



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on February 7th 2021 at 10:45.

The current lockdown restrictions have resulted in the decision to not meet in person at Bethesda Chapel at present. We plan to use our YouTube channel to broadcast the services, but will still continue to provide this written service sheet. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we all seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

Our worship today is a joint effort, being led by Paul and Judith, with help from Beryl and Jean W. Again, we thank Tim for his technical expertise in making this service accessible through the internet. If you are reading this at home, and are familiar with the words of the hymns and songs, you may wish to sing or hum along to them, or you may prefer to read them quietly in your heart or aloud. The youtube links are included if you have internet access and wish to watch the recordings.

Welcome and introduction

"Good morning, and welcome to you all! I'm Judith, a member of Blackburn Baptist Church, and it's my privilege to invite you and welcome you to our time of worship this morning. We may not be meeting at Bethesda Chapel, but we are reminded that God's church is not confined to a building but is made up of people - you may not know me and I may not know you, but we are all known and loved by God.

So welcome today, especially as we come and meet around the Lords table, sharing a time of Communion together. We remember God's love, shown in the gift of his son, and follow the commandment to "Do this in my memory." You are again all welcome, as Pauls leads us in sharing bread and wine together - you may wish to prepare some now, as we join in **lifting our voices in that great hymn of praise:**"

O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemers praise.

Oh for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of His grace. (The triumphs of his grace x3.)

Jesus! the name that charms our fears
that bids our sorrows cease,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears
'tis life and health and peace...

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
he sets the prisoner free,
he sets the prisoner free,
his blood can make the foulest clean
his blood availed for me.....

He speaks, and listening to his voice
new life the dead receive,
new life the dead receive.
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe....

Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb
your loosened tongues employ,
your loosened tongues employ;
ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
and leap, ye lame, for joy....

My gracious Master and my God
assist me to proclaim,
assist me to proclaim;
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of Thy name.....

Words by Charles Wesley (1739), music T Jarman.
Public domain. CCL No 5664
https://youtu.be/CFJvBwgmK_c

Judith leads us in prayer:

"Let us pray together:

It's Sunday, God of our longings, and if our routines were not so disrupted, we would be getting ready to head out to worship, in great overflowing churches, in small country chapels, or in homes, gathering with our friends, neighbours, even strangers. But we're not. So, as we linger over a late breakfast, read the paper, watch the news, figure out how to access an online church service, remind us that, even in our isolation, we are not alone.

It's Sunday, Jesus of our loneliness, and if things were different we may be putting on our Sunday best, and hurrying the slowcoaches among us. Instead, we may be sitting around in our PJ's, looking at the church notices e-mailed to us, the on-line service, and trying the Bible passages for the day. Gather us as your scattered sisters and brothers, who are still a household of faith, who still long to care for others, even at a distance,

It's Sunday, Breath of creation, and rather than being inside somewhere, we have a chance to do what so many folks say is just as good as being in a church: worship God in nature. So even if we are stuck inside, may we notice the sky, the trees, the birds, the creatures, the leaves in the morning breeze. May we go out and find you in the cathedrals of forests, in the sanctuaries of local parks, in the little country churches of our backyards, praying for the gift of creation, for the breath of life, for the wonder of this day, for your steadfast love.

It's Sunday, God in Community, Holy and One, and we offer our hearts, our lives, our souls, in worship to you. **Amen.**"

As we prepare to meet together around the communion table - or kitchen worktop, or coffee table - we are reminded **in music that it is only by grace that we come.**

Only by grace can we enter,
only by grace can we stand,
not by our human endeavour
but by the blood of the Lamb.
Into Your presence You call us,
You call us to come,
into Your presence You draw us
and now by Your grace we come,
now by Your grace we come.

Lord if You mark our transgressions who would stand?
Thanks to your grace we are cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.
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now by Your grace we come.

Songwriters: Graham Kendrick, Gerrit Gustafson
Only by Grace lyrics © Integrity's Hosanna Music, CCL NO 5664

Pauls leads us as we meet around the Lord's table.

"Jesus said to them: I am the bread of life, Whoever comes to me will never be hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your should. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are stain but because you are weak. Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help. Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more. Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you. Come and meet the risen Lord, for we are his body.

Here is the table of the Lord, we are gathered to his supper, a foretaste of things eternal.

Come, when you are fearful, to be made new in love. Come, when you are doubtful, to be made strong in faith. Come, when you are regretful and be made whole. Come, young and old, there is room for all.

We set aside our wisdom, our will, our words. We empty our hearts and bring nothing in our hands. We yearn for the healing,. The holding, the accepting, the forgiving, which Christ alone has to offer. So may the peace of the Lord rest within us and remain with us today and always. **Amen.**

The tradition which I hand on to you comes from the Lord himself. For on the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread, gave God thanks and then broke it, saying, This is my body that is for you. Do this and remember me.

For the bread we eat day by day: God be blessed for ever.
For the bread of the great day that feeds us for new life, God be blessed for ever.

(We eat the bread together)

In the same way, Jesus took the cup after supper and said: This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, Do this as often as you drink it, and remember me.

For the wine that makes hearts glad, God be blessed for ever.
For the wine that seals the covenant, God be blessed for ever.

(We drink the wine together)

Loving God, we thank you that you have nourished us at this table. We pray for those who hunger and thirst - may they be filled! And may we, with them, feasts at the table of your eternal kingdom. This we ask through Jesus Christ, who was, and is, and is to come, and who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever, **Amen.**"

Judith prays:

"God of our impressionable world,

We pray for the leaders of the nations, that they would be wise, just and compassionate as they exercise their authority.

We pray for all leaders as they discern the way forward amid the difficult social and economic challenges of the pandemic.

May your truth be known, and your love be shared in Jesus' name.

We pray for a smooth and just rolling out of vaccine programmes, for those who are vulnerable, for those who mistrust the vaccine, for those for whom it has come too late. We pray for the families, and friends of - and all ministering to - the dying and the bereaved.

May your truth be known, and your love be shared in Jesus' name.

We pray for those who feel overwhelmed by the additional pressures of home schooling, for those whose relationships are at breaking point.

We pray for those who have lost their lives to depression and for their families and friends. We pray too for those whose lives are blighted by anxiety and stress. We pray for the health services and charities trying to support them.

May your truth be known, and your love be shared in Jesus' name.

We pray for your church - around the world and in our own community, we pray for creative ways to serve and to share, for courage and integrity as we listen and pray, for urgency and daring as we respond to the needs around us.

May your truth be known, and your love be shared in Jesus' name.

We pray, in a moment of silence, for all those on our hearts and for all those who have no one to name them in prayer.

May your truth be known, and your love be shared in Jesus' name.

Amen."

We once again have the opportunity to **lift our voices in song** as we join together with **There is a Redeemer**.

There is a redeemer,
Jesus, God's own Son,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah,
Holy One.

Thank you, oh my father
for giving us Your Son
and leaving Your Spirit
till the work on Earth is done.

Jesus my redeemer,
name above all names,
precious Lamb of God, Messiah
oh, for sinners slain.

Thank you, oh my father....

When I stand in glory
I will see His face,
and there I'll serve my King forever
in that Holy Place.

Thank you, oh my father
for giving us Your Son
and leaving Your Spirit
till the work on Earth is done

Words and music, Melody Green
Copyright©Word Music UK, CCL No 5664
<https://youtu.be/MboAvzpvz58>

We now, watch, listen to, or read words that Beryl has found helpful, from her "Jesus Calling" daily readings.

As many of you will know, as Brian is presently unwell and in hospital, the last few weeks have been particularly difficult for Brian and Beryl. Beryl would like to thank the church family for all the love, prayers and tokens of care that have been shared. These have lifted and strengthened her during this time.

With a mountain scene as a backdrop, these words have encouraged Beryl:

"Follow me one step at a time That is all I require of you. In fact, that is the only way to move through this space/time world.

You see huge mountains looming and you start wondering how you are going to scale those heights.

Meanwhile because you are not looking where you are going, you start to stumble on the easy path where I am leading you now.

As I help you get back on your feet, you tell me how worried you are about the cliffs up ahead. But you don't know what will happen today, much less tomorrow.

Our path may take an abrupt turn, leading you away from the mountains. There may be an easier way up the mountains than is visible from this distance.

If I do lead you up the cliffs, I will equip you thoroughly for that strenuous climb. I will even give my angels charge over you, to preserve you in all your ways.

Keep your mind on the present journey, enjoying my presence. Walk by faith, not by sight, trusting me to open up the way before you."

With your help, I can advance against a troop, with my God I can scale a wall.
Psalm 18, v 29.

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways, they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.
Psalm 91, v 11-12.

We live by faith, not by sight.
2 Corinthians 5 v 7.

As we continue our studies in Luke's gospel, **Jean reads Luke 4, 1-14, entitled: The Temptation of Jesus.** She reads from the Good News Bible.

“Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit and was led by the Spirit into the desert, where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing, so that he was hungry when it was over.

The Devil said to him, “If you are God's Son, order this stone to turn into bread.” But Jesus answered, “The scripture says, ‘Human beings cannot live on bread alone.’”

Then the Devil took him up and showed him in a second all the kingdoms of the world. “I will give you all this power and all this wealth,” the Devil told him. “It has all been handed over to me, and I can give it to anyone I choose. All this will be yours, then, if you worship me.”

Jesus answered, “The scripture says, ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!’”

Then the Devil took him to Jerusalem and set him on the highest point of the Temple, and said to him, “If you are God's Son, throw yourself down from here. For the scripture says, ‘God will order his angels to take good care of you.’ It also says, ‘They will hold you up with their hands so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones.’”

But Jesus answered, “The scripture says, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

When the Devil finished tempting Jesus in every way, he left him for a while.

Then Jesus returned to Galilee, and the power of the Holy Spirit was with him. The news about him spread throughout all that territory. “

Paul now shares his message for today.

“Jesus being filled with the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan and was led by the spirit into the wilderness’. By reading just the first verse of our passage today, it sounds like the rest of the chapter is going to be wonderful doesn't it? Jesus baptised, pleases God, is filled with the spirit, and then led by the spirit, Jesus is seemingly being led out into the desert away from everyone. A time of peace and preparation perhaps. But quite the opposite is in store, Jesus is walking right into challenges and conflict with the devil.

I wish I could begin my message here today by telling you that the devil is not real, I really do. I wish that I could tell you that he was a figment of someone's dark imagination, a fantasy horror fiction story, but I can't do that, and the reason I can't

is because scripture bears out the reality of Satan, who was once Lucifer; according to the Scriptures an incredibly beautiful and powerful angel who rebelled against God and was eventually cast out of the presence of the Lord, and there are passages scattered throughout the course of the Bible which help us see this clearly. So this encounter with Jesus is for real. And we are warned the devil is still active today: 1 Peter 5:8 - Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Matthew and Luke are the ones who give us the details of this particular encounter with Satan, this event which really heralds the beginning of Jesus's public ministry. It has its counterpart in the Old Testament where Satan is seen bringing temptations into the life of 'the first Adam' in the garden of Eden. Not only did Adam and Jesus both encounter temptations at the hand of the devil, but they both encountered the same kind of temptations. You may be wondering what I'm talking about, you may say I don't recall Adam ever being tempted to turn a rock into a loaf of bread and that is true, but we will see how both encounters are of very much the same kind.

We're also going to discover the power of punctuation - there was once a woman who was travelling overseas, her husband was wealthy and she felt it was her calling to spend his money. She found a wonderful bracelet, the price was £75,000, she thought she had to have it, so she texted her husband to clear it with him, to get permission. She said in her text "found the perfect bracelet only £75,000 may I buy it?" Her husband was in a meeting, he read the text immediately, said "sorry I have to respond to this now" and he wanted to respond NO - price too high! But it sounded to her as she read it as 'no price too high'! Missing the comma cost him £75,000 from his bank account.

Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the spirit into the wilderness being tempted for 40 days by the devil, and in those days he ate nothing and afterwards he was hungry -very understated- Never think that if you are filled with the Holy Spirit you will not be affected by the devil. Never think that if you are led by the spirit you will not be lambasted by the devil - in fact I think it's safe to say if you are led by the spirit you are going to experience the attacks of the enemy who wants to take way your joy of the Lord and your blessing.

Jesus led by the spirit here faces opposition, so don't you assume: "I'm a child of God, I'm a Christian, I love Jesus who will keep me safe from all that is evil." He has promised in (1 Cor 10:13) - that God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. When you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. Not live a life without temptations.

This strategy from the devil is not out of the ordinary. Back in the Old Testament, the Israelites, miraculously delivered out of Egypt by that final plague, find themselves followed up immediately by the pursuit of Pharaoh to destroy them. King Hezekiah opened the temple and re-instituted the Passover, celebrating with a glorious feast in Jerusalem and wanting his people to be in the will of God, but

as soon as they celebrate the Passover, it's then that the Assyrians surround the city of Jerusalem and threaten to destroy it.

It is the same for the three disciples Peter James and John at the transfiguration, having shared such a mountain top experience with Jesus, they must have thought it didn't get any better.

But as soon as they went down the mountain the first person they met was a demon-possessed boy, who in spite of what they had done before, they could do nothing to help.

V3 -Jesus is in the wilderness and is hungry, and Satan says "if (as) you are the son of God command these stone to become bread," (a supposition becomes an affirmation) - in other words, in view of the fact that you are the son of God, you have the power to provide food for yourself, what's wrong with that? This challenge is a temptation to satisfy himself. it's really a question about Gods provision and promise, 'you're the son of God, since that's true why isn't your father providing for you out here, why wouldn't he let you, his own son the Messiah, use your power to satisfy your hunger?

We find that same kind of temptation for Adam & Eve. In the garden there is the tree.

The devil says, "has God really said that you cannot eat from this tree? why would God keep something good from you, what kind of a God do think you serve?" What he said was to question Gods provision.

Jesus responds well in v4..... if you and I were to understand the passage from which Jesus is quoting we would understand better just how significant is what he is saying (Deut 8:3)

'And (God) humbled you and let you hunger, and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord'

Jesus wants you to know that the words that come from the Lords mouth are of far greater importance than what goes into our mouths. Even at times of desperate need. It is the same for us as it was for Jesus - our greatest need is his word.

The second temptation is now questioning God's promise. Taken to a high place the devil shows him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. and said to Jesus "I will give you all authority over this, their glory has been delivered to me. I will give it to whomsoever I wish"

The consequences of Adam and Eve succumbing to the fruit in the garden was the dominion of this world being handed over to Satan. Now Jesus has come for the whole world. So Satan is saying you can have it all the easy way, no cross, no suffering, it can all be yours, just one condition!!!!

You might say, don't be daft, even I would not worship Satan. Well let me say - When you run after the things of this world, when you desire them and put your focus totally on the things of this world, when you begin to live for the things of this world, you are essentially bowing down to those things, you are essentially giving

yourself to those things and offering yourself to those things - that is the definition of worship.

Let me ask, what does it mean to worship God? We offer ourselves to him. Isn't that what Paul said - offer yourselves as a living sacrifice which is your spiritual worship.

V8 Jesus answered - worship the Lord your God and serve him only. I like the inclusion of 'Serve' him. We often talk of worship as an hour or so together on a Sunday rather than the definition Paul gives of a living sacrifice of all our lives.

One day we will see the world's kingdoms handed back.

Rev. 11: 15 "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever", if this reminds you of a song, you probably know it as the music of the Messiah.

The third temptation v9 sees Satan quoting scripture (Ps 91 v11 & 12) but out of context.

The Jewish nation was expecting the Messiah to come to the temple at Jerusalem. The rabbis had predicted that when the Messiah comes he will come to the pinnacle of the temple. So here Satan presents an opportunity to fulfil prophecy, gain recognition for who he is by jumping off the temple into the Hebron valley road and fulfil their expectations.

Satan says : "It is written he will command his angels concerning you to guard you" - so jump off, make the evening news, leave people in no doubt who you really are.

Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy 6 v 16 "You shall not put the lord your God to the test," and goes on in v 17 to say, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies and his statutes, which he has commanded you."

From the outset Jesus was not looking for spectacular gestures or short cut ways, regardless of the difficulties, because it is often through difficulties that right things can be accomplished.

Hebrew 5v 7-9 reads "Jesus learned obedience through what he suffered." Surely we are called to follow in his footsteps.

Now when the devil had ended every temptation he departed from him until an opportune time.

1 John 2 : 16 (NKJV) says for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the father, but is of the world.

These three frame all the devil has to offer. Adam & Eve struggled and failed, the second Adam, Jesus Christ, shows us both how to stand firm in God and a right understanding and application of his word in scripture.

What about the story of the comma?

As Jesus sets out on his mission, he is obedient to God and his word, without pause he will fulfil all that God requires as No price is too high for him to bring us his salvation.

How about you, will you be obedient regardless of the consequences or will it be No, the price is too high?

I can assure you the price is far too high to say no.”

May we therefore say together, with full assurance of faith, the **Lords 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, for ever and ever.

Amen.

We bring our time together to a close as we sing (or read): **Crown him with many crowns**

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee
and hail him as your chosen king
through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life
who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife
for those he came to save:
his glories now we sing
who died and reigns on high;
He died eternal life to bring,
and lives that death may die.

Crown him the Lord of love,
who shows 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!
A city stands on high,
his glory it displays,
and there the nations 'Holy' cry
in joyful hymns of praise.

Crown him the Lord of years,
the potentate of time,
creator of the rolling spheres
in majesty sublime:
all hail, Redeemer, hail,
for you have died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail
through all eternity!

Words by Matthew Bridges (1800 - 1894) and Godfrey Thring (1823 - 1903)
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https://youtu.be/s7OCs0d_4vM

We close our time together with a Benediction:

Paul: May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, may the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you his peace.

Judith: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, **Amen.**

As we say goodbye , we have an opportunity to listen, watch or read, a song which may be new to some, as it was to Judith, stating our beliefs. The version we are watching shows a choir of young people from West Coast Baptist Church, USA, singing by the seashore, in their bare feet, with the sea lapping gently around their ankles at times! Maybe some of us would like to be with them!

I believe in the Son,
I believe in the Risen One,
I believe I overcome
by the power of His blood
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive because He lives.
Amen, Amen,
let my song join the one that never ends
because He lives.

I was dead in the grave,
I was covered in sin and shame,
I heard mercy call my name,
He rolled the stone away.

Amen, Amen.....

I'm alive, I'm alive because He lives.

Amen, Amen

Let my song join the one that never ends,

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow;
because He lives, every fear is gone.
I know He holds my life, my future in His hands.
Because He lives, I can face tomorrow;
because He lives, every fear is gone.
I know He holds my life, my future in His hands

Amen, Amen

I'm alive, I'm alive because He lives....

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