



**Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on March 17th 2024 at 10:45, meeting at Bethesda Chapel.**

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

Our service today is being led by Alec, who began with a **Welcome** - saying if he was to speak in the languages of everyone here this morning, it would take a long time, as we had people here from so many different countries this morning. He said it was a great joy to be here, and gave a special warm welcome to our friends from New Life Church International, to Andrii and his wife, Irina, here to speak to us in Russian, and to Santa and her mother from Latvia, who will translate his talk into English for us today, saying it has been his dream to get them here. He then read from Psalm 104 "I will sing to the Lord all my life as long as I live. I will sing praise to my God as long as I live, may my meditation be pleasing to him as I rejoice in the Lord." Alec acknowledged that maybe when we hear those verses this morning we may think 'yes I agree with what is written in the word of God, but I don't feel like that this morning, my life situation it's not like that I have health problems I have financial problems I have family problems I have difficulties in my work I have difficulties in with my neighbours 'whatever it might be.' He continued to tell of a family who came over here in 1997, who had challenges but despite that wrote the song we then sang:

**Opening hymn, with our usual musicians this week, Trevor, Kate Paul W and Judith - our thanks to Jamie for playing last Sunday>**

**Come, now is the time to worship.  
Come, now is the time to give your heart.  
Come, just as you are to worship.  
Come, just as you are before your God.  
Come.**

One day every tongue will confess You are God; one day every knee will bow.  
Still the greatest treasure remains for those who gladly choose You now.

**Come now is the time to worship....**

Willingly we choose to surrender our lives, willingly our knees will bow;  
with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, we gladly choose You now.

**Come now is the time to worship....**

Author: Brian Doerksen CCLI Song Number 2430948 Copyright: ©1998 Vineyard Songs (UK/Eire) (Vineyard Music UK) CCL No 5664

**Bible reading Esther 3:1-10 Carol Berry**

After these events, King Xerxes honoured Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honour higher than that of all the other nobles. All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honour to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honour.

Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, 'Why do you disobey the king's command?' Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply. Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behaviour would be tolerated, for he had told them he was a Jew.

When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honour, he was enraged. Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.

In the twelfth year of King Xerxes, in the first month, the month of Nisan, the pur (that is, the lot) was cast in the presence of Haman to select a day and month. And the lot fell on the twelfth month, the month of Adar.

Then Haman said to King Xerxes, 'There is a certain people dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom who keep themselves separate. Their customs are different from those of all other people, and they do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them. If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will give ten thousand talents of silver to the king's administrators for the royal treasury.'

So the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

**Message "Pride is the cause of your problems" Andrii Rusnak** (Russian language translated into English by Santa Maluha) (Sorry we are unable to transcribe this, if you are able to access the Internet it can be watched on our YouTube channel, or via the YouTube link on our website, simply type in Blackburn Baptist church and it should find the site!)

Alec thanked Andrei and Santa on behalf of the church, then invited all to share in a short **Time of open prayer, before joining in with three Songs:**

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart, I will enter His courts with praise;  
I will say, "This is the day that the Lord has made." I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad, He has made me glad, I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad, He has made me glad, I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

Author: Michael Omartian CCLI Song # 3062205 Copyrights© 1982 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.) Birdwing Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing) CCL No 5664

May our worship be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord.

May our worship be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord.

May the words of my mouth be pure and the meditation of my heart;

May our worship be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord.

Author: Graham Kendrick CCLI SONG # 277997 Copyrights © 1988 Make Way Music (Admin. by Make Way Music Limited) CCL No 5664

**God will make a way where there seems to be no way;**

**He works in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me.**

**He will be my guide, hold me closely to his side**

**with love & strength for each new day, He will make a way,**

**He will make a way.**

By a roadway in the wilderness He'll lead me, rivers in the desert will I see.

Heaven & earth will fade, but his word will still remain, and He will do something new today.

**God will make a way...**

Author: Don Moen CCLI SONG # 458620 Copyrights©1990 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) CCL No 5664

## **Our Prayers were led by Jean:**

“Hello Father. Well here we are again! Thank you for way we are able to meet together to worship and praise you freely, we know we are so fortunate in this as many of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world fear persecution for being caught praying to you or talking about you and even for owning a bible. So we thank you for the luxury to be free in so many ways

We ask for your forgiveness for the times in this last week that we have thought or said something that doesn't honour your name. For the times we have found something else to do instead of reading your word, or taking time to prayer, yet Lord you faithfully still love us and forgive us.

Lord we thank you for our family and friends. We ask that you take care of them and keep them safe from harm. We ask that you give strength and patience to those who are awaiting the results of hospital tests. For those who cannot be with us today help them to feel your presence and peace. We pray for those who do not know your love, who live without recognising they are cherished, affirmed and accepted through Jesus Christ and we pray for those who are worried, anxious, ill, tired, depressed and stressed.

Heavenly father we bring before you the conflicts around the world. We think especially about Ukraine you know the awful burden that the Ukrainian people face. Lord give them the strength and resilience they need to face the terrible things going on in their country and please guide the Russian leader to see the wrong he is doing and the unspeakable damage he is doing to Ukraine and to his own country. And we thank you for the churches there who are trying to get aid to those in need.

We also bring to you the conflict with Israel and Gaza. It must cause you such distress to see the dreadful way the fighting is causing so much horror, death and injury. The way that water, food and health care is being denied to the most vulnerable. This is no way for civilised people to act whatever the provocation. Lord we ask for a swift resolution to this problem with an end to the conflict, and if not an end then a long cease fire to allow aid to get to those suffering especially the children.

Lord we ask that you help guide our Prime Minister and the Government. Help those who have been elected to serve the people to behave in an appropriate manner and to never lose sight of the honour they have been given. Be with those MP's who are Christian and help them to show by example the way to behave. Also Father we bring you the council members of our town of Blackburn again help them to work for the good of the people who have elected them. May the different communities work together for unity and the good of everyone. May you be with people and families of the surrounding areas may they see what goes on in our Church and make them curious to see what we do here at Bethesda. We also ask for your blessings on the New Life Church International that worship here may their worship and faithfulness to You be seen as a witness to those around them.

Heavenly Father we have important decisions to make here at Bethesda. Please help us all to prayerfully listen and to discern what you have to say to us about the way forward. We have a church meeting at the end of the service and we ask you to be with us as decisions are made. We have not always lived in ways that reflect God's love for all. There are times when prejudice and ignorance have caused us to judge others as less important, less capable, less whole than ourselves.

Lord God, although you never promise that our faith will prevent us from meeting the challenges that everyday life brings, nevertheless we do have the assurance that nothing can ever separate us from your love, and that means so much. That whatever trials we face we can be sure of the protection of your Holy Spirit to know an inner peace, a stillness that comes

from knowing you are with us, and a hope that enables us to hold on with the strength which comes from you. May this security give us confidence and joy.  
Lord we pray all these things in the name of your precious son Jesus Amen.”

**We joined together singing our Closing (offertory) hymn**

O the bitter shame and sorrow that a time could ever be  
when I let the Saviour's pity plead in vain, and proudly answered,  
'None of you and all of me!'

Yet you found me; there I saw you dying and in agony,  
heard you pray, 'Forgive them, Father', and my wistful heart said faintly,  
'Some of you and some of me.'

Day by day your tender mercy, healing, helping, full and free,  
firm and strong, with endless patience brought me lower, while I whispered,  
'More of you and less of me.'

Higher than the highest heaven, deeper than the deepest sea,  
Lord, your love at last has conquered: grant me now my spirit's longing,  
'All of you and none of me!'

Authors: Charles Vincent, Theodore Monod CCLI SONG # 2419213 Copyrights@ Words: 1982 The Jubilate Group (Admin. by Jubilate Hymns Ltd, sub to Hope Publishing for various regions) (The Jubilate Group) Music: Public Domain CCL No 5664

**Alec led a Closing prayer and Benediction:**

'Loving Heavenly Father, we thank you for giving us your son, your only beloved begotten son, who died on the cross to pay the price for our wrongs, although he'd done nothing wrong himself, not one single thing, he died for us. We thank you that you raised him from the dead, giving him life and that in him and through the power of the holy spirit we live in you. We thank you and praise you and appreciate you from the bottom of our hearts. We praise you particularly today that you've brought us together from many lands and many nations, from many places where you have revealed yourself to us and to many of us.. We thank you that there is no race, no colour, no group of people, no one on the face of this earth that you did not die for and you long for so many, for each one to come to you. It is our hearts prayer, our hearts desire, our hearts longing, that even in our borough here you will reveal yourself to hundreds, to thousands of people that they too may come to you seeking forgiveness and knowing new life in Jesus Christ. We pray this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and for his sake, men, and we close together with the words of the grace: 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.'

**Notices were shared by Tony, before people either joined in five minutes of prayer, went through for refreshments or said farewell.**