



**Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on July 31st 2022 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 service today is being led by Alec, and as a number of the fellowship are away for one reason or another, it was not possible to record the service, so here are the bare bones which we hope you will still find an aid to worship.

**Alec began by welcoming everyone, and reading the following from Elisabeth Elliot, 'Secure in the everlasting arms':**

"He makes us wait.  
He keeps us on purpose in the dark.  
He makes us walk when we want to run,  
sit still when we want to walk,  
for He has things to do in our souls  
that we are not interested in."

and then introduced our first hymn, which he then plays on the piano:

**Hymn: Christ is made the sure foundation**

Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ the head and corner-stone,  
chosen of the Lord and precious, binding all the Church in one;  
holy Zion's help for ever, and her confidence alone.

All within that holy city dearly loved of God on high,  
in exultant jubilation sing, in perfect harmony;  
God the One-in-Three adoring in glad hymns eternally.

We as living stones implore you: Come among us, Lord, today!  
With your gracious loving-kindness hear your children as we pray;  
and the fulness of your blessing in our fellowship display.

Here entrust to all your servants what we long from you to gain;  
that on earth and in the heavens we one people shall remain,  
till united in your glory evermore with you we reign.

Praise and honour to the Father, praise and honour to the Son,  
praise and honour to the Spirit, ever Three and ever One:  
one in power and one in glory while eternal ages run.

Jubilate Hymns version of Christ is made the sure foundation John M Neale (1818 - 1866) translated from Urbs beata Jerusalem (Latin 7th century) Authors: David Peacock, Henry Purcell, John Mason Neale CCLI SONG # 7049378 Copyrights© 1982, 1993, words - Jubilate Hymns Ltd, Music David Peacock: The Jubilate Group (Admin. by Jubilate Hymns Ltd, sub to Hope Publishing for various regions) (The Jubilate Group) CCL No 5664

**Alec then shared the Notices and Offering, before inviting us to sing again:  
Come people of the risen King, shown the screen.**

Come, people of the risen King, who delight to bring Him praise.  
Come, all and tune your hearts to sing to the Morning Star of grace.  
From the shifting shadows of the earth we will lift our eyes to Him,  
where steady arms of mercy reach to gather children in.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!  
One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, rejoice!

Come, those whose joy is morning sun and those weeping through the night.  
Come, those who tell of battles won, and those struggling in the fight.  
For His perfect love will never change, and His mercies never cease,  
but follow us through all our days with the certain hope of peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!.....

Come, young and old from every land, men and women of the faith.  
Come, those with full or empty hands, find the riches of His grace.  
Over all the world, His people sing, shore to shore we hear them call  
the Truth that cries through every age;

'Our God is all in all'.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!

Authors: Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend CCLI SONG # 5232617  
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**Becky led our prayers of intercession:**

"Dear Heavenly Father, each one of us present this morning wants to praise your holy name, and give thanks for all the blessings you bestow on us every single day. We know it is written that where one or two gather together in your name there you will be also.

So we do indeed bring our prayers to you right now. This beautiful world that you made for us is in such a really bad way at the moment Lord. The future is uncertain for everyone at present Lord. Rising prices for everything, cost of living going through the roof. There are enough families struggling to make ends meet already without all these rising prices, families with low incomes, in low paid jobs, with young

children to support, and now all this extra pressure of making ends meet. When winter comes round, which will be here sooner than we know it, people will be frightened of putting their heating on, or getting cut off from any heating because they can't pay their bills. This will be very difficult for older people, who perhaps don't have good health already and will suffer even more if they are frightened of being unable to pay their bills. Please Lord, prey on the consciences of the big companies who set these targets. Same with the rising cost of petrol. We all know that there is a fantastic amount of cars on the road, and that a lot of them are probably unnecessary, but not all. Some homes have to take their children to and from school, some kiddies are disabled and need lifts, some elderly folk need transport for hospital visits and doctors appointments et cetera. They have to depend on their families supplying transport for them.

That is another of our prayers to you Heavenly Father, for our NHS. We are still way behind with the public's waiting list for treatment. We can't get day-to-day appointments to our doctors and consultants yet, as a result some families lose their loved ones before treatment can begin.

We pray for small businesses that have had to cease trading because of trade being too low. This means more job redundancies, less income still.

Lord our list goes on and on, we don't know how to improve these things, so we bring these concerns to you. You know everything that is going to happen even before it does. We ask you then, Father God, to give our government and these top officials, that set these things, some conscience about how it is going to affect most of our lives.

Our prayers are not just for ourselves Lord, we continue to pray for Ukraine and the terrible atrocities going on in that country. Our problems seem small by comparison but we are all your children and our prayers are for us all. Please help those broken families, through loss of life or separation. Only you can help these heartbroken families to get their lives back on track. We do pray and sympathise for that country and other countries too, in the circumstances. We pray that the people who know you and love you can find comfort in talking to you dear Lord.

We bring our prayers before you again Lord for our very own church here at Bethesda Chapel. We ask for your guidance and wisdom in the coming weeks. We want to see our church full of life again. Our Pastor Alec and our deacons work endlessly to serve you, as you deserve to be served. Things are proving quite difficult though, as you already know Heavenly Father. We just pray Lord for your decision to make itself clear to us. You know each and everyone of us by name, what is in our heads and in our hearts. You know as well Lord, how much we all love and trust you, and love each other. Please then Lord let it be clear to each of us how to support each other and to simply put our trust in you.

Now Lord we want to give you our thanks for the many many blessings you give to us daily. We thank you for our beloved families and friends. We thank you for the food on our table and a lovely warm bed to sleep in at nights. We thank you for our health and homes and gardens. We thank you for our neighbours. We thank you for our hospitals even though they are not up to full speed, we could not manage without them. We thank you for our schools, and hope the teachers and pupils are having a

lovely break at present. We thank you for our local parks and countryside is, for the birds and the flowers and the massive big trees. Thank you for the lovely weather we have been having recently and the lovely ice cream van in Witton Park, for the laughter of kiddies out on their bikes or playing football.

As a church now can we just take a pause to pray for everyone or anyone we know who is not well today Lord, or who is grieving the loss of a loved one. Whoever they are and at their time of need, that a hand may be offered to that person this day. That they will have a feeling of peace and know they have been prayed for, I say this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

### **We were invited to join in singing a song shown on the screen at Bethesda: King of Kings, by Hillsongs**

In the darkness we were waiting without hope, without light,  
'til from Heaven you came running, there was mercy in your eyes.  
To fulfil the law and prophets to a virgin came the word;  
from a throne of endless glory to a cradle in the dirt.

Praise the Father, praise the Son, praise the Spirit, three in one;  
God of glory, Majesty, praise forever to the King of Kings

To reveal the kingdom coming and to reconcile the lost,  
to redeem the whole creation you did not despise the cross,  
for even in your suffering you saw to the other side,  
knowing this was our salvation, Jesus, for our sake you died.

Praise the Father, praise the Son....

And the morning that you rose all of Heaven held its breath  
'til that stone was moved for good for the Lamb had conquered death.  
And the dead rose from their tombs and the angels stood in awe,  
for the souls of all who'd come to the Father are restored  
and the church of Christ was born. then the Spirit lit the flame;  
now this gospel truth of old shall not kneel, shall not faint  
by his blood and in his name in his freedom I am free  
for the love of Jesus Christ who has resurrected me.

Praise the Father, praise the Son....

Authors: Brooke Ligertwood, Jason Ingram, Scott Ligertwood CCLI SONG # 7127647 Copyright ©2019 Fellow Ships Music (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) So Essential Tunes (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) Hillsong Music Publishing Australia (Admin. by Hillsong Music Publishing UK) CCL No 5664

### **Our reading for today: Acts 2 37-47, was shared by Graham.**

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'

Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom

the Lord our God will call.'

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

### **The fellowship of the believers**

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**Alec invited us to join in our Message Hymn which he played on the piano: Revive your church O Lord**

Revive your church, O Lord, in grace and power draw near;  
speak with the voice that wakes the dead, and make your people hear!

Revive your church, O Lord, disturb the sleep of death;  
give life to smouldering embers now by your almighty breath.

Revive your church, O Lord, exalt your precious name;  
and by your Holy Spirit come and set our love aflame.

Revive your church, O Lord, give us a thirst for you,  
a hunger for the bread of life our spirits to renew.

Revive your church, O Lord, and let your power be shown:  
the gifts and graces shall be ours, the glory yours, alone!

Author: Albert Midlane CCLI SONG # 2804093 Copyrights ©1982 The Jubilate Group (Admin. by Jubilate Hymns Ltd, sub to Hope Publishing for various regions) (The Jubilate Group) Jubilate Hymns version of Revive thy work, O Lord. CCL No 5664

### **Time for Alec to share his Message:**

"Our title this morning is TO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH?"

This is our first Sunday in a 5 week series looking at what the church is.

We are really continuing on from our series on prayer in our emphasis on what we found characterised the lives of Nehemiah, David, Samuel, Hezekiah and Isaiah; that is to say a longing for the Name of God to be honoured and to live lives that set out to demonstrate the glory of God.

Today is by way of an introduction to our theme.

Recently one of my colleagues overheard the following conversation whilst passing the building site at the junction of Bank Top, Hancock Street and Stansfeld Street. Two people were looking at the construction work that was taking place and said to one another something like this, "How long is it going to take before this mosque is completely built and ready for use?" They might get a big surprise when it is eventually opened.

What is a church? Well first of all it is not a building, although it will probably use buildings to gather together. Neither is it a lot of other things, like an online resource centre, wellness facility or sports and social club though these may be ways of gathering people together and all offer activities which may be connected with the life of a church.

Where does the word "church" come from?

William Tyndale, an English biblical scholar and linguist who became a leading figure in the Protestant Reformation in the years leading up to his execution is well known as a translator of the Bible into English. Tyndale's translation was the first English language Bible to draw directly from Hebrew and Greek texts, the first English language translation to take advantage of the printing press and the first of the new English language Bibles of the Reformation. Indeed many of the Bible commentaries I use, although written in recent years, are in series titled Tyndale's Old Testament and Tyndale's New Testament Commentaries. I mention this simply to make clear that when he used the word "churches" in his translation of Acts 19:37 he was referring to heathen temples.

The English word "church" is derived from the Greek word *Kyriakos* as used in such phrases like *kyriakon doma* or *kyriake oikia* meaning "the Lord's house" that is to say a place of worship.

Linguistically this is from where we get the German "Kirche", the Scottish "Kirk" and the English "church".

In what is known as the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, there is a word called *ekklesia* which could be merely a crowd of people or an assembly of evildoers; but the *ekklesia* of the Lord was the covenantal body of Israel that is to say those who had agreed to give their lives back to Him and were living in a relationship with the living God; those who were connected with him. When this body assembled, when it got together, it worshipped God, appealed to God, repented to God, that is say asked forgiveness for the wrongs it had done before God and made a 180 degree about turn in its life and made choices for the nation as a whole. To stand "in the midst of the *ekklesia*" was a significant responsibility; to face shame before the *ekklesia* was to be avoided; to fail to come together in the *ekklesia* was a serious breach of duty.

In the New Testament the word *ekklesia* means mostly a local congregation of Christians and not a building; it is an organism and not an organisation.

*Ekklesia* means basically called out, called by God out of the world. The *ek* part means 'out' and *kletos* means 'called'. The Greek term usually represents God's people as distinguished from others, thus "called out of the world".

The term for *ekklesia* is found 114 times in the New Testament and in this context, the word is employed in four senses:

1) It represents the body of Christ worldwide, over which the Lord functions as head (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22; 1 Tim. 3:15).

2) The expression can refer to God's people in a given region (Acts 9:31).

3) Frequently, it depicted a local congregation of Christians (1 Cor. 1:2; Rev. 1:11).

4) It could also signify a group of the Lord's people assembled for worship (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

The purpose of being called out from the world by God is on the one hand to know and grow in the knowledge of who God is and live in and through His grace and on the other hand to make Him known outside the church so that those outside may come to know the grace, mercy and peace of God's forgiveness and be built up into the body of Christ which is His church.

The first church was in Jerusalem. How did it get there?

We have just sung:

"In the darkness we were waiting without hope without light  
till from heaven you came running there was mercy in your eyes .  
To fulfil the law and prophets to a virgin came the Word  
from a throne of endless glory to a cradle in the dirt.  
To reveal the kingdom coming and to reconcile the lost,  
to redeem the whole creation you did not despise the cross  
for even in your suffering you saw to the other side  
knowing this was our salvation Jesus for our sake you died

And the morning that you rose all of heaven held its breath  
till that stone was moved for good for the Lamb had conquered death  
and the dead rose from their tombs and the angels stood in awe,  
for the souls of all who'd come to the Father are restored.

Then the Spirit lit the flame and the Church of Christ was born :  
By His blood and in His Name, in His freedom I am free  
through the love of Jesus Christ who has resurrected me."

Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that amazing? That is awesome! That is life-changing! Did you see the phrase "And the church of God was born"?

The greatest moment in history was not when man walked on the moon; but when God walked on the earth. God in Jesus Christ, the Creator of the universe, who would expect to be worshipped by all those he had made, gives up all his rights and privileges and comes to earth as one of us, dying to pay the price for the mess that we have made in our lives by going our way without reference to him. God the Father brought him back to life and then following Jesus' ascension into heaven God the Holy Spirit came down to earth. In Jerusalem the church was born.

You heard correctly. The church was born in Jerusalem, not in Rome, not in Canterbury, not even in Didcot, not in the western world at all but in the east. The Jerusalem church grew very quickly and was very active. As Graham read, the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. These were four very

strong and clear characteristics of the early church. It was awesome. That means it was extremely impressive, daunting, breath-taking, stunning, astonishing, astounding, staggering, extraordinary, incredible, unbelievable, magnificent, wonderful. Everyone was filled with awe.

That was church life then.

Are these the kinds of words, the kinds of expressions, the kind of thoughts we hear people expressing nowadays about churches? Or do people say, did I hear you correctly? You go to a what; to a church? Crazy! Out of your mind! Waste of time, effort and money! Out of date, irrelevant, a relic of a wasted past! But wait a minute.

Read Acts 2: 43-47 (just read by Graham)

Let`s just stop and think for a minute. Let`s suppose for a moment. Let us say that today, and for the next 25 days every day in Blackburn with Darwen 5,000 people give their lives to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Would our God want that? Would we want that? That would be the whole borough: 130,000 people; people with different backgrounds and very different lifestyles.

If people could see today and every day that we live like the disciples did at that time, living together in love, forgiveness and reconciliation, then that too would be awesome. That was what the church was like.

We need to live in such a way as a church that when we call people to turn away from the mess they have made of their lives asking God for forgiveness and following him as his disciples, that we have first done that and are doing that ourselves.

The disciples of Jesus were familiar with his lifestyle and they basically copied it, well eventually.

Whatever Jesus did he did for the sake of his Father`s glory, not for his own sake. Jesus didn`t eat with sinners and tax collectors because he wanted to appear inclusive, tolerant and accepting. He ate with them to call them to repentance.

It was Antioch not Jerusalem which became the model of the church which was to appear all over the world. Here for the first time they were called "christianoï", Christ-men. Antioch was the model on which the Pauline churches, the churches which the Apostle Paul and his teams grounded and built up, were developed. Everywhere, Paul made cities his centre with where possible the Jewish synagogue as the jumping-off point. But in time a separate ekklesia of Jewish and non-Jewish converts came into being, each with its own elders. All were expected to submit to Paul`s authority in matters of faith, but this was spiritual and with humble and gentle warnings and not coercive. No church had superiority over any other; local administration and discipline was autonomous.

Of the life and organisation of the churches generally we know very little, except for Jerusalem which was not typical. Yet what we know makes us confident that their unity lay in the gospel itself, acceptance of the Old Testament Scriptures and acknowledgement of Jesus as "Lord and Christ". Differences of organisation, ways of thinking and forms of ministry were probably greater than we might normally realise.

Churches in the world today vary enormously in size. Our brother Revanth`s church in Hyderabad has 330,000 members. A typical church in Japan might average around 50



members, (well in Japan they make small things very well, even churches!) Yoido Full Gospel church in Seoul, South Korea boasts 800,000 members.

But we know too of many countries where for Christians to come together it is very difficult if not impossible; there are of course many lands where for various reasons Christians meet together in homes like in the original church in Acts.

I would like to close my message today by looking at the title, "To HIM be glory in the church". I am sure you may know where this is found.

In Ephesians 3: 20-21 we read: "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

"To Him be glory in the church." What does this "glory" look like? I struggled with the meaning of this for many years. Where was the glory in the church?

One of my frequent Facebook stops is the account called, "Let's stop playing church." How easy it is for each of us to go through the motions of being believers; becoming and remaining church-goers and not disciples. Yes in the Word of God we do read in Hebrews 11:25, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encourage one another", and we do very well to do that. But Jesus did not call us primarily if at all to be churchgoers; he called us to follow him, to be his disciples.

To Him be glory in the church?

This glory comes often at the cost of great suffering. What happened to the first apostles?

Matthew suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, killed by a sword wound.

Mark died in Alexandria in Egypt after being dragged by horses through the streets until he was dead.

Luke was hanged in Greece as a result of his tremendous preaching to the lost.

John faced martyrdom when he was boiled in a huge basin of oil during a wave of persecution in Rome but was miraculously delivered.

Peter was crucified upside down on an x-shaped cross.

James, the leader of the church in Jerusalem, was thrown over a hundred feet down from the south-east pinnacle of the Temple when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. He survived to be beaten to death.

James the son of Zebedee, a strong church leader, was beheaded at Jerusalem.

So I finish with Hebrews 12:1-3 which is my appeal to you this morning:

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

Amen.”

**Our closing hymn was once more led by Alec playing the piano: Christs church shall glory in his power**

Christ's church shall glory in his power and grow to his perfection;  
he is our rock, our mighty tower, our life, our resurrection:  
so by his skilful hand the church of Christ shall stand;  
the master-builder's plan he works, as he began,  
and soon will crown with splendour.

Christ's people serve his wayward world to whom he seems a stranger;  
he knows its welcome from of old, he shares our joy, our danger:  
so strong, and yet so weak, the church of Christ shall speak;  
his cross our greatest need, his word the vital seed  
that brings a fruitful harvest.

Christ's living lamp shall brightly burn, and to our earthly city  
forgotten beauty shall return, and purity and pity:  
to give the oppressed their right the church of Christ shall fight;  
and though the years seem long he is our strength and song,  
and he is our salvation.

Christ's body triumphs in his name; one Father, sovereign giver,  
one Spirit, with his love aflame, one Lord, the same for ever:  
to you, O God our prize, the church of Christ shall rise  
beyond all measured height, to that eternal light,  
where Christ shall reign all-holy.

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And finally we join together to say:

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