



**Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on October 30th 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.

The church is lit by two pumpkins at the front, containing candles which shine through the carved cross and fish, very topical and atmospheric on the eve of All Hallow's Eve (probably better known as Hallowe'en)!!

**Our service today is led by Colin**, who began by welcoming everyone, and congratulating them on remembering to alter their clocks, now we are back to Greenwich Mean Time! He gave the congregation a bit of a scare when he said this was the last service in Bethesda Chapel - and then continued - in October!

**Colin introduced our first song, shown on the screen:**

Light of the world, You stepped down into darkness, opened my eyes, let me see beauty that made this heart adore you, hope of a life spent with you.

Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down,  
here I am to say that you're my God.  
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy,  
altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days, so highly exalted, glorious in heaven above;  
humbly you came to the earth you created, all for love's sake became poor.  
Here I am to worship....

I'll never know how much it cost to see my sin upon that cross...

Here I am to worship.....

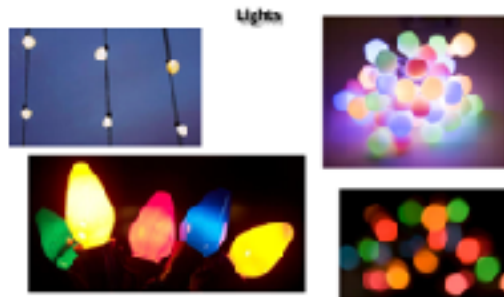
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**Colin led in prayer:**

Father God, with you there is no darkness. Your character has no shadows, and you are pure goodness. Yet we live in a broken world: we see so much darkness around us in our communities and nation. Even in our fellowship, pain, sickness and disease are common experiences. Bring your light and restoring presence to the dark places in our lives. Bring your hope to hearts that feel defeated. Bring your love and compassion to those in pain. Give us faith to say with the Psalmist, 'Lord, you light my lamp; my God illuminates my darkness.' May your light of hope shine in the darkness for families today. Show us glimpses of your presence with us and the comfort you bring. In the

busy-ness of today, help us to take a moment to be still and sit with you. You are trustworthy and true, and we thank you for caring for us so deeply. Open our eyes to see you at work today. Give us your light, we pray, in Jesus' name, Amen.

**Colin shares some thoughts:**



(To help us, he brought out different bulbs from a carrier bag!)

We are like lightbulbs, because we too have different:

- Shapes
- Sizes
- Colours
- Ages/Styles
- Strengths
- Roles

But they have something in common too - unless these bulbs are connected to an electric power source, all will fail to fulfil their true purpose for life, no matter how expensive they might be.

Likewise, unless we are plugged into the true source of life and light, which is Christ the Creator, we will never find true fulfilment in this life or for the next. The meaning and purpose of life is Christ because he alone is the source of eternal life. We were created to have a relationship with our Creator, to glorify him and enjoy him, and find pleasure in him, for ever. For the kingdom of God is not about food and drink, or fashion and clothing, but about righteousness, joy and peace in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Colin then invited us to lift our voices in song**, as accompanied by Alec on the piano, we joined together to sing:

Lord, the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness, shining -  
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth you now bring us,  
shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory.

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy,  
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

Lord, I come to your awesome presence, from the shadows into your radiance,  
by the blood I may enter your brightness,  
search me, try me, consume all my darkness,  
shine on me, shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory.....

As we gaze on your kingly brightness so our faces display your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory, mirrored here may our lives tell your story,  
shine on me, shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory....

Author: Graham Kendrick CCLI SONG # 30426 Copyright © 1987 Make Way Music, [www.grahamkendrick.co.uk](http://www.grahamkendrick.co.uk) CCL No 5664

**Our gifts and offerings were collected** during the song, and on receiving them Colin prayed: "We thank you our Heavenly Father for these gifts. May they be used in your service, to your honour and glory, for the extension of your kingdom in this place . In Jesus name we ask. Amen."

**Colin invited Victor to lead our prayers:**

"Lord Jesus, we thank you that you are the truth and the way, leading our steps on the best and most precise path. Continue to guide us, your people, to be faithful to you, and help us to be encouraged and renewed for the better.

Father Lord, lead us not into temptation and deliver us from complacency. We are asking with confidence that you will fill us with your Holy Spirit. Enable us to work together as members of one body and use wisely the talents and attributes you have given to us to faithfully love, and serve you and one another.

As always, we present our every need, fill us with the knowledge of your love and your unmatching power of divine providence. We honour you, Lord, The one who was and is, The One who will continue to be even when the earth ceases to be. Your word says the gate of hell shall not prevail over your Church, strengthen us, Lord, and help us grasp the height of your plans for us. Show us what we need to do, and how to live to be attractive to our brothers and sisters. Give us the grace to show friendship and compassion as you do. Empower us with the confidence to talk about you and tell people of your assurances to us that we are never alone.

We pray this morning Lord God, give wisdom to our political leaders, particularly the new prime minister and his cabinet, help them to make the right decisions, and give them unflinching courage to lead aright. We also ask that all nations live in harmony and tranquillity, remembering the stampede in Seoul Korea last night; please, Lord, heal the suffering and sorrow of all mankind. We pray for countries in West Africa that are currently ravaged by flood and that are battling with loss of lives and properties that you replenish and bless them. We remember those children who are abused and frightened, who rely on drugs, angry and confused all the time. We pray this morning for the world in general, Heavenly Father, countries where there are

shortages of food and water, where sanitation is non-existent and quality hospital treatment.

There is anxiety for the safety of our young people as there is so much avoidable violence in our world today, we pray about the situation with guns and knives. Lord, we ask you to intervene in all this danger, and we pray for your peace that surpasses all understanding to reign again.

Dear Lord, I ask for your abundant rain of blessing on our church here at Bethesda, We pray you will give the leadership wisdom and good health. We remember those who are unwell or caring for family members who are unwell at this time in our congregation that your mighty power of healing is placed on them. Make them find solace in the knowledge of your love for them. We are grateful for those we know who are recovering, please continue to strengthen them.

We pray that by grace, we will stand on your promises, and by faith, we will walk as you walk with us, and through these, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen"

(Colin shared that Victor has been away recently, he is studying for a second degree in Bath so is not able to be with us every week. The studying is going well!)

**Colin then introduced the theme for his message today**, continuing our thoughts on occupations. We have already considered Vine keeper, builder and shepherd. Colin has chosen Lighthouse Keeper for today.

**(We then watched a short video cartoon** about a lighthouse, whose light failed. As a ship approached, the lighthouse keeper brought others carrying lanterns into the lighthouse, and all their small individual lights joined together, shining out brightly in the darkness, just as we should shine with Jesus light here at Bethesda)

**We were then invited, by Colin, to sing again should we so wish**, this time a very appropriate song called My Lighthouse, sung by The Rend Collective, which we have sung before - with actions. We remained seated for this very bouncy song, with a strong Irish rhythm played on the fiddle, guitar and drum.

Perhaps you can think of some suitable actions!!

In my wrestling and in my doubts, in my failures You won't walk out;  
Your great love will lead me through - You are the peace in my troubled sea, oh oh  
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

In the silence, You won't let go, in the questions, Your truth will hold;  
Your great love will lead me through - You are the peace in my troubled sea, oh oh  
You are the peace in my troubled sea.

My Lighthouse, my lighthouse, shining in the darkness, I will follow You.  
My Lighthouse, my lighthouse (oh oh) I will trust the promise,

You will carry me safe to shore (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)  
Safe to shore (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Safe to shore (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)  
Safe to shore.

I won't fear what tomorrow brings, with each morning I'll rise and sing;  
My God's love will lead me through - You are the peace in my troubled sea, oh oh  
You are the peace in my troubled sea, oh oh.(You are my light)  
My Lighthouse, my lighthouse (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)  
shining in the darkness, I will follow You (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)...

Fire before us, You're the brightest, You will lead us through the storms.  
Fire before us, You're the brightest, You will lead us through the storms....  
My Lighthouse, my lighthouse (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)  
shining in the darkness, I will follow You (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)....

Authors:Chris Llewellyn, Gareth Gilkeson CCLI SONG # 7002032 Copyright© 2013 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music Ltd) CCL No 5664

**Colin read from Matthew 5, 14-16, from the Sermon on the Mount:**

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

**Colin shared his message: Lighthouse Keeper**

"Thinking about my job-description this morning, I am reminded of a children's chorus we used to sing here at Bethesda:

Be a Lighthouse for Jesus, be a Lighthouse shining bright,  
send the beacon out in the land of doubt, and so, be a light for him.

For 'doubt' we could equally substitute the word 'darkness', though I guess the song wouldn't rhyme quite so well. When you look at the news, you cannot escape horrifying anger, crime, terror, disease and war, and even the threat of nuclear war. Politics is dark. Entertainment is dark. Social media is dark. And if the court case in Manchester, involving a certain neonatal nurse, is anything to go by, our hospitals can also be dark. And with all this going on around us, we could be tempted, I guess, to cry out to God, 'Where are you in all this darkness? We need light!' If we did so, I'm sure God would wrap his everlasting arms around us, look us in the eye and say, in the words of Jesus from our reading this morning: 'You are the light of the world.... (So) let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify me.' In other words, we are to be a light set on a hill; a light for all the world to see; in short, a lighthouse that shines forth in the darkness. In the darkness of crime, terror and disease, we are the light. In the darkness of modern politics, entertainment and social media, we are the light. It's not that we ought to be the

light. It's that we are the light. And, according to Jesus in our reading, we are meant to shine by doing good works that glorify God.

But what does Jesus mean in our reading from Matthew 5 by our 'good works'? In his first letter to the Thessalonian Christians, Saint Paul declares to the Christians: 'We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work of faith, your labour of love, and your steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.' Here, Paul refers to three kinds of 'good works': the good-work of faith; the good-work of love; and the good-work of hope - all based on our Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, Paul constantly kept this Christian community he had founded very much in his heart. So, it was with deep affection that he remembered these three lights that shone in their lives. The apostle knew these spiritual qualities can only shine in lives that are being lived on the wavelength of the Risen Christ, walking in Spirit and truth, and doing the works of God through his grace and supernatural power which he supplies in abundance. Let us consider these three qualities and apply them in our own lives as believers in the Lord.

Paul refers first of all to the good-work of faith, or the **works of faith**. These were not the dead works of the Law of Moses, or any system of religious rule-keeping. A work of faith can only be accomplished through the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. God has prepared good works for each of us to do, but these tasks can only be carried out as we submit to his leading and guidance.

You see, this faith is the spiritual foundation upon which all spiritual work is anchored. (Think about the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders. The Rock was Christ and his Word.) Their faith was a sanctifying or purifying faith, the type of faith Saint James challenged his readers with when he wrote, 'show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.' It is always important to identify whether a passage relates to initial salvation (what we call 'justification') or ongoing salvation as a believer progresses in the faith, which the Bible calls 'sanctification' - the act of becoming more holy or godly, more Christ-like, which is what the word 'saint' means.

Tuesday is All Saints Day. Whereas some Christians celebrate the lives of certain saints or special people, like Saint Peter or Saint Paul, the Bible actually teaches that all people in Christ are special because all are special to him and have been gifted with his Spirit. So, all people who name the Name of Christ as their Saviour and Lord are called to be saints - to be Christ-like. So, on Tuesday, we can, of course, celebrate the work that Christ has done through some remarkable people, both in the past and present, but we can also rejoice in the fact that we are also sainted in Christ and are special in him and chosen for his service. But the question is: are we living to please our Lord and Saviour or to please ourselves?

So, faith that justifies is a work of the Spirit in the heart of a person who has trusted in Christ as their Saviour. This salvation is based on his finished work on the Cross. Faith that justifies takes place at one moment in time, when we place our trust

in Christ. When a sinner is born-again, their faith in Christ is reckoned by God as righteousness. They are justified - just as if they had never sinned. However, the ongoing faith that sanctifies, is the work of faith that Paul praises in that verse - the work of faith the Thessalonians had in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sanctification is a work of faith which takes time to grow and mature. It is the faith that translates into good works that honour the Lord. An ongoing sanctification process takes place as the Holy Spirit works the work of God through our lives. In other words, a 'work of faith' is a righteous act of God which He carries out through us because of our faith in Christ. When our faith rests on him, the work we produce is Christ working through us.

Our second 'good work' is the **labour of love**. The love of these Thessalonian Christians was not a fluctuating, emotional love, or love based on sentimental feelings, and changing circumstances. Instead, their love of the Lord was a sacred bond of genuine praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done for them, through Christ. This kind of love is the denial of our ego, our self-life, the desire to please ourselves. Instead, it is a deep desire to do only that which honours the Lord.

For this labouring in love is prompted by the knowledge that all we are and all we have is from the Lord. The more we know of God's goodness and grace towards us the more we are prompted to labour in love for the Lord. When we begin to consider the enormity of what God has done for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died on the Cross for us, the more we are prompted to labour in love for Him.

The Church is the Body of Christ; an incarnation of love in and through the Spirit of the Living Lord Jesus. He made it very clear that the clearest demonstration of the power of the gospel to save is the love of Christians for their Lord and for each other. Jesus said, 'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' This is a love that transcends all the barriers and barricades that the world around us will put up to try to limit our freedom in Christ. But sadly, Christians are good at following the world's agenda by helping the opposition to erect those same barriers of division within our churches. You see, divide and conquer has always been the Devil's strategy.

The third **Good Work** of the Thessalonians was the steadfastness or persistence of their future hope in the Lord Jesus. His many precious promises and the blessed expectation of his soon return was not founded on empty optimism or a fingers-crossed-wishful-thinking attitude. It is the unshakable confidence in the knowledge that God's Word is true. And though we may have to wait for His return - it will certainly come. But in the meantime, as Paul says, 'For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.' 'For to be away from the body' is to be 'at home with the Lord'. When with perseverance, we hope in the Lord and stand firm on the promises of God, we have an inner-assurance in His Word. Indeed, our steadfast hope in the Lord is the unshakable conviction that what we read in his Word is God-breathed or God-spoken to us as unique individuals who are precious in his sight.

May we follow in the footsteps of the Christians of Thessalonica whose good works were energised by faith, whose service was motivated by love, and who maintained an

unwavering hope in the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. May our work of faith be actively dependent on Him. May our labour of love become a living sacrifice that honours our Father God in thought, word, and deed, and may the steadfastness of our hope in Christ Jesus our Lord, inspire others to follow our example. In other words, that they too will desire to be a clear beacon for Christ; a lighthouse that will shine forth the gospel of peace in a world that has lost its way and is groping around in the dark, trying to find some faith, love and hope for the future, both in this life and for the life to come.

I started with a children's song, and now I'm going to end with one; one I'm sure you will all recognise:

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine."

**As we bring our service to a close , Colin invited us to sing again, once more with Alec playing the piano:**

Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice.  
Christ, be our light! .....

Longing for food, many are hungry. Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others, shared until all are fed.  
Christ, be our light! ...

Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone.  
Christ, be our light! ....

Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Author: Bernadette Farrell CCL No 5664

And finally ;

**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.**