praise, to the one who reigns forever, and whose glory fills the earth. Amen.*

**Children’s Talk** – Psalm 8 – *Nathanael*

This summer marked the 50th anniversary of the first time people walked on the moon. The first time any person walked on a planet other than our own – something in total only 12 people have done. That was 50 years ago this year. But that reminded of something I remember seeing when I was a teenager, and blew my mind when I first saw it.

Mark could you queue the animation? We’re going to go on a tour of our solar system, and we start with the moon there – 3,500km across, next to the dwarf planet Ceres. And Saturns’s moon Callisto, and Mercury. Mars, 6800km across – about the size of a minecraft world. Venus, second nearest to the sun. And earth here, blue, beautiful – and we see pretty quickly that we on earth are living on a privilege planet. The most special place in all of creation. Kepler 22b – from another solar system now. Neptune, Uranus. The gas giants next - Saturn, Jupiter. And the first star now – Proxima Centauri – before we get to our own Sun. Huge. Can you Pause it there Mark?

Do you see the 3 little blue marbles on the left there? Those are Kepler, Neptune, and Uranus. Our priviledged planet, Earth, is already too small to see. Tiny, even compared to our sun. But we carry on from here to Sirius – the brightest star in the night sky. And Vega. But it’s at this point things get really crazy.

Arcturus – our sun already a miniscule in comparison. But it continues. The beautifully named Rigel in the constellation of Orion. Before we get to another in Orion – the distinctly reddish Betelgeuse. And now onto the largest two known stars by diameter – red super-giant stars Canis Majoris, and Scuti.

You know I’ve got a red, fine line pen here. And even if we drew a dot on this screen we could not approximate the size of our sun. If we wanted to show the sun we’d just have to put a little arrow to say “if you could put the sun somewhere, which you can’t, it would go about here”. These are the sizes of things we’re dealing with in space. Impossible to understand.

But when I look at that, when I watch that through, a shrinking feeling comes over me. It makes me feel small. Not just small, but insignificant. But in a good way. Because when I realise how small I am, leads me to wonder at the fact that the God who made and sustains all of that – every moon, planet and star – that God knows each of us intimately. Just a glance into the universe God has made resizes everything. It leaves me asking why, oh why am I here. Why oh, oh why, should God, or anything pay any attention to me, or to anyone here. But he does. And that Is something that fills me we hope.

We know a lot more about space than people did when the words of the bible were written. But this experience of looking up and being amazed isn’t something particular to us. We have the words of a song written by King David, great King David who fought goliath and ruled over Israel 3000 years ago, we have a song he wrote when contemplating the amazingness of the sky above. You can find the words of that song in the bibles which are spread around, but it’s also printed on the sheets you should have found around the chairs. Markis going to come and read through it now. Thanks Mark.

**Reading** – Psalm 8 – *Mark Cardwell*

Great, thank you Mark. We’re going to stand and sing 2 more songs – one children’s song and one more traditional - which continue to express the bigness of our god. Please stand.

**Song**

*Our God is a great big God*

*All creatures of our God and King*

**Filling in the gaps? (focus on fall & redemption?)**

Great, do take a seat.

We look out at the world and can be amazed at its majesty. But there are also times when we look out at the world around us and are appalled by what we see. We see the effects of natural disasters – hurricanes in the Caribbean, we see people who have lost everything risking their lives for the hope of a better life in a western country, we see our own country seemingly at an impasse; unable to make any progress. We look at all of these things and know in our hearts that it’s not right – there’s something wrong there. That the world’s not supposed to be like that. In fact, if we’re honest, there are times when we can even look at ourselves and wonder – why do I act like that? Why do I look for praise there, or success there, when I know that it will not satisfy? Even in ourselves there’s something not right.

Again, this is a feeling, a story, which the bible deals with. Because the bible tells us that while the majesty of the universe does point to a right ordering, the sadness and pain is the effect of what the bible calls ‘sin’. When sin entered the world, so did all pain, hurt and suffering. When sin entered each of our hearts, we lost intimacy of relationship with our heavenly father. But as a good father loves their children unconditionally, so did God. And so while the world was still affected by sin, while we were still living in rebellion to him, he made a way that we might be reconciled to him; through the death of Jesus Christ. In rising again, Jesus began the work of recreating the world, and we have the hope of his coming return when that work of recreation will be complete.

As we wait for that day though, we can enjoy the truths of relationship with our heavenly father. One of those truths is that we can speaking to our father heavenly father in prayer – in the sure knowledge that he hears us, and wants the best for us. Rosie is going to come up now and lead us in a time of prayer for the church and for the world. Thank you Rosie.

**Intercessions**

Amen, thank you Rosie. We’re going to stand and sing another song now. So let’s stand and sin “how deep the father’s love for us”.

**Song**

*How deep the father’s love for us*

Do take a seat. Let me repeat my welcome from earlier…

**Notices**

**Break**

**Prayer for speaker**

In a moment Josh, the pastor of our church here, is going to be speaking from the Psalm which we read earlier, but before he comes up I’m just going to pray for him as he speaks, and us as we listen. Let’s pray.

**Sermon**

Thanks Josh.

**Song**

*How great thou art*