



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on June 25th 2023 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, who began by reading Psalm 100:

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving

and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

For the Lord is good and his love endures for ever;

his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Our Opening hymn was played by Trevor, Kate, Paul W and Judith:

All hail the power of Jesus name:

let angels prostrate fall.

Bring forth the royal diadem

and crown Him Lord of all.

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,

ye ransomed from the fall,

hail Him who saves you by His grace,

and crown Him Lord of all

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget

the wormwood and the gall,

go spread your trophies at His feet,

and crown Him Lord of all

Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe

on this terrestrial ball

to Him all majesty ascribe

and crown Him Lord of all

O that with yonder sacred throng

we at His feet may fall,

join in the everlasting song

and crown Him Lord of all.

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Notices were shared by Tony, reminding us of the Ladies Bible Study on Tuesday morning, Tiddlywinks on Wednesday and the Dedication service next Sunday morning.

Alec then invited Tony to share news from last weekend, when he had , with leaders from St Lukes, taken a group from Orbit away for a residential time at Bowley Scout Camp. It went very well! Alec had also attended the Cathedral yesterday, when he represented NWBA at the Installation of the new Bishop of Blackburn, Bishop Philip. He also shared that the funeral of Don will take place on Thursday July 6th here at Bethesda at 1pm, and gave a brief flavour of the Baptist Assembly that he had attended, last weekend, together with Jane.

Our Prayers were then led by Brenda:

“The first part of our prayer this morning was written by our dear friend, Barbara Riding, who was known and loved by many of us. I found it among some of her papers, given to me by her daughter. So please join with Barbara and myself as we pray all together. Let us pray.

Our living, loving Lord we are here to worship You again. You are almighty and all powerful and yet You know each one of us. Everything we have and are comes from You. We marvel at this and our thoughts and words are too inadequate to express our praise and adoration.

We confess we have failed You in so many different ways. You sent Your Son Jesus Christ to live in our world and show us the way we should live. You inspired Your prophets and evangelists to write Your word so we can read it day by day, yet time and time again we fail to come anywhere near the standard You expect of us. Forgive us, Lord and strengthen us in our weakness.

We thank You Lord for the beauty that surrounds us in these summer days - for the colour of plants and flowers, the sunshine, and the necessary rain this week. You are such a great God and You provide for us in so many ways.

We come this morning with different needs, Lord - different worries and problems, different joys or anxieties. Accept our thanks for the promise of Your presence here with us, hearing our prayers and accepting our praise.

We thank You for the good things that have happened to us and to people we know this week. Thank You that Alec and Jane were inspired and blessed at the Baptist Assembly last weekend and for the items Alec has just shared with us. Thank you for the special time some of us spent with Brian and Jackie Chilvers, who told us about their work in Chad, yesterday. We pray for the hospital there and the continuance of the work they have been doing and ask that, as they move on to new things, You will be with them for the work You have in store for their future.

We remember the children and young people of this area and the work that is being done by the local churches running the Orbit group. Thank You that Tony was able to go to camp with them last weekend and they were challenged with a new experience. May they be helped to an understanding of Your love for them. Heavenly Father, we pray for all the youth of the world, amongst them our children and grand and great grand children, as they face the many difficulties and challenges of this changing world.

Lord God, we now come to remember at this time the horrific things that are happening in this world and places where there is so much suffering.

We again bring Ukraine before You and plead and plead for an end to the conflict. We also ask for improvement in the desperate situation of so many after the recent flood. At the

present time with more threats of insecurity, in the words of our Prime Minister we pray that 'all parties will be responsible and protect civilians.' We hear too often of so many lives ended and shattered here, at home and in many other places too. Throughout the world there is great pain and loss both on land and at sea and there's ill treatment and places where people cannot worship You without fear. We bring all these to You, O Lord.

We pray again for our country, Father God, as there are always problems to be overcome. The government continues to struggle with difficulties and policies and finding the way to finance things, so that all may have their fair share and be cared for. Please give the leaders Your guidance.

Again, we pray for the people of Blackburn Baptist Church and the ones we know. We bring before You and ask Your help for the ones who have health problems and are suffering or waiting for treatment and the ones who care for them. We ask for Your peace and comfort for those so recently bereaved and we remember with love the ones lost to us, but we thank You that we are left with good memories of them.

Our prayers continue again for the future of our church fellowship and for all who join with us at times. We do not know what the future holds, but You know, and we continue to follow the way, as You lead us. We ask for Your special blessing on the dedication of Daisy, the daughter of Paula and Tim, and the baptism hopefully soon to be held. Lord God please continue to guide our Pastor and Deacons and to give them the strength and ability that they need and help us to give them our support in whatever way we can. We thank You for all involved in decision making and the ongoing jobs to renew and repair this building and to keep our activities here running smoothly.

Father God, we put ourselves into Your hands, asking that You will be with us throughout this service and during the coming week, keeping us safe, faithful and true and following in Your footsteps.

We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen"

Alec introduced a time of Praise and worship, 3 songs sung consecutively, beginning with one shown on the screen, followed by two others played by our own music group.

Man of sorrows, Lamb of God, by His own betrayed:
the sin of man and wrath of God has been on Jesus laid.

Silent as He stood accused, beaten, mocked, and scorned,
bowing to the Father's will, He took a crown of thorns.

**Oh, that rugged cross, my salvation
where Your love poured out over me.
Now my soul cries out, "Hallelujah,
Praise and honour unto Thee"**

Sent of heaven, God's own Son to purchase and redeem
and reconcile the very ones who nailed Him to that tree.

Oh, that rugged cross, my salvation...

Now my debt is paid it is paid in full,
by the precious blood that my Jesus spilled.
Now the curse of sin has no hold on me
whom the Son sets free oh, is free indeed.

Now my debt is paid it is paid in full...

Oh, that rugged cross my salvation...

See the stone is rolled away behold the empty tomb,
Hallelujah, God be praised, He's risen from the grave!

Oh, that rugged cross my salvation....

Songwriters: Matt Crocker / Brooke Ligertwood CCLI SONG # 6476063 Copyrights ©2012 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia (Admin. by Hillsong Music Publishing UK) CCL No 5664

When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold through life's fearful path;
for my love is often cold; He must hold me fast.

**He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
for my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.**

Those He saves are His delight, Christ will hold me fast;
precious in His holy sight, He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost; His promises shall last;
bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast.

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast....

For my life He bled and died, Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied; He will hold me fast.
raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast
'til our faith is turned to sight when He comes at last!

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast....

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Ascribe greatness to our God, the Rock,
His work is perfect and all His ways are just.
Ascribe greatness to our God, the Rock,
His work is perfect and all His ways are just.
A God of faithfulness and without injustice,
good and upright is He;
A God of faithfulness and without injustice,
good and upright is He.

Authors: unknown CCL No 5664.

**Jean came forward to read two Bible passages for us:
Isaiah 53:1-5**

Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.
Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.

Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

Before giving his message, Alec invited us to watch and reflect on another video on the screen: Cry of the broken:

Lord I come, Lord I thank you for your love, for this grace divine;
love and mercy, undeserving, You gave it all. the greatest sacrifice.

You were wounded for my sin and You were bruised for all my shame.
You were broken for my healing, only by the cross I'm saved.

**I come boldly to your presence,
Lord I bow before your throne.
You're my healer, my redeemer,
You're my hope, my life, my all.**

You're the mender of the broken, to every outcast, a friend and comforter.
I come boldly to your presence.....

You hear the cry of the broken.
You answer the cry of the broken.

Author: Darlene Zschech CCLI SONG # 5894220 Copyrights@ 2010 Wondrous Worship (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.) CCL No 5664

Message "The broken body"

It is the focus of our message to the world. It is the key to what the Bible teaches about the only true and living God, to whom be praise for ever. It is the central feature of our faith and of our lives.

Believers in Jesus, true followers of Jesus, disciples of our Lord are united in the belief, in the conviction, in the assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of the living God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and of our lives came to earth to die for those He had made and would make.

He came because we were broken. Our lives were broken. Our lives were in a mess because we had not lived in relationship to the One who made us; we had decided to go our own way and fell short of the glory God had intended for us, instead making again and again an unthinkable and irresponsible mess of our lives.

“There is a green hill far away, outside a city wall, where the dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains he had to bear; but we believe it was for us he hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven; he died to make us good, that we might go at last to heaven, saved by his precious blood.

There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin; he alone could unlock the gate of heaven, and let us in.”

His Body was broken to heal our brokenness. The Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you.” (1 Cor. 11: 23b-24)

The Cross of Christ is not attractive. The Son of God had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him. There was nothing attractive about him at all, nothing to cause us to take a second look. He was looked down on and passed over, a man who suffered, a man who knew pain first-hand. One look at him and people turned away. We looked down on him, thought he was scum. But the fact is that it was our pains he carried— our disfigurements, all the things wrong with us. It was our wrongs that did that to him, that ripped and tore and crushed him; our wrongs! He took the punishment, his body was broken and that made us whole. Through his bruises we get healed. We’re all like sheep who have wandered off and got lost. We’ve all done our own thing, gone our own way. And God has piled all our sins, everything we’ve done wrong, on him, on him.

Dying on the Cross wasn’t a staged media spectacle to draw attention to himself.

It wasn’t a religious denominational public relations exercise.

It wasn’t a matter of behaving in a politically correct way.

It wasn’t an act carried out to demonstrate tolerance.

He died that we might be forgiven. He was broken so that there could once and for all be an end to the mess we were in.

It is because we are broken people that we are attracted to the Cross of Jesus.

God has revealed to us that all we have ever done wrong has been forgiven through his death on the Cross.

We are broken people living a life of and in forgiveness together with one another.

We are broken people living a life of hope in a hopeless world.

We are broken people sharing the life of Jesus in our lives as broken people in a broken world.

People are not attracted to us because we claim to be or pretend to be what we are not. If we say to the world that we are good people we will be deceiving ourselves but we will not be deceiving those around us, nor will we deceive our Father who is in heaven.

If we are real as Jesus is real; if we are not scared to admit that we make mistakes, that we are often hurt and in real pain, that we struggle getting on with others, that we suffer from anxiety and depression, that we worry about getting needy medical appointments, that we battle with the increasing cost of living, that we fight with our unfulfilled wishes and expectations but share our certainty that God knows and cares and can be trusted; that He changes our hearts and our minds to be those who can in His Name and with His strength cope with the assaults on our God-given human lives of our frequently deeply inhuman media-technological society.

If they see us warts and all, in broad daylight; if we are unashamedly honest, if we without pretence in full view of the world around us and then when asked speak about how God has entered into our lives in Jesus Christ and lives in us through the Holy Spirit changing us and transforming us, encouraging us and enabling us, those with whom we engage will see and hear and understand and as we long come into our fellowship with Jesus as their Lord.

But if we pretend to be the bees` knees; if we declare ourselves to be those who know and understand and cope with everything because of who we are and what we have learned and experienced; that we can do it, we can cope, we don` t need help thank you very much, what we say and do will stink literally to high heaven.

People do not need to change their clothes and their words to be welcomed into and welcome in this building; but we need to be being continually changed, renewed in the power of the Holy Spirit and transformed into the image of Christ to accept them as they are, saying, we are like you, we are the same as you, we are all sinners in need of a Saviour. We are as broken as you are. We are as weak and helpless as you are. It is our weaknesses and how Christ helps us deal with them that attracts, not our so-called strengths.

Who are we without Christ?

All our well-constructed outward armour, all our protective coverings, all our well-hidden uncomfortable truths, all our carefully packed away and invisible weaknesses, all our failed attempts to be and do whatever and whenever and wherever, all our failed relationships; all these attitudes and behaviours are transformed when we give our lives back to God in Jesus Christ and that is what attracts others, seeing that we are weak as they are, helpless as they are, wounded like they are and like Jesus was as He died to set us all free from sin and death and hell.

This is what the so-called "Great Commission" in Matthew 28: 16-20 which Jean so kindly read to us is all about. The disciples of Jesus obeyed Him in going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. Then it says, "When they saw Him, the worshipped Him; but some doubted."

The most well-known doubter was Thomas who said as John writes: "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were and put my hand into his side I will not believe" that the Lord Jesus is alive.

Doubters and worshippers were told by Jesus who has all authority in heaven and earth to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them everything He commanded them. They were specially chosen and called by God Himself.

At the BU National Assembly last weekend in Telford, Tim Presswood, who took my induction service here at BBC on November 2, 2019 and is now President of Baptists Together, and has accepted our invitation to visit us here at BBC in 2024, led the prayer of blessing for the newly accredited ministers. This is part of his prayer:

“God, who called fishermen and tax collectors, look at these your servants.

They are not much to look at are they God!

Couldn't you find anyone better?

Couldn't you find anyone richer, more beautiful, more influential?

Couldn't you have called those of political influence to lead your church into triumph?

Couldn't you find anyone better?

Of course you couldn't.

There is no-one better than this ragbag collection of your creatures. Because you made them; you have shaped them; you called them and formed them.

These are your called and tested servants.

May these your servants walk humbly with you.”

We are called, we are chosen. A bunch of weaklings. A group of nobodies. People suffering from all kinds of illnesses, many experiencing depression and anxiety and probably doubters included.

Who does God choose?

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to put to nothing the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Who did God choose to defeat the Philistines led by the giant Goliath? The eighth son of Jesse, a mere shepherd boy, someone who believed and trusted in God in His weakness and whom God specially and specifically trained up to be able to kill the giant without heavy weaponry but with a sling and small stones.

Who did God choose initially to be the leaders of the early church; four fishermen, one tax collector, one politician, one thief and a few others? Did He often choose somebody with a Cambridge degree or with a notable curriculum vitae? No! The people who followed Jesus Christ were those who followed Him when He called them; people chosen according to their faith and their willingness to serve and not chosen according to their worldly credentials.

Who did God choose to reach out to the people of Blackburn with Darwen, Galligreaves, Bank Top, Wensleyfold, Beardwood, Revidge, Mill Hill, Cherry Tree, Feniscowles and other areas? He chose and called us. What are our qualifying characteristics? We ourselves are His disciples; we have given our lives to Him and are growing in grace and truth.

God says to us, His disciples, go and make other disciples, baptise them and teach them everything I have told you. But He doesn't leave us to do that on our own. He says I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.

By instructing His disciples to make disciples of all nations, Jesus was saying that they should teach His teachings to others—something which He had done throughout His public ministry. Jesus worked at teaching His followers what they needed to know to make more disciples.

Paul writes to his spiritual son Timothy, “You’ve heard my message, and it’s been confirmed by many witnesses. Entrust this message to faithful individuals who will be competent to teach others.” 2 Timothy 2:2

When the people of the area we are in, when the people that we are engaging with or will be engaging with see us broken but being healed by the Lord, weak but being strengthened by the Lord, anxious but being comforted by the Lord and by one another they will believe our testimony, they will believe our life stories; then in God’s grace and mercy they will believe what we say about Jesus and follow Him.

Let us continue to share with one another what the living God is doing in our lives right now week for week. Let us encourage one another in our brokenness and allow God to equip us to share His love in what we do and what we say. To His Honour and to His Glory and for the sake of His Name; and may He build and strengthen His church.

Alec introduced our Closing (offertory) hymn

All the way my Saviour leads me- what have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy, who through life has been my guide?
Heav’nly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate’er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well;
for I know, whate’er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.

All the way my Saviour leads me- cheers each winding path I tread,
gives me grace for ev’ry trial, feeds me with the living bread.
Though my weary steps may falter and my soul athirst may be,
gushing from the rock before me, lo! A spring of joy I see;
gushing from the rock before me, lo! A spring of joy I see.

All the way my Saviour leads me- Oh, the fullness of His love!
Perfect rest to me is promised in my Father’s house above.
When my spirit, clothed immortal, wings its flight to realms of day,
this my song through endless ages: Jesus led me all the way;
this my song through endless ages: Jesus led me all the way.

Authors: Fanny Jane Crosby, Robert Lowry CCLI Song # 2741682 Words and Music Public domain CCL No 5664

After a prayer of thanksgiving, we joined together saying: The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Amen.