

Service Plan – Sunday 25 July 2021

- This service is designed for use in a small group setting, so will function differently with only 1 or 2 people. Feel free to adapt it to suit.
- It will be helpful if one person leads the gathering, and introduces each section using the suggested words, or take turns! There are some things to say together as well (in bold).
- You can access the songs and sermon by clicking on the links where they are found in the outline.

Introduction

We have come together as the church of God to fix our eyes upon Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, to encourage one another to hold fast to the hope he has given us, and to spur one another to love and good deeds.

Hebrews 12:1-2 says:

“Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith.”

Optional Song

Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) - [Link](#)

Optional Kid’s Song

Who’s the King of the Jungle - [Link](#)

Optional Kid’s Video (approx. 12 minutes)

Suffering (Part 2 - God works suffering for good) - [Overview with discussion Q’s](#)

Quiz Worx Video - [Link](#)

Kids’ Activity sheets are here: [Ages 2-4](#) | [Ages 5-8](#) | [Ages 9-12](#)

The Creed

Let’s affirm with Christians across the world and through the ages what we believe about God and his love for us:

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again from the dead;

he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy universal church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

Bible Readings

The following, or another prayer may be said before the Bible readings

Gracious God,
your word is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword.
Today, when we hear your voice, deliver us from hardness of heart.
Help us to put away everything that keeps us from persevering in your way,
for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

1 Kings 20:35-43

³⁵One of the sons of the prophets said to his fellow prophet by the word of the LORD, “Strike me!” But the man refused to strike him.

³⁶He told him, “Because you did not listen to the LORD, mark my words: When you leave me, a lion will kill you.” When he left him, a lion attacked and killed him.

³⁷The prophet found another man and said to him, “Strike me!” So the man struck him, inflicting a wound. ³⁸Then the prophet went and waited for the king on the road. He disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes. ³⁹As the king was passing by, he cried out to the king and said, “Your servant marched out into the middle of the battle. Suddenly, a man turned aside and brought someone to me and said, ‘Guard this man! If he is ever missing, it will be your life in place of his life, or you will weigh out seventy-five pounds of silver.’” ⁴⁰But while your servant was busy here and there, he disappeared.”

The king of Israel said to him, “That will be your sentence; you yourself have decided it.”

⁴¹He quickly removed the bandage from his eyes. The king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets. ⁴²The prophet said to him, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Because you released from your hand the man I had set apart for destruction, it will be your life in place of his life and your people in place of his people.’” ⁴³The king of Israel left for home resentful and angry, and he entered Samaria.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy:

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace to you and peace.

²We always thank God for all of you, making mention of you constantly in our prayers. ³We recall, in the presence of our God and Father, your work produced by faith, your labor motivated by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and with full assurance. You know how we lived among you for your benefit, ⁶and you yourselves became imitators of us and of the Lord when, in spite of severe persecution, you welcomed the message with joy from the Holy Spirit. ⁷As a result, you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord rang out from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place that your faith in God has gone out. Therefore, we don't need to say anything, ⁹for they themselves report what kind of reception we had from you: how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Christian Standard Bible (CSB)

The Christian Standard Bible. Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers.

Sermon

[Dan Budd - 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 - Faith, love and hope](#)

Optional time for discussion or reflection

Confession

Romans 3:23 tells us that “All of us have sinned and fall short of God’s glory”. Therefore, God calls us to confess our sins, to him and to one another, to turn away from our sin and turn to Christ to receive his mercy and grace. So, let’s pray this prayer of confession together:

Heavenly Father,

**we praise you for adopting us as your children
and making us heirs of eternal life.**

**In your mercy you have washed us from our sins
and made us clean in your sight.**

Yet we still fail to love you and serve you as we should.

**Forgive us our sins and renew us by your grace,
that we may continue to grow as members of Christ,
in whom alone is our salvation. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Merciful Father, we rejoice that you forgive those who truly repent and trust in your Son. Grant us true repentance and your Holy Spirit, that we may live godly and obedient lives, and finally come to your eternal glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer

Father, thank you that you have promised to hear us when we pray, and that through your dear Son Jesus Christ you have taught us best how and what to pray. We come to you now in obedience to your word and trusting in your gracious promise. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ together with all the saints and Christians on earth as he has taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

Informal time of prayer or you could use some of the prayers below:

Praise be to you our awesome God for as Psalm 66 sings to us, you have preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping. Although testing us you “refine us like silver” and although we go through “fire and water” you bring us to a “place of abundance.” How magnificent, loving and rejuvenating you are. Oh Lord in these troubled Covid times we need you. Please be merciful to hear our prayers and save us from self-pity, doom and gloom. Let us be merry light beacons who bless others as we are filled full of your hope. May we be comforters in the love of Jesus as we point the way to the balm and guidance of your Holy Spirit.

We ask that you might keep us faithful and obedient, reading your word and praying every day as we stay alert for the gooddeeds we can do that have been stored up for us in advance. Might we do these things with generous and willing hearts, always looking to advance and proclaim your Kingdom love. Keep us from temper outbursts and selfish conflict. Even as we are restricted indoors, might we be free from frustration in your Spirit, confounding with your fruit the evil temptations that seek to ensnare us.

Please help us to be creative in developing community fellowship despite physical separation. Watch over those who find difficulty using technological tools. Give us patience with each other through the setbacks when plans appear to fail. We think of the growth groups just beginning new bible studies this term. Please give understanding of what we read and help us to apply this well and share even although we are apart.

Dear Lord, thank you that our builders have been able to make a start on our new church buildings but please protect them and the work site as they must now stop for a while. May this whole experience serve to enrich our appreciation of your blessing in providing

wonderful meeting areas and also each other as we look forward to when we can finally worship together again.

Bless our young folk please dear Lord. Keep them healthy and give them insight to your grace and power through their studies and reflections on your purposes and your claim on their lives. Oh Holy Spirit, please sweep through all the leaders and provide them with the wisdom, guidance, creativity and stamina they need to deliver the youth program successfully amidst Covid conditions.

Lord Jesus, you are the healer and the one who comforted your disciples just before dying for us all with the words "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." We believe this with great joy dear Father and look forward to seeing and participating in your stupendous action for justice, righteousness and mercy in the near future, as evil and sickness is overcome in all certainty and truth.

Optional Song

Won my Heart - [Link](#)

Concluding Prayer

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

What's Happening:

Notices video - [Link](#)

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and keep up to date on what is happening!

