

Welcome and Call to Worship

I would like to extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to everyone who receives this service wherever and whenever it is read.

May The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26)

Opening Prayer

We gather together in the name of Jesus Christ, we are all members of God's family; we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

Heavenly Father, we unite together in praise and thank you for all the blessings you have poured out on us. May we focus on those things we have in common. May we come with open hearts before the Lord in love and true friendship with one another.

Amen

Psalm 24

- ¹ The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;
² for he founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters.
- ³ Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD?
Who may stand in his holy place?
⁴ The one who has clean hands and a pure
heart,
who does not trust in an idol
or swear by a false god.^[a]
- ⁵ They will receive blessing from the LORD
and vindication from God their Saviour.
- ⁶ Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek your face, God of Jacob.^{[b][c]}
- ⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
- ⁸ Who is this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.
- ⁹ Lift up your heads, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
- ¹⁰ Who is he, this King of glory?
The LORD Almighty—
he is the King of glory.

Hymn**Happy the man that finds the grace**

Charles Wesley

Happy the man that finds the grace,
The blessing of God's chosen race,
The wisdom coming from above,
The faith that sweetly works by love.

Happy beyond description he
Who knows, The Saviour died for me,
The gift unspeakable obtains,
And heavenly understanding gains.

Wisdom divine! Who tells the price
Of wisdom's costly merchandise
Wisdom to silver we prefer,
And gold is dross compared to her.

Her hands are filled with length of days,
True riches, and immortal praise,
Riches of Christ, on all bestowed,
And honour that descends from God.

To purest joys she all invites,
Chaste, holy, spiritual delights;
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her flowery paths are peace.

Happy the man who wisdom gains,
Thrice happy who his guest retains!
He owns, and shall for ever own,
Wisdom, and Christ, and heaven are one.

Prayers of intercession

Take a few moments now to bring to the Lord all that is on your mind and in your heart leaving your worries at the foot of the cross. We all have people and places in our thoughts, and things that are troubling us. If you have printed this document fill in the blanks with those things that you wish to lift to the Lord or just raise them one at a time in your mind creating your own Prayers of intercession

1

Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

2

Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

3

Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

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Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

5

Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

6

Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

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Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

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Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

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Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

10

Lord of Love and Mercy hear my Prayer

Hymn Saved by Grace (Some Day the Silver Cord Will Break)

Fanny Crosby

Someday the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But oh, the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King!

Chorus:

And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story— Saved by grace;
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story— Saved by grace.

Someday my earthly house will fall,
I cannot tell how soon 'twill be;
But this I know— my All in All
Has now a place in heaven for me. (Chorus)

Someday, when fades the golden sun
Beneath the rosy-tinted west,
My blessed Lord will say, "Well done!"
And I shall enter into rest. (Chorus)

Someday: till then I'll watch and wait,
My lamp all trimmed and burning bright,
That when my Saviour opens the gate,
My soul to Him may take its flight. (Chorus)

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.

Reading Please open your Bible and read
Ephesians 1 verses 3 to 14

Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ

Having read these verses spend a few moments in personal prayer opening your hearts to the words.

Reflection

It is a testament to the enduring nature of the word of God that a letter written to a church in Ephesus around 60AD still resonates with us today. Paul identifies himself at the beginning of the letter and its style and internal references confirm Paul as the author.

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia (today part of Turkey) it was a major cultural and commercial hub it was also the site of the fertility temple dedicated to the goddess Diana (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world). More importantly Paul used it for the centre of his missionary work in the region.

Ephesians like many of Paul's writings confirms that salvation is through faith and cannot be attained by works or human endeavour. The whole letter emphasises that as believers we are as one body in Christ and that it is imperative we work together to make the unity of the church a reality.

Today we will be looking a little closer at chapter 1 verses 3 to 14

Verses 3 to 14 is actually one long sentence that thanks God for the actions and blessing that have led us to be one body with Christ. These verses give a concise and beautiful summary of the Christian message and the glory that is Christ Jesus.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

This applies no matter who we are or what we have done in the past. John Wesley's words in the hymn "To God be the Glory" summarises it perfectly "O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood to every believer the promise of God. The vilest offender who truly believes that moment from Jesus a pardon receives."

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit

People are often described as either a glass half empty or a glass half full kind of person. Myself, whether I am glass half empty or half full can change by the hour and I am sure that is the same with most people. But what I so often forget is that no matter how empty my glass is it is always refillable and the best way to refill the glass is to count ones blessings. Today's reading shows us vividly how blessed we are when we have Christ in our lives.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ

What a blessing it is to know that the creator of heaven and earth has enacted a plan for our salvation. To know that we are now at one with God due to the saving grace of Jesus.

This is the message that was carried out by the first disciples as they preached to all nations Salvation is through Jesus the old barriers have come down nothing stands between us and God no walls, no traditions, not race, not gender, not social standing, not even our past sins.

To hear and truly believe, is all that is required, it is as simple and as difficult as that.

We are blessed beyond measure to be part of God's salvation plan, God's great plan for his creation through Christ.

Today's reading reminds us that God is achieving his purposes: through the gospel being preached, heard, and believed.

So what is standing in your way, what is the barrier that still stands for you, why is your glass either half full or half empty, why are you not filling it to overflowing with the blessings of Jesus letting those blessings flow from your glass to all you meet. So many people are thirsty so many are spiritually dry, so why, when we know where the spring is, do we think twice about filling our glasses to overflowing?

We should never think twice and we should never find a reason not to share the good news of Jesus.

So be bold, fill your glass and go forth sharing the good news and the love of Jesus.

Hymn Jesus, lover of my soul
Charles Wesley

Jesus, lover of my soul,
let me to thy bosom fly,
while the nearer waters roll,
while the tempest still is high;
hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
till the storm of life is past;
safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
hangs my helpless soul on thee;
leave, ah! Leave me not alone,
still support and comfort me.
All my trust on thee is stayed,
all my help from thee I bring;
cover my defenceless head
with the shadow of thy wing.

Plenteous grace with thee is found,
grace to cover all my sin;
let the healing streams abound;
make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art;
freely let me take of thee;
spring thou up within my heart,
rise to all eternity.

Poem

The Road Of Faith

© By M.S.Lowndes

Shine your light, O Lord,
so that I may see,
just where I am heading
and what's in front of me

Your word is the light,
the lamp unto my feet
It may not light far ahead,
nor show me where it's steep

But it gives enough light
for each step I take,
just enough to see ahead,
along this road of faith

For this is what it surely is
As we walk with Jesus Christ,
the road that we are travelling on
Is by faith, not by sight

So shine your light, O Lord,
so we may see our way,
though you only show in part,
it's enough for each new day.

Sending and Closing Prayer

Merciful God, we celebrate the way that you chose to bring unity and peace to people through the gift of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We give you heartfelt thanks that though we are incapable of being consistently good, loving and righteous - . You, gracious Father, are those things for us.

Forgive us for our inconsistency, and bless us.

May we know that your love for us is constant it never changes, and that your forgiveness is always there for us no matter what circumstances we find ourselves facing.

Help us Lord to go forth in your love without prejudice and to bring the word of your saving grace to all we meet, Amen.

Grace Prayer

Wherever we are, we can share the
grace together.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus
Christ, the love of God and the
fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with
us all, now and evermore.

Amen