



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on May 2nd 2021 at 10:45, meeting once more at Bethesda Chapel.

The lifting of lockdown restrictions has resulted in the decision to meet in person at Bethesda Chapel once again. We still plan to use our YouTube channel to broadcast the services, and will continue to provide this written service sheet for those unable to attend Bethesda. 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 service today is led by Alec, sharing “Encouragement in Hard Times, 3 :

### Coping with Anxiety.

At 10:35 2 songs are played: well actually one song in two languages, firstly Polish and then English - here are the words the English translation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALFYyuU3glg> JESUS BLOOD in Polish

#### “Jesus’ blood”

You left Heavens praise for the sake of us,  
offered up your will, for the joy to come.  
You embraced the cross, taking all it's pain  
so I could walk away, free and unashamed.

I owe my life to you my Saviour,  
I owe it all to you alone,  
your sacrifice has won my freedom,  
I was bought by Jesus' blood.

Risen from the grave, seated now on high,  
over all you reign, all power in your hand;  
Eternity will sing of your holy name,  
King of all the earth, in majesty to come.

I owe my life, to you my Saviour....

When at last I stand before the throne of grace,  
wonder fills my heart, your majesty reveals;  
I will bow my knee, and join with angels' song.  
Worthy is the lamb, all praise to You alone.

I owe my life to you my Saviour....

Jesus' Blood lyrics © Life Worship  
CCL No 5664

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=La-fMEpKZgU> JESUS BLOOD in English

**At 10:45 Alec shares a Welcome**, to all who are watching later either this week or next week, during the week (including those he knows watching and praying for us in Germany). He comments that those at Bethesda are well spaced out today, and after the service will have the opportunity to go and sing outside in the church garden - he has prepared some traditional hymns. Sibylle is able to sing inside the church in Germany today wearing masks, and Alec hopes it will not be too long before we also are able to sing at Bethesda, but without masks! Today we will have to settle for the garden!

**He leads us in prayer:** "Loving Heavenly Father we praise you that we can come together freely in this place and to meet with you. Open our eyes to see you, God of gods, King of kings, Lord of lords, Holy and righteous, loving and merciful, our gracious God. Open our ears to hear what you are saying to us and open our hearts to accept what you're saying to us, to understand and be willing to follow you. This we pray in the name of Jesus for his sake, Amen."

**"We are now going to sing together in our hearts**, and you are welcome to stand for any hymn today that you so choose, we are going to sing together with a wonderful choir from Chennai in India," (imagine the ladies in their beautiful saris, and the gentlemen very smartly attired!)

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;  
she is his new creation by water and the word:  
from heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;  
with his own blood he bought her and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth;  
her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth:  
one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food;  
and to one hope she presses with every grace endued.

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,  
she waits the consummation of peace for evermore:  
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blessed;  
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest!

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three-in-One;  
and mystic, sweet communion with those whose rest is won:  
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we  
like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.

## **Our Prayers for others are led today by Shirley:**

"Dear Lord of all, precious Saviour, Prince of Peace, as we come to you today remembering our theme of "Encouragement in hard times" we first remember those who are struggling in this pandemic. Living God, we pray for those who face the future with uncertainty or anxiety, those who fear it, who despair of it, or who feel they have no future. We pray for those in the troubled places of the world, those who long for peace, and an end to conflict and a time of harmony, but who in their hearts have given up hoping. Living God, reach out to all for whom the future seems uncertain or unwelcome and bring the assurance that even in the darkest moments, the greatest challenges, the most worrying times, you are there working out our purpose, able to bring light out of darkness, hope out of despair, joy out of sorrow and good out of evil. Grant the confidence that there is nothing in heaven or earth, in life or death, in the present or the future that is finally able to separate us from your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Now we pray for our young people. **Perhaps when I say "Lord in your mercy" you could say "hear our prayer".**

Dear Lord, we pray for the young people past and present of our church, our country and our world. Young people with so much to offer, so many gifts, so many fresh ideas, so much vigour and enthusiasm yet faced today as never before by all kinds of pressures, demands and temptations.

**Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer.**

Lord of all, give guidance to all who work with young people, in churches, and youth organisations, in schools and colleges, and organisations dedicated to childcare.

**Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer.**

Loving Lord, we thank you for young people. Through our giving to and receiving from them help us to make that gratitude real.

**Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Dear Father, we remember, particularly at this time, those dealing with the terrible tragedy in Miami. We pray comfort for those families who have lost loved ones and pray hope and success to find those still missing.

We continue to pray for Brian and Jackie Chilvers as they look to continue their work in Chad. May they be blessed as they serve and witness to your saving grace.

We pray for the government at this difficult and controversial time. Give them wisdom and the desire to do what is right in your sight. We all have opinions Lord, but help us to remove the plank in our own eyes before we attempt to take the speck out of others.

Now nearer to home we have much to thank you for Lord, the love and support of our families; our church family remembering particularly at this time Gwen and Anne as they come to terms with the loss of Keith and Frank. Knowing the love they had for Jesus is such a blessing to them and us, and what a blessing it was to actually sing your praise in the car park on Friday, and we look forward weather permitting, to do the same in the garden after the service today.

We thank you too for the Tiddlywinks on Wednesdays. We pray that the mums, childminders and little ones will be safe, loved and blessed, as they gather together and, knowing our acceptance of them, will gradually come to know that the loving God of the universe loves them so much more than we can do.

We look forward to the future. Give wisdom to Alec and the deacons as they seek to lead us. Help us to be forward-looking, a step at a time. It is said "without vision the people perish". Help us to look forward with your joy which is our strength.

As we close our prayer today, let us remember in the quietness of our hearts, all those who need a special touch from you and let us as a church family encourage each other with the knowledge that you are our Creator, our Saviour and our Lord. Accept us just as we are, but desire us to be the people you intended us to be.

We ask these prayers in your name and for your glory. Amen

**Alec announces that our next song is "In Christ alone."**

In Christ alone my hope is found,  
He is my light, my strength, my song;  
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground,  
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!  
My Comforter, my All in All,  
here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,  
fullness of God in helpless babe.  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
scorned by the ones He came to save:

till on that cross as Jesus died,  
the wrath of God was satisfied -  
for every sin on Him was laid;  
here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,  
light of the world by darkness slain:  
then bursting forth in glorious day  
up from the grave He rose again!  
And as He stands in victory  
sin's curse has lost its grip on me,  
for I am His and He is mine -  
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,  
this is the power of Christ in me;  
from life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny.  
No power of hell, no scheme of man,  
can ever pluck me from His hand:  
till He returns or calls me home,  
here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rn9-UNer6MQ>

Alec returns to the pulpit, and invites any who wish to follow the Bible reading on their smartphone to find todays passage: Luke 12:22-34 (yes, we have been studying Luke, and Alec is continuing that today as he reads from the Good News Bible)

“Then Jesus said to the disciples, “And so I tell you not to worry about the food you need to stay alive or about the clothes you need for your body. Life is much more important than food, and the body much more important than clothes. Look at the crows: they don't plant seeds or gather a harvest; they don't have storage rooms or barns; God feeds them! You are worth so much more than birds! Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it? If you can't manage even such a small thing, why worry about the other things?

Look how the wild flowers grow: they don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today and gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? What little faith you have!

“So don't be all upset, always concerned about what you will eat and drink. (For the pagans of this world are always concerned about all these

things.) Your Father knows that you need these things. **31** Instead, be concerned with his Kingdom, and he will provide you with these things.

### **Riches in Heaven**

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom. Sell all your belongings and give the money to the poor. Provide for yourselves purses that don't wear out, and save your riches in heaven, where they will never decrease, because no thief can get to them, and no moth can destroy them. For your heart will always be where your riches are.”

**We are now invited to stand if we wish, or remain seated as we listen to another song entitled “Who am I?”, before Alec shares his message for today.**

Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth  
would care to know my name, would care to feel my hurt?  
Who am I, that the Bright and Morning Star  
would choose to light the way for my ever wandering heart?

Not because of who I am but because of what you've done;  
not because of what I've done but because of who You are.

I am a flower quickly fading, here today and gone tomorrow,  
a wave tossed in the ocean, a vapour in the wind;  
still you hear me when I'm calling, Lord, you catch me when I'm falling,  
and you've told me who I am...  
I am yours, I am yours

Who am I, that the eyes that see my sin  
would look on me with love and watch me rise again?  
Who am I, that the voice that calmed the sea  
would call out through the rain and calm the storm in me?

Not because of who I am but because of what you've done;  
not because of what I've done but because of who You are.

I am a flower quickly fading..

Whom shall I fear?  
Whom shall I fear?  
'Cause I am yours, I am yours.

Mark Hall, 2004

Who Am I lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Mgb Ltd., My Refuge Music, Be Essential Songs

CCL No 5664

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBcqria2wmg>

(The video finishes with a picture of Christ on the cross, and the words “Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for me. You are my saviour, my strength and My God. I am yours.)

**Message** A quickly fading flower?



Alec asks if we are anxious he may speak for too long? Or are worried about what he might say? Or might not say? Are we worried about anything at all? (Murmurings from the congregation!) He shares what he may say may be different from his notes as he is a little bit unsure as to what he may say, but will follow what the Lord says. This is part 3 of Encouragement in Hard Times, coping with anxiety.

Phoning call centres is for many of us an experience which is pre-programmed to be very frustrating. Please press 1 is the name of a company which seeks public support for its campaign to improve the design of automated phone menus.

All kinds of jokes have been made about ringing call centres so that we remain sane. Some of these are perhaps actually rather helpful. My favourite, though I am probably rather biased, is the psychiatric call centre menu which goes like this:

Hello. Welcome to the Psychiatric Hotline

If you are obsessive-compulsive, please press 1 repeatedly.

If you are co-dependent, please ask someone to press 2.

If you have multiple personalities, please press 3, 4, 5, and 6.

If you are paranoid-delusional, we know who you are and what you want. Just stay on the line so we can trace the call.

If you are borderline or schizophrenic, listen carefully and a little voice will tell you which number to press.

If you are manic-depressive, it doesn't matter which number you press. No one will answer.

If you are phobic, don't press anything.

If you are anxious, just start pressing numbers at random.

So you see you have booked to go to Keswick and they send you an e-mail which asks you to select which meetings you would like to attend. You might be rather unsure where you should put your cross so that you first of all go for the evening meeting on day 1, then think again and choose 2 instead, then maybe 3 and 4 together instead of 1 and 2 and so on, deleting and re-inserting your choices rather anxiously and eventually tired of doing this you might give up. You might get very depressed as well but that's for another day. You might say I am not really sure which meetings the Lord wants me to go to. You might just be indecisive or you could be anxious really wanting to do the right thing.

Or you are coming to a meeting at Bethesda and you are a little bit anxious about it. Let me say that is truly understandable in these days. But at home you start thinking maybe if I go there I need to be sitting in the right place, near an open window or door, protected by a side wall, not really visible from the front, guaranteed two metres away from the next person and so on and so forth. So I'd better arrive early because there is no seat reservation system. Maybe I should just stay at home I am a little anxious about the seating arrangements. Please understand I am taking this very seriously. It is not a light-hearted matter.

When I returned with Lufthansa to Manchester on April 25 I booked the seat next to the emergency exit on the left-hand side Row 10 seat A and even told the deacons that is where I was sitting. Presumably so I could be found if the machine went down crossing the EU border. Actually I do that to get more foot room. But of course I had to be instructed by the airline staff how to open the door in an emergency.

We might get anxious about all kinds of things.

You are in the supermarket working out which product at which price offers the best nutritional value. You ring up your partner to check. You select bananas rather than oranges, then both, then put one back. It is not just indecisiveness you are worried about your health. With other products you are anxious about your weight.

We are all anxious at some time, at some place and in some way.

Some people maybe don't mind being anxious, as long as they feel they can control it; whatever decisions they make, whatever factors are involved, whoever is

connected in this spaghetti of decision-making. But as a rule anxiety eats us up from the inside.

Anxiety is often sudden or immediate. You hear an ambulance siren and hope no-one you know has been injured in an accident; a family member or a close friend is being operated on and you are awaiting news; your grandchild's exam results are coming out tomorrow and you, your children and grandchild are anxious.

And what does the Bible say about all this? What does God say in His Word? Surely we can talk to Him about all these things? Is He interested? Does He really want to know that we can't find our door key and are worried about being late for church? Does He have any way of finding the important parcel that the post hasn't delivered yet? Does He care about our potential loss of livelihood? Does he know how worried I am about the mechanical condition of my car? Does He know how anxious I am about my health, about getting an important medical appointment, about receiving the correct diagnosis and the appropriate medicinal treatment? About being able to think clearly and to walk?

On the inside of the door of the apartment of a church member a sign had been placed that was clearly visible on leaving. It read, "God knows, God cares, trust Him". It was like a self-made three point sermon for every day, for every time this person would leave home. If I remember rightly next to that was a note which said, "Remember your key". But in one sense the real key is to know that God knows and cares and that we can and should trust Him.

Sometimes we forget that God knows when we are anxious. He came into the world He made. He knows what it is like from the inside. He knows the realities and challenges of living here.

Continuing on from the call at the beginning when we are anxious and hitting all the buttons let us hit 0 and #.

Why 0? What does the zero symbolise?

0 because we may have no idea how to go on.

0 because we are maybe at the end of our tether.

0 because we maybe cannot control the sudden anxiety which is threatening and hurting us, giving us the feeling that we are in danger.



Somebody said once, “I am rather worried. You know I found out there are seven basic types of anxiety. I can’t work out which kind of anxiety I have and not knowing, not recognising, not understanding what causes my anxiety is worrying me.”

0 because we are worried about the possibility of being worried. Die Angst vor der Angst.

The 0 is right at the bottom. Only the ON/OFF button is lower. And I think we all know what that means.

When we hit zero we should then hit the # code.

What does the hash code mean?

Hashing is designed to solve the problem of needing to find or store an item in a collection efficiently. It is a technique to make things more efficient by effectively narrowing down the search at the outset.

So when we hit 0 and # we are saying we are in desperate need and we want to go direct to the source of help.

This leads us to God’s voice; not pre-recorded but pre-planned; not computer-controlled, not system-determined but personal. God speaks to us when we cry to him in our anxiety and worry and ask for His help.

You see He is connected. He is available, 24/7. He responds. He intervenes. He is even waiting for your call and has an answer. He acts. In the Bible in the book of Isaiah 65:24 it says:

“Even before they call, I will answer, and while they are still speaking, I will hear.”

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6

This is saying that our hearts and minds will be guarded, protected from anxiety. There is like a wall, a border, a fence, a barrier, a screen of peace. Nothing can break through this. Nothing and no-one can disturb or takeaway this peace. It is less of an obstruction, less of a temporary road block; it is more like an ongoing, permanent blockade, a bulwark, a complete STOP to anxiety.

As we read in Luke 12 Jesus says to church members and church attenders that we do not need to worry. Is that true? No! Look at verse 22 again: Then Jesus said to his

disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear."

Jesus is speaking to his disciples, those who are following and obeying Him. What is He referring to with "therefore"? This is the connection to the previous passage in Luke 12 where he demonstrates the folly, the plain stupidity of storing up material goods and possessions. There is more to life than food and clothing. God will always provide what is needed and in any case being anxious will not achieve anything, it will be totally ineffective.

Read again Luke 12:25-26.

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

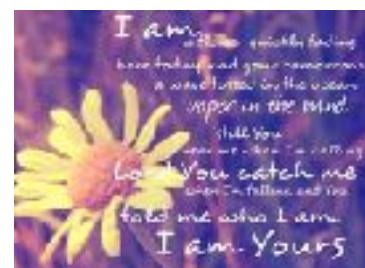
Jesus says if we cannot add a single hour to our life, if we cannot even do that, why should we worry about anything else? We should first of all seek the kingdom of God.

"You do not even know what will happen tomorrow! What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." James 4:14

I am glad to be alive here this morning to encourage us to follow together the Lord who is each day and every day able and willing to lead us, to guide us and to protect us as we continue to seek and follow Him.

**Alec introduces our last song,**

Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;  
with patience bear thy cross of grief or pain.  
Leave to thy God to order and provide;  
in ev'ry change he faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heav'nly Friend  
thru' thorny ways leads to a joyful end.  
  
Be still, my soul: Thy God doth undertake  
to guide the future as he has the past.  
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;  
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know  
his voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.



In you I rest, in you I found my hope.  
In you I trust, you never let me go.  
I place my life within your hands alone,  
be still my soul

Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'ning on  
when we shall be forever with the Lord,  
when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,  
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.  
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,  
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

In you I rest, in you I found my hope.  
In you I trust, you never let me go.  
I place my life within your hands alone,  
be still my soul.

Text: Katharina von Schlegel, b. 1697; trans. by Jane Borthwick, 1813-1897 Music, Sibelius; Finlandia.

CCL No 5664.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg59iE3MhXM>

We bring our service to a close as we share the Grace together:

**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.**

### **NWBA - A Season of Prayer**

Each day during our season of prayer, you are invited to pray for two churches in our NWBA community. This week's prayer focus is:

**Monday 28th June 2021**

**Hoole Baptist Church, Chester**

Pray for wisdom as reflect and pray and as we make decisions to Reimagine - leading the church out of lockdown.

**Poynton Baptist Church, Cheshire**

That we'd seek to encounter God, to be filled with the Spirit, to imitate Jesus and that through our missional communities and missional projects we would strive to be the hands, feet, voice, heart, and presence of Jesus to a community in Poynton, Cheshire and Manchester who desperately need Jesus.

**Tuesday 29th June 2021**

**Disley Baptist Church, Cheshire**

That we will be able to discern God's plan for DBC - to really know where God wants us to go.

**Haggate Baptist Church, Burnley**

Pray for creativity and wisdom as we open things afresh in a new situation, and seek to renew old contacts and make new ones.

**Wednesday 30th June 2021**

**Chaplaincy Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital**

That our Hospital Chapel is a place of welcome.

For patients and staff as they come to terms with all that has happened.

**Kay Street Baptist Church, Rossendale**

Please pray as we enter a new season of 'intentional discipleship', and seek new ways of being the church emerging out of this covid experience.

**Thursday 1st July 2021**

**Hope Community Church, Aintree, Merseyside**

for wisdom, love, patience and grace to not just go back to how things were, but to hear from God as we reopen

**Church Without Walls Baptist Church, Manchester**

That we will be the church God wants us to be

**Friday 2nd July 2021**

**Sion Baptist Church, Burnley**

Pray that we can be a blessing to our local community as we continue to follow Jesus in serving and reaching out to the many needs around us.

**Sandbach Baptist Church, Cheshire**

For guidance about when, where and how we should begin to meet physically again

**Saturday 3rd July 2021**

**Aintree Baptist Church**

We would value your prayers as we make major decisions on our Building and the way forward

**Oldham Baptist Church**

Discernment of God's leading forward and the need for fresher approach/vision.

**Sunday 4th July 2021**

**Atherton Baptist Church**

That we will have wisdom and sensitivity to rebuild relationships with those who have been isolating over the past year.

**Trinity Baptist Church, Fleetwood**

Pray that as we prepare for the church's centenary in 2026 we will see greater increase of local interest in Baptist witness in Fleetwood.

**Monday 5th July 2021**

**Cleveleys Baptist Church, Lancs**

We are returning to the building for Worship on 16.5.21 and want to equally provide for those who attend and those who we will continue to provide for through our online presence.

**Christ Church, Ramsbottom, Bury**

that the church obeys Jesus' command to love one another and that we can reconnect with everyone when we're able to, and emerge as a stronger church than before.

**Tuesday 6th July 2021**

**Tanterton Christian Fellowship, Preston**

that all of the church family will be able to embrace our new hybrid normal with the ongoing combination of physical and digital meetings, and that the summer months will be useful preparation and guidance as we look to organize our new season of ministries commencing in the autumn.

**The Well Church, Lytham St Annes**

Evangelism amongst the new connections and for our church planting to resume

**Wednesday 7th July 2021**

**Didsbury Baptist Church**

That we might see and seize the opportunities that will arise for rebuilding our community life, witness, and mission under God.

**Ellesmere Port Community Ministry**

For wisdom to discern the way forward; to know those things that we should continue, what should stop and what new things are to be picked up. For a good rhythm of life that sustains and nourishes our community, ourselves and our planet. For opportunities to listen deeply to people's experience of the last year or so and to bring them words of life and hope.

**Thursday 8th July 2021**

**Grove Lane Baptist Church, Cheadle Hulme**

For discernment for a good way ahead

**Lumb Baptist Church, Rossendale**

Ask God to guide us in our search for a new minister and the future ministry of our church.

**Friday 9th July 2021**

**Old Colwyn Baptist Church**

**Harpurhey Community Church, North Manchester**

For power and motivation to continue to share the gospel message.

**Saturday 10th July 2021**

**Astley Bridge**

That the current fellowship will return and newcomers will join us

**Greenfield Baptist and Congregational Church, Urmston**

Thanking God for His faithfulness towards us throughout the lockdown, asking Him to show us the next steps as we move out of lockdown.

**We hope you'll be able to join us for virtual fellowship:**

Sundays at 1pm, Meeting ID: 962 5576 8258, Passcode: 491306.

Prayer meeting on Thursdays at 7.30pm. Meeting ID: 923 9680 7071, Passcode:

411034 Its very easy to join on the phone, and it would be lovely to hear your voices again! Just ring 02034 815237, then use the ID and password as above when you are prompted.