



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on November 19th 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 "India Day" is being led by Alec, with Trevor playing the piano, Kate the violin, Paul W the double bass and Judith the flute. Nigel is manning the PA system, whilst Paul C is recording the service, which because of the sensitive nature will not be made public this week.

**Alec began with a Welcome**, naming a family here for the first time, and Irina from the New Life International Church as well as everyone else present on this, India Day! He continued as he referenced the cricket taking place today as the BBC had said that the whole of the Indian nation was wanting and waiting to become immortal. Alec commented that this would come not through being world cricket champions but by giving their lives to Jesus and living for ever in and with him. He then introduced our Opening hymn:

"Great is Thy faithfulness," O God my Father,  
there is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
as Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

**"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed Thy hand hath provided—  
great is Thy faithfulness," Lord, unto me!**

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon and stars in their courses above,  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

**"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"....**

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

**"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"...**

Authors: Thomas Obediah Chisholm, William Marion Runyan CCLI SONG # 18723 Copurights © Words and music: 1923. Renewed 1951 Hope Publishing Company CCL no 5664

**Notices were shared by Jane this week**, in Tony's absence (celebrating his mother's birthday). Our usual weekly activities will take place, and all were invited to share in a 5 minute time of prayer following the service.

**Alec then introduced an India quiz, that being the focus of the service today.** Alec will be travelling to India on Nov 28th, to spend time with a fellowship there, visiting churches, leading a pastors conference (studying Nehemiah), sharing with baptisms and visiting the orphanage associated with the fellowship before returning to the UK on December 12th, in time to lead the Christmas festivities here.

The quiz included various true or false statements about India, questions concerning countries bordering India, the national flag, and number of languages spoken - lots!! We continued in worship singing:

Majesty, worship His Majesty: unto Jesus be all glory, honour, and praise.

Majesty, kingdom authority, flow from His throne unto His own, His anthems raise.

So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.

Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.

Majesty, worship His Majesty, Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all Kings.

Author: Jack Hayford CCLI SONG #1527 Copyrights@ 1981 New Spring (Admin. by / Small Stone Media BV, Holland (Admin. in the UK/ Eire by Song Solutions www.songsolutions.org))CCL No 5664

**Alec then showed various slides and film clips from India, to give a flavour of the work and people in and with which he will share before inviting the congregation to sing again:**

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Thou art the potter, I am the clay.

Mould me and make me after thy will,

while I am waiting, yielded and still.

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Search me and try me, Saviour today!

Wash me just now, Lord, wash me just now,

as in thy presence humbly I bow.

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Wounded and weary, help me I pray!

Power, all power, surely is thine!

Touch me and heal me, Saviour divine!

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Hold o'er my being absolute sway.

Fill with thy Spirit till all shall see

Christ only, always, living in me!

AUTHORS Adelaide Addison Pollard, Ellen Jane Lorenz, George Coles Stebbins

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCYI1zgiWzc>

**Having shared his itinerary,** Alec led in Praise and prayer needs for India, giving thanks that he had obtained the necessary visa and vaccinations, and asking for prayer support in many ways whilst he is there.

**Shirley then led our prayers of intercession:**

"Before we pray let us remind ourselves to whom we pray, as written by Graham Kendrick:  
'This is our God, the Servant King - He calls us now to follow Him,  
to bring our lives as a daily offering of worship to the Servant King.'

Let us pray: Almighty and loving God, we thank you for the assurance we have that you are always with us, that in you we will find help and strength in times of trouble, that whatever we face you will always be there to reach out and save us.  
Great is your faithfulness from one generation to another.

We thank you that your mercy never runs dry despite our repeated faithlessness, from one generation to another. So now we worship you, you who alone are God, worthy of all praise and honour.  
Great is your faithfulness from one generation to another.

We come to make our confession, offer our petition and bring our intercessions.  
Great is your faithfulness from one generation to another.

Almighty and loving God, take our faith, weak though it is, kindle the sparks of life within us and fan a new flame of love within our hearts, and so we may set out into another week with renewed purpose, resolved to live and work for you, in the assurance that you are with us now and always.  
Great is your faithfulness from one generation to another. Thanks be to God. Amen

And now Lord we turn our thoughts to others, so, so many others. We look at the signs of the times as the men of Issachar did, and see wars, destruction of our planet by climate change etc. etc. Forgive us Lord. We have all contributed in some ways towards this.

At this time we are continually hearing of destruction and the heartbreak of the suffering and bereaved in Israel and Ukraine. I find it so hard to find the words to pray dear Lord, except to say heal the sick, comfort the bereaved and give strength and courage to the Aid workers and all who are helping to relieve the suffering, wisdom and guidance to all in authority. Please bring the hostages home to their families and that the evil perpetrators in all situations may be brought to justice. Teach us to pray dear Lord that your kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

We now look to our families and church family here at BBC. So many at this time dear Father are having difficulties, those in hospital, those recovering at home and those waiting patiently for appointments. Few bring each and every one of them to you now in a time of silence, knowing you are close and always hear our prayers.

We think too of our church activities and pray that your name is glorified in each one of them and that as the New Year approaches we will be able to reach our community with your love and the power of the Holy Spirit. We thank you dear Lord that you have called Alec to a Tim elf ministry in India. We pray that you will protect him and bless him abundantly and that he will bear much fruit as he shares your gospel of salvation to hearts which, we pray, are open and hungry to receive you. We look forward to him returning with much good news.

And now to close we pray for our own church meeting this afternoon. We ask that you will lovingly unify our hearts in all the decisions that have to be made as we know that it says in your word that unity commands the blessing. Amen.

I finish with another verse from The Servant King.

'So let us learn how to serve and in our lives enthrone Him;  
each other's needs to prefer for it is Christ we're serving.

This is our God, the Servant King...' "

### **Jean then shared our Bible reading for today, John 13:1-17**

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

Jesus replied, 'You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

'No,' said Peter, 'you shall never wash my feet.'

Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.'

'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter replied, 'not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!'

Jesus answered, 'Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.' For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

### **Alec prayed before sharing his Message.**

The last hymn we sang this morning was written by Adelaide Pollard. Adelaide was at a prayer meeting in the early 1900's when an elderly lady, instead of asking for blessings from the Lord, prayed "It doesn't matter what you bring into our lives, Lord. Just have your own way with us." This phrase rang so clearly in her mind that, before she was even home for the evening, several of the verses had formed in her mind. When she got home, she completed the verses for the hymn.

She wrote and we sang:

"Have your own way Lord, have your own way. You are the potter I am the clay.  
Mould me and make me after your will while I am waiting yielded and still"

As a church maybe we could sing

"Have your own way Lord, have your own way. You are the potter we are the clay.  
Mould us and make us after your will, while we are waiting yielded and still."

That is very profound; very meaningful; very deep.

I think that fits our meeting after the service today rather well. You are the potter we are the clay. Mould us and make us according to your will while we are waiting yielded and still.

This is one of the hardest things to do - to allow God to have His way with us as believers and as church. We so love our own way and usually believe it is the best way for us. But as believers in Jesus, we must have faith that God's way is what is best for us. May He help us all to allow Him to have His own way in our lives, and in the life of the church fellowship.

You see a potter can only mould the clay when it lies completely in his hand. It requires complete surrender.

It is about being a servant of God.

Let me introduce you to a great man of God (he showed a slide on the screen)

Podimannil Thomas Chandapilla was the Vicar General of St. Thomas Evangelical Church of India. He ministered to the university students in India and the Church at large through new mission initiatives, including the founding of Jubilee Memorial Bible College at Chennai, India.

He was invited to be with us students at All Nations Christian College for 3 or 4 months whilst I was learning there. He was expected to give all the lectures in our series on 2 Corinthians. When he appeared in the lecture hall in front of us in the loose, full white clothes he would normally wear in his home country he greeted us warmly and announced he would not be teaching us from 2 Corinthians but would speak about servanthood. You see his whole life did that. But he always spoke about it as well. Believers as doormats; always needing to be there at the right place at the right time; being ignored, being taken for granted, not looking at all attractive, being picked up and having the dirt hit out of them against hard surfaces, having to take all kinds of pressure without any choice, being criticised for not being able to take the dirt and for looking unclean and finally being thrown out and replaced being no longer suitable for the humble purpose for which they were originally made. I am so grateful to have met him. I have never forgotten him. He is with the Lord now. He was once asked where the spiritual battle in India was most evident and at its strongest; he said simply everywhere.

We come now to something very important and indeed extremely challenging. I want to share with you something of the life and message of Amy Carmichael. Amy is a believer now with the Lord, whose missionary call came through contacts with the Keswick movement. In 1892 she volunteered to the China Inland Mission but was refused on health grounds. However, in 1893 she sailed for Japan as the first Keswick missionary to join the Church Missionary Society (CMS) work led by Barclay Buxton. After less than two years in Japan and what was then known as Ceylon, the present Sri Lanka, she was back in England before the end of 1894. The next year she volunteered to the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, and in November 1895 she arrived in South India, never to leave.

Amy's lengthy ministry at Dohnavur right in the south of India where she established an orphanage was sustained through her strong reliance upon God's Word and prayer. Her early dedication to holiness practices and her roots in the Keswick tradition helped to guide her strong will and determination in her mission to the children of southern India.

What I choose to share with you today is part of what she wrote in 1903.

Amy Carmichael lay awake long into the night. The pounding drums of a Hindu festival drove sleep from her. "The darkness," she later wrote, "shuddered round me like a living, feeling thing." As she lay there, her mind wandered from the village where she lived in India to eternity. She recorded her thoughts in her 1903 book "Things as they are."

#### Carmichael's Allegory

"I saw, as it seemed this: That I stood on a grassy field, and at my feet a precipice broke sheer down into infinite space. I looked, but saw no bottom; only cloud shapes, black and furiously coiled, and great shadow-shrouded hollows, and unfathomable depths. Back I drew, dizzy at the depth.

### The Precipice

“Then I saw forms of people moving single file along the grass. They were making for the edge. There was a woman with a baby in her arms and another little child holding on to her dress. She was on the very verge. Then I saw that she was blind. She lifted her foot for the next step . . . it trod air. She was over, and the children over with her. Oh, the cry as they went over!

“Then I saw more streams of people flowing from all quarters. All were blind, stone blind; all made straight for the precipice edge. There were shrieks as they suddenly knew themselves falling, and a tossing up of helpless arms, catching, clutching at empty air. But some went over quietly, and fell without a sound.

### The Sentries

“Then I wondered, with a wonder that was simply agony, why no one stopped them at the edge. I could not. I was glued to the ground, and I could not call; though I strained and tried, only a whisper would come.

“Then I saw that along the edge there were sentries set at intervals. But the intervals were far too great; there were wide, unguarded gaps between. And over these gaps the people fell in their blindness, quite unwarned; and the green grass seemed blood-red to me, and the gulf yawned like the mouth of hell.

### The Distracted

“Then I saw, like a little picture of peace, a group of people under some trees, with their backs turned towards the gulf. They were making daisy chains. Sometimes when a piercing shriek cut the quiet air and reached them it disturbed them, and they thought it a rather vulgar noise. And if one of their number started up and wanted to go and do something to help, then all the others would pull that one down. ‘Why should you get so excited about it? You must wait for a definite call to go! You haven’t finished your daisy chains yet. It would be really selfish,’ they said, ‘to leave us to finish the work alone.’

### The Gaps

“There was another group. It was made up of people whose great desire was to get more sentries out; but they found that very few wanted to go, and sometimes there were no sentries set for miles and miles of the edge.

“Once a girl stood alone in her place, waving the people back; but her mother and other relations called, and reminded her that her home assignment was due; she must not break the rules. And being tired and needing a change, she had to go and rest for a while; but no one was sent to guard her gap, and over and over the people fell, like a waterfall of souls.

“Once a child caught at a tuft of grass that grew at the very brink of the gulf; it clung convulsively, and it called—but nobody seemed to hear. Then the roots of the grass gave way, and with a cry the child went over, its two little hands still holding tight to the torn-off bunch of grass. And the girl who longed to be back in her gap thought she heard the little one cry, and she sprang up and wanted to go; at which they reproved her, reminding her that no one is necessary anywhere; the gap would be well taken care of, they knew. And then they sang a hymn.

“Then through the hymn came another sound like the pain of a million broken hearts wrung out in one full drop, one sob. And a horror of great darkness was upon me, for I knew what it was—the Cry of the Blood.

“Then thundered a Voice, the Voice of the Lord: ‘And He said, “What have you done?”’

Wait! Is this too much?

Is this too much? Are these pictures too vivid? Are these realities too . . . real? What does God say?

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9).

"It is not the will of your Father in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18:14).

"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him". (John 3:36 ESV)

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46).

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28).

Maybe Amy Carmichael's description is not so over-the-top after all. It's at least worthy of consideration. Time is short. Eternity is real. If we are just making daisy chains let's stop. Let's get off the side-lines. In God's strength and in His way let's make a difference for eternity while you and they still have time. Let's follow God's Word in being still, knowing that He is God. But let our hearts and lives be active in following Him. I always need this reminder. Do you?

I then read Matthew 16-20 and slowly read these lyrics:

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name, I've been born again in Jesus' name  
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His love as He told me to.  
He said, "Freely, freely you have received, freely, freely give.  
Go in my name, and because you believe others will know that I live"

All power is given' in Jesus' name, in earth and Heaven in Jesus' name;  
and in Jesus' name I come to you to share His power as He told me to.  
He said, "Freely, freely you have received freely, freely give.  
Go in my name, and because you believe others will know that I live"

### **Closing (offertory) hymn "The servant King /from heaven you came)"**

From heaven you came helpless babe, enter'd our world Your Glory veil'd;  
not to be served but to serve and give Your life that we might live:

**This is our God, the Servant King - He calls us now to follow Him,  
to bring our lives as a daily offering of worship to the Servant King**

There in the garden of tears my heavy load He chose to bear,  
His heart with sorrow was torn yet 'Not my will but Yours', He said.

**This is our God, the Servant King....**

Come see His hands and His feet - the scars that speak of sacrifice,  
hands that flung stars into space to cruel nails surrendered.

**This is our God, the Servant King....**

So let us learn how to serve and in our lives enthrone Him;  
each other's needs to prefer for it is Christ we're serving.

**This is our God, the Servant King....**

Author: Graham Kendrick CCLI SONG # 78897 Copyright ©1983 Makeway Music CCL no 5664

**Alec asked all to remain standing as he led a closing prayer, during which he gave thanks for all our gifts, asking that they be used wisely and well for the extension of God's kingdom in this place, finally inviting everyone to join in saying 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.**