



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on February 4th 2024 at 10:45, meeting at Bethesda Chapel.

Whilst some are able to meet in person, others we know are still at home. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

Our Communion service today is being led by Alec, on this **BMS DAY OF PRAYER**, with Trevor, Paul W, Kate and Judith helping to lead the music.

**Alec begins:** "A very warm welcome to each one of you and to all of us this morning. We come together as the body of Christ in this place to worship him, to praise his name. We adore him because he's a living God, the all-powerful God, the all knowing God, the all-seeing God, and that's for the whole world, for right throughout the world, from 14-15 hours ago till another 7 or 8 hours after us now, right throughout the world today people are coming together in the name of Jesus to praise him, to worship him, to learn from his word, to seek his forgiveness and to receive it and share together in loving fellowship with one another. Isn't that wonderful? And we're going to sing a joyful song about this which I think fits our light hearts this morning, or our young hearts this morning and that's He's got the whole world in his hands, so I'd like to ask Brenda to give out the instruments and we'll share in a really joyful song this morning."

He's got the whole world in His hands  
He's got the whole wide world in His hands  
He's got the whole world in His hands  
He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got the tiny little baby in His hands  
He's got the tiny little baby in His hands  
He's got the tiny little baby in His hands  
He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got you and me brother in His hands  
He's got you and me sister in His hands  
He's got you and me brother in His hands  
He's got the whole world in His hands

He's got everybody here in His hands  
He's got everybody here in His hands  
He's got everybody here in His hands  
He's got the whole world in His hands.

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**Tony shared the Notices**, reminding Church Members of the Special Church Members Meeting to be held after the service today, and our usual weekly activities. Next Sunday Carol will be speaking to us, followed by our shared lunch.

**Alec then led BMS DAY OF PRAYER worship, which included BMS sourced PowerPoint and prayer points, before inviting the congregation to share in a time of open prayer.**

**Alec invited Jane and Tony to join him at the Communion Table as we sang:**

Oh, to see the dawn of the darkest day: Christ on the road to Calvary.

Tried by sinful men, torn and beaten, then nailed to a cross of wood.

**This, the power of the cross: Christ became sin for us.**

**Took the blame, bore the wrath – we stand forgiven at the cross.**

Oh, to see the pain written on your face, bearing the awesome weight of sin.

Every bitter thought, every evil deed crowning your bloodstained brow.

**This, the power of the cross...**

Now the daylight flees, now the ground beneath quakes as its Maker bows his head.

Curtain torn in two, dead are raised to life; 'Finished!' the victory cry.

**This, the power of the cross...**

Oh, to see my name written in the wounds, for through your suffering I am free.

Death is crushed to death, life is mine to live, won through your selfless love.

**This, the power of the cross: Son of God – slain for us.**

**What a love! What a cost! We stand forgiven at the cross.**

Authors: Keith Getty, Stuart Townend CCLI SONG #4490766 Copyright © 2005 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd), CCL No 5664

**Alec read 1 Corinthians 11, 23-27, as he welcomed those who love Jesus to join in this time of communion.**

**For I received from the Lord,**

**Tony led a prayer of thanksgiving:** "Lord, thank you that we have the privilege to meet together like this. Lord, it is only through your blood that we have the right to enter into your presence, that without you we would be outside the curtain, outside the veil, forced to never see you, never be in your presence. But we are able to be in your presence. Lord help us always to remember when we are in your presence what a great and mighty God you are, and that we should fall down and worship you on all occasions as often as we can. Lord please help us always to remember that you are always with us, and we pray that as a part of your body here on earth we are united, even though we have differences Lord, we are united in our love of you. We pray Lord that we would stand firm for your gospel and as a body will show what your love means in this world of darkness. Lord help us to be a light, in Jesus name. Amen"

**Alec continued:** "This is the body of Jesus broken for you". Jane and Tony distributed the bread, which we ate as we received, showing our individual relationship with Christ. Trevor quietly played "What kind of love is this?" as the bread was shared.

**Alec lifted the Cup,** saying "In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup and said 'This is the new covenant in my blood, do this whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' We waited until all had been served before drinking together as a sign of our unity in Christ.

"Whoever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lords death until he comes again. Come quickly Lord Jesus."

We reflected in silence on our unworthiness and thankfulness before Alec shared briefly in prayer.

**Our Prayers today are led by Shirley.**

Loving God, you call us to the task of mission, to make known the good news of Christ, to proclaim the gospel to all we meet through word and deed. Teach us what that means, and to be ready to fulfil that calling when the opportunity arises  
Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, so that many will hear and respond.

Loving God you called us to be witnesses for Christ, but there are some you set apart for a particular calling: evangelists, ministers, preachers and teachers of your word, each with a special responsibility to lead others to you.  
Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, so that many will hear and respond.

You call others to more specialised ministries: working in industry or shops, prisons or hospitals, the Armed Forces, sports, youth work, charities or ecumenical projects.  
Grant your wisdom and guidance and inspiration, so that many will hear and respond.

You call others again to missionary service, either at home or overseas, to share the gospel through their preaching or teaching, or through offering practical skills as a testimony to the love and compassion of Christ.  
Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, so that many will hear and respond.

Loving God, we thank you for all who in different ways strive to fulfil the great commission, taking the gospel to the ends of the Earth. Teach us to see their work as our work, their needs as our needs, their opportunities as our opportunities, and so challenging us and your people everywhere to support them always through our prayers, our money and our love, demonstrating our appreciation of their work and our concern for your kingdom.

Grant your wisdom, guidance and inspiration, so that many will hear and respond in the name of Christ. Amen.

Dear Father, as we continue to pray for peace and an end to war in Gaza and Ukraine, we are reminded that we too have a mission to reach the unsaved people that you sent the Lord Jesus to die for in the area in which you have placed us, in Galligreaves, Bank Top and beyond. Your word tells us that the harvest is plenty, but the workers are few and we are to ask the Lord of the Harvest therefore to send out workers into the harvest field, so that is what we ask, dear Lord, that you will send people to us who have a passion for the Lord Jesus, and a compassion for the lost, and will willingly work in the harvest field. Help us, dear Father, to be bold when people question our faith and always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope that we have, but to do this with gentleness and respect, and also to tell them it is by grace we have been saved through faith and this is not from ourselves. It is a gift, your gift dear God, not by works so that no one can boast, for we are your handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works which you have prepared in advance for us to do.

We pray specifically now dear Father, for our special church meeting after this service. We pray that your presence will continue to be with us as we seek your will for future ministry in this place.

So many of our dear ones need a special touch from you Lord, at this time: those bereaved, struggling with ill health, awaiting hospital appointments, troubled by situations which are hard to share. In the quietness of our hearts now we bring each and everyone to you thanking you for the blessings we have shared.

Loving God, you have called us into this church to share fellowship with each other, to be your family in this place to be one people bound together in love.  
Together, we are the body of Christ, bind us together in love.

We have come today, recognising you have called us also to a wider fellowship of fellowship, which extends across denominational differences, beyond geographical boundaries and into the world, though we may never meet in person. We are one with fellow Christians everywhere, united by one faith, sharing the common good of taking the good news of Christ to the ends of the Earth.

Together we are the body of Christ, bind us together in love.

We have come now to listen and learn, to hear of all you are doing across the world and to respond with gratitude, to recognise all we can receive from the wider church and all we can contribute to it.

Together we are the body of Christ, bind us together in love.

Open our horizons through this time we have spent together, broaden our vision, enlarge our understanding and help us to glimpse more fully the extent of your purpose, the wonder of your love, and the richness of the Christian family to which we belong.

Together we are the body of Christ, bind us together in love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **Song "Beauty for brokenness" (God of the poor) Graham Kendrick**

Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair,  
Lord, in the suffering this is our prayer:  
bread for the children, justice, joy, peace  
sunrise to sunset your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives, cures for their ills,  
work for the craftsman, trade for their skills.  
Land for the dispossessed, rights for the weak,  
voices to plead the cause of those who can't speak.

**God of the poor, friend of the weak,  
give us compassion we pray.  
Melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain,  
come, change our love from a spark to a flame.**

Refuge from cruel wars, havens from fear,  
cities for sanctuary, freedoms to share.  
Peace to the killing-fields, scorched earth to green,  
Christ for the bitterness, his cross for the pain.

Rest for the ravaged earth, oceans and streams  
plundered and poisoned; our future, our dreams.  
Lord, end our madness, carelessness, greed,  
make us content with the things that we need.

**God of the poor....**

Lighten our darkness, breathe on this flame,  
until your justice burns brightly again;  
until the nations learn of your ways,  
seek your salvation and bring you their praise.

**God of the poor....**

Author: Graham Kendrick CCLI SONG # 1236690 Copyright © 1993 Make Way Music, Ccl no 5664

### **Bible reading Psalm 40 Jane Farmer**

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry.  
He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire;  
he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.  
He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.  
Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,  
who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.  
Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us.  
None can compare with you;  
were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.  
Sacrifice and offering you did not desire - but my ears you have opened; -  
burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.  
Then I said, 'Here I am, I have come - it is written about me in the scroll.  
I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.'  
I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;  
I do not seal my lips, Lord, as you know.  
I do not hide your righteousness in my heart;  
I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.  
I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly.  
Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord;  
may your love and faithfulness always protect me.  
For troubles without number surround me;  
my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see.  
They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me.  
Be pleased to save me, Lord; come quickly, Lord, to help me.  
May all who want to take my life be put to shame and confusion;  
may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace.  
May those who say to me, 'Aha! Aha!' be appalled at their own shame.  
But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who long for your saving help always say, 'The Lord is great!'  
But as for me, I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me.  
You are my help and my deliverer; you are my God, do not delay.

## **Alec shared his Message PSALM 40**

### 1)WAITING

- for a bus, train, tram, taxi or plane to come
- for someone to come
- for something to happen
- for pain to go away
- for a medical appointment
- for an ambulance or for treatment at A & E
- for someone to answer our telephone call; “you are no. 27 in the queue.”
- for God to listen
- for God to answer
- for the church to grow
- for a change of circumstances
- for God to get us out of the mess we have got ourselves into

We are used to waiting.

#### 1.1 But how do we wait?

Are we frustrated having to wait? Discouraged? With a sense of hopelessness thinking nothing is ever going to happen or change?

Advertising and marketing try to persuade us not to wait. Decide now, buy now, travel now. Buy on credit now. The terms have never been and will not become better! You do not need to wait. Why wait?

Waiting for God is at the heart of living by faith. “But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31, NKJV)

#### 1.2 Whom do we wait for? For the living God! Really?

When it suits us? When we think He will let us do what we want? As long as what God seems to be saying fits in with our ideas and concepts of what we should be doing?

Or because he is who he says he is: all-powerful, all-knowing. Loving and caring. Just and holy? And because as our Lord and Saviour we long to obey Him.

### 2)WHAT IS THE RESULT OF OUR PATIENT WAITING?

God turns to us.

God hears our cry.

God acts.

2.1 What does God do and what follows from God’s intervention? “He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire.”

This doesn’t necessarily mean that He takes us out of the situation we are in although He may do that. But He prevents us slipping and sinking. He strengthens our faith. We rest on Him the rock. He is our refuge and

our strength. He holds us in His hands. He enables us to stand in the evil day. Psalm 37:1–7 emphasises the fact that the Lord delivers those who wait on Him and commit themselves to His will.

In the first book of the Old Testament, Jacob's son Joseph experienced the calamity of being thrown into a pit, in a very literal sense. His brothers despised him and tried to get rid of him by putting him into a pit. However, in God's providence, Judah, one of the brothers, persuaded the others to draw him out of the pit and sell him to Ishmaelite traders going to Egypt. God used this deep experience in Joseph's life and in the life of His people Israel for their good.

God's grace leads us into the pit. God's grace sustains us in the pit. God's grace will bring us out. And while in the pit, keep looking up. In the pit, there is only one place to look, and that is up.

The Bible does not record any literal events in David's life such as being trapped in a pit. Rather, this is additional poetry describing how deeply desperate David's plight was. David's warlike life was full of near-death experiences, some of which seemed so hopeless that they were like being in a refuse tip or slimy swamp. One can imagine being abandoned in a cavernous hole in the ground filling with water, mud, and slime. In such a predicament, in such a difficult situation it is impossible to get a foothold, but the Lord reached down to David, answered his cry for help, and pulled him to safety. David says the Lord set his feet on a rock and made his steps secure. The imagery indicates that the Lord rescued David from his enemies and provided security for him.

That is what He does for us if we decide to follow Him. Our circumstances may not change but our attitude to them, our mindset will be changed. Our minds, our response, our behaviour will reflect the Lord as we are transformed into His image from one degree of glory to another.

The Old Testament prophet of God Jeremiah was thrown into a pit because he was prophesying against the city of Jerusalem and its people. He was warning them that if they did not repent and turn away from their wicked ways, the city would be destroyed by the Babylonians. The officials of the city, who were angered by his message, accused him of demoralising the soldiers and undermining the war effort. They then threw him into a cistern of mud with no water.

The Lord is the reason Jeremiah is in the pit. He told Jeremiah, "Stand up and say to them whatever I command you." (1:17)

Let me ask the same question again. Why is Jeremiah in the pit? Jeremiah was in the pit because of God and his Word. He's there because Judah rebelled against God and God decided to let Judah suffer in exile at the hands of the Babylonians. He's in the pit because God, in his mercy, gave Judah another opportunity to repent, not wanting anyone to perish. He's in the pit because God gave Jeremiah the grace in this call to be the tool he used to call back to repentance. He wants the wayward to return and trust in him as Saviour. We are the ones today who are called to proclaim God's grace and mercy, after people hear of their sin.

2.2 What does God do? "He set my feet upon a rock and gave me a firm place to stand."

We stand on the Word of God. No more and no less.

In the book of Numbers from chapter 1 we see God's people as an army of serving soldiers and faithful worshippers

3) WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE AND RESPONSIBILITY?

3.1 We become a worshipping people.

"He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God."

3.2 The church of God, the body of Christ grows.

"Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him."

**We joined in our Closing (offertory) hymn:**

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

**Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord?**

**I have heard you calling in the night.**

**I will go Lord, if you lead me.**

**I will hold your people in my heart.**

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them, whom shall I send?

**Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord?...**

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

**Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord?....**

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**Alec closed in prayer:** 'Loving heavenly Father, we praise you and thank you as we have shared many times in our prayers and thoughts and readings this morning. We thank you for dying for us on the cross, for giving us new life, and we thank you for the many many gifts you give us each day of every year of our short time on this planet that you have made. We ask that you will bless the gifts that we have digitally given and physically given for the extension of your kingdom in this place, in this area, in this world. May you be the light in the darkness. May the people in Galligreaves and in this area and indeed in this whole town know that you are present here, that you are the living God, not living in temples made by hands but live in our hearts and we thank you that we go round as witnesses, as living demonstrations of your reality in our lives. We pray that you will go with us now into our gathering this afternoon, that you will lead us and guide us, that as we go home later may we know you are with us. May we be reassured of your love for us. May we know the peace of God which passes all understanding at all times, day or night, 24/7, in this year 366 days if you do not come before the end of the year, that we will know your presence with us, and your peace with us at all times. And keep us mindful of one another, that we would constantly lift one another up before you at the throne of grace, come to you in prayer for those who are not here, are not able to come as well as those present this morning. May we be faithful in praying for one another and the people of God, in and for this town. For we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and for his sake. Amen.'