

### Wonderings

- Where have you encountered Christ in someone unexpected
- What does it mean for your community to live as though Christ is all, and in all

### Group Response & Sharing

Write a short prayer or reflection:  
“Christ, clothe me in...”

### Sharing Circle

Invite anyone who wishes to share one insight or question that is staying with them. Encourage listening without interruption or commentary.

### Heartfelt Action: Living the Transformation

Choose one or more of the following as take-home actions:

- **Clothing Reminder:**  
Select a scarf, bracelet, badge, or another item you wear this week as a reminder that you are “clothed in Christ.”
- **Community Act:**  
Take a step to honour the image of God in someone who is different from you—through conversation, advocacy, or support.
- **Kenosis Practice:**  
Identify one small area where you can release control this week and practise humility or service.

### Closing Prayer

Christ in all,  
You strip away what divides  
and clothe us in mercy.  
Clothe our minds with peace,  
our hearts with justice,  
our voices with courage,  
and our lives with compassion.  
Let us walk as those transformed—  
ever becoming,  
ever beloved.  
Amen



# HeartBeat

## Clothed Anew in Christ

Growing The Gospel Together

Sunday 3rd of August  
Lectionary Reading:  
Colossians 3:1–11

SESSION THEME:  
Transformation, identity,  
inclusion, and the image of God  
in all.

### Framing Idea:

This passage isn't about moralism or behaviour management.

It is about radical spiritual transformation—moving from fear and division to love and communion, in Christ who is all and in all.

## Welcome & Opening Prayer

Begin with a moment of silence.  
Invite people to breathe deeply and  
centre themselves. Then pray:

Living Christ,  
you clothe us in grace and truth.  
Open our minds to see  
the world as you do.  
Open our hearts to become the  
people you call us to be.  
May your Spirit stir in us  
a holy courage to live with  
justice, humility, and love.  
Amen.

## Scripture Reading

Read Colossians 3:1–11 slowly  
and prayerfully, preferably from a  
translation that includes inclusive  
language

Invite someone to read the passage  
aloud twice. The first time, ask people  
to simply listen. The second time, ask:

- What word or phrase catches your attention?
- What image or invitation stirs in you?

Allow brief silence after each reading.

## Heartbeat Reflection Sections

### Part 1

#### Reframing Vision

Verses 1–2:

“Seek the things that are above...”

Paul begins by inviting us to “seek  
the things that are above”—not as an  
escape from the world, but as a way  
of seeing it differently.

For modern readers shaped by justice  
and inclusion, “above” means aligning  
with God’s reign here and now: mercy,  
courage, compassion, reconciliation.

Think of how Marcus Borg and James  
Alison talk about reframing faith as  
living with open eyes and hearts.

#### Wonderings

- What does it mean to you to  
“seek what is above” in a world  
of climate crisis, conflict, and  
division.
- How have your eyes been opened  
to see the world differently in the  
light of Christ

### Part 2

#### Hidden Identity in Christ

Verse 3:

“Your life is hidden with Christ in  
God.”

This verse invites us into mystery. As  
Rowan Williams and Sarah Coakley  
suggest, Christian identity is not  
about spiritual superiority or visibility,

but about kenosis—a surrender to  
God’s love and grace.

Our truest self is not our ego or  
performance, but the self formed in  
love, solidarity, and humility.

#### Wonderings

- What parts of your “old self” are  
no longer helpful or true
- What does it feel like to imagine  
your life “hidden with Christ”

### Part 3

#### Dismantling the Dehumanising

Verse 5:

“Put to death whatever is earthly...”

This part of the passage has often  
been misused to shame bodies or  
repress desire. But read in the light  
of liberation theology, “earthly”  
refers not to the physical, but to  
dehumanising systems: greed,  
exploitation, and violence. Paul names  
“greed, which is idolatry”—a deeply  
political critique of empire.

#### Wonderings

- What systems or patterns do you  
see today that dehumanise other
- How can we practise faith in a  
way that redeems humanity, not  
rejects it

### Part 4

#### Clothed in the New Self

Verses 9–10:

“Clothe yourselves with the new  
self...”

Being “clothed anew” is a continual  
journey of formation. It’s not about  
becoming perfect but becoming more  
fully alive in love. As Process Theology  
suggests, we are always becoming—  
always being renewed, shaped in  
God’s image.

#### Wonderings

- What do you imagine the “new  
self” looks like in your life today
- What habits, values, or  
relationships help you grow into  
Christ’s image

## Reflect

If you could wear one visible symbol  
each day to remind you that you are  
“clothed in Christ,” what would it be?  
What would it mean to you?

### Part 5

#### Christ Is All and In All

Verse 11:

“Christ is all and in all.”

Here Paul makes one of the most  
radically inclusive statements in the  
New Testament.  
In Christ, there is no longer Jew  
or Greek, slave or free, male and  
female—no dividing lines.  
This resonates deeply with  
commitments to anti-racism, LGBTQ+  
inclusion, gender justice, and human  
dignity. It also echoes Franciscan  
spirituality, which sees Christ in every  
person and all creation.