

Service Plan – Sunday 31 October 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 on 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 pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”*

Optional Song

Micah Song - [Link](#)

Optional Kid’s Song

Jesus is the King - [Link](#)

Optional Kid’s Video (approx. 5 minutes)

God, the maker of the world - [Link](#)

Creed

Colossians 1

**Christ is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn over all creation.**

**For in him all things were created,
things in heaven and on earth,
visible and invisible:**

**He is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.**

He is the head of the body, the church.

**He is the beginning, and the firstborn from the dead,
so that in everything he might have the supremacy.**

**For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,
and through him to reconcile to himself all things,
whether things on earth or things in heaven,**

**by making peace through his blood
shed on the cross. 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.**

Lamentations 2:12-22

ל Lamed

¹² They cry out to their mothers, “Where is the grain and wine?”
as they faint like the wounded in the streets of the city,
as their life pours out in the arms of their mothers.

מ Mem

¹³ What can I say on your behalf? What can I compare you to, Daughter Jerusalem?
What can I liken you to, so that I may console you, Virgin Daughter Zion?
For your ruin is as vast as the sea. Who can heal you?

נ Nun

¹⁴ Your prophets saw visions for you that were empty and deceptive;
they did not reveal your iniquity and so restore your fortunes.
They saw pronouncements for you that were empty and misleading.

ו Samek

¹⁵ All who pass by scornfully clap their hands at you.
They hiss and shake their heads at Daughter Jerusalem:
Is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty,
the joy of the whole earth?

פ Pe

¹⁶ All your enemies open their mouths against you.
They hiss and gnash their teeth, saying, “We have swallowed her up.
This is the day we have waited for! We have lived to see it.”

צ Ayin

¹⁷ The LORD has done what he planned; he has accomplished his decree,
which he ordained in days of old. He has demolished without compassion,
letting the enemy gloat over you and exalting the horn of your adversaries.

ץ Tsade

¹⁸ The hearts of the people cry out to the Lord.
Wall of Daughter Zion, let your tears run down like a river day and night.
Give yourself no relief and your eyes no rest.

ק Qoph

¹⁹ Arise, cry out in the night from the first watch of the night.
Pour out your heart like water before the Lord's presence.
Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children
who are fainting from hunger at the head of every street.

ר Resh

²⁰ LORD, look and consider to whom you have done this.
Should women eat their own children, the infants they have nurtured?
Should priests and prophets be killed in the Lord's sanctuary?

ש Shin

²¹ Both young and old are lying on the ground in the streets.
My young women and young men have fallen by the sword.
You have killed them in the day of your anger, slaughtering without compassion.

ת Taw

²² You summon those who terrorize me on every side, as if for an appointed festival day;
on the day of the LORD's anger no one escaped or survived.
My enemy has destroyed those I nurtured and reared.

Acts 21:15-36

¹⁵ After this we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ Some of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us and brought us to Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to stay.

¹⁷ When we reached Jerusalem, the brothers and sisters welcomed us warmly. ¹⁸ The following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ After greeting them, he reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

²⁰ When they heard it, they glorified God and said, "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law. ²¹ But they have been informed about you—that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or to live according to our customs. ²² So what is to be done? They will certainly hear that you've come. ²³ Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have made a vow. ²⁴ Take these men, purify yourself along with them, and pay for them to get their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that what they were told about you amounts to nothing, but that you yourself are also careful about observing the law. ²⁵ With regard to the Gentiles who have believed, we have written a letter containing our decision that they should keep themselves from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from sexual immorality."

²⁶ So the next day, Paul took the men, having purified himself along with them, and entered the temple, announcing the completion of the purification days when the offering would be made for each of them. ²⁷ When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd, and seized him, ²⁸ shouting, “Fellow Israelites, help! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against our people, our law, and this place. What’s more, he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.” ²⁹ For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

³⁰ The whole city was stirred up, and the people rushed together. They seized Paul, dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut.

³¹ As they were trying to kill him, word went up to the commander of the regiment that all Jerusalem was in chaos. ³² Taking along soldiers and centurions, he immediately ran down to them. Seeing the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the commander approached, took him into custody, and ordered him to be bound with two chains. He asked who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ Some in the crowd were shouting one thing and some another. Since he was not able to get reliable information because of the uproar, he ordered him to be taken into the barracks. ³⁵ When Paul got to the steps, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, ³⁶ for the mass of people followed, yelling, “Get rid of him!”

Christian Standard Bible (CSB)

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Sermon

Dan Budd - [Acts 21:15-36](#)

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

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

Heavenly Father, we come before as people in need of saviour. We thank you that before time began on this earth you planned to send Jesus as that saviour. You gave your only son for us. You gave your very best to save an undeserving people. Lord, help us to never forget that there was nothing good in us worth redeeming other than we were your creation.

As we thank you for your generosity, we pray too, that we will be generous with our time, our gifts and our money. We ask that we might learn to look after the needs of others, especially your church. May we have your heart for the lost.

We thank you for the generosity of the members of this church past and present who have given to so that the gospel can be proclaimed within our church and then taken to the ends of the earth.

Give us a desire to not just listen to your word but be people who are obedient. Help us not to be like boats washed around on the waves and uncertain. We pray that we might be sure of our salvation and live a life obedient to you because we know you are all truth.

We thank you that you have shown us what marriage should be as you show us Christ giving up his life for the church, and the church submitting to his righteous rule. We pray that you will strengthen all marriages that they might reflect your glory and that they will be a safe place for children to grow and be nurtured in your ways.

Please help those whose marriages are hard work. Give husbands and wives patience, perseverance, and a great love for each other. Help those who aren't married and wish to be married a great sense of purpose in their circumstance.

As we slowly come back to a sense of normality help us to not leave anyone behind. Please help us to know who might have slipped away in this time. We pray for our young people in youth group and kids club. May we be known as a church that loves and caters for all ages. Especially Lord, for the next generation we pray they will find their hope in Jesus and help the leaders to love them and prepare well.

We continue to pray for the people of Afghanistan. Pray for the protection and provision of local believers and their families. We ask that our brothers and sisters will persevere through difficulties and persecution. We also pray for ongoing Bible translation work as well as radio, TV and social media ministries.

We ask all this for the glory of Jesus. Amen.

Let's conclude with the Lord's Prayer:

**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.**

Optional Song

Let Your Kingdom Come - [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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