

Preparation Song

**Come people of the Risen King
Who delight to bring Him praise
Come all and tune your hearts to sing
To the Morning Star of grace
From the shifting shadows of the earth
We will lift our eyes to Him
Where steady arms of mercy reach
To gather children in**

Rejoice Rejoice

**Let every tongue rejoice
One heart one voice
O Church of Christ rejoice**

**Come those whose joy is morning sun
And those weeping through the night
Come those who tell of battles won
And those struggling in the fight
For His perfect love will never change
And His mercies never cease
But follow us through all our days
With the certain hope of peace**

Rejoice Rejoice...

**Come young and old from every land
Men and women of the faith
Come those with full or empty hands
Find the riches of His grace
Over all the world His people sing
Shore to shore we hear them call
The Truth that cries through every age
Our God is all in all**

Call to worship

Though the LORD is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life.

(Psalm 138:6-7)

Opening prayer

Gracious God, we come rejoicing in your presence, for your love is stronger than

death, your mercy reaches from the heavens to the very depths, and your kindness is seen in your grace in Jesus our Lord. We praise your holy name! Amen.

Confession

We come with humble hearts before you, Lord, and confess our sins.

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

May God our Father forgive us our sins, and bring us to the fellowship of his table with his saints for ever.

Amen.

Opening Song

**God, you have done great things
God, You give grace to the weak,
And bless the broken-hearted
with a song of praise to sing.
You reached down and lifted us up,
You came running, looking for us.
And now there's nothing,
and no one beyond Your love.**

***You're the overflow,
You're the fountain of my heart,
So let Your mercy rain,
let Your mercy rain on us.
You're the faithful One
when the world's falling apart.
So let Your mercy rain,
let Your mercy rain on us.***

**How deep, how wide,
how long, how high
Is Your love, is Your love.
How deep, how wide,
how long, how high
Is Your love, is Your love, O God.**

Reading: Acts 11:19-30 (NET)

¹⁹Now those who had been scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the message to no one but Jews. ²⁰But there were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene among them who came to Antioch and began to speak to the Greeks too, proclaiming the good news of the Lord Jesus. ²¹The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

²²A report about them came to the attention of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts, ²⁴because he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and a significant number of people were brought to the Lord.

²⁵Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught a significant number of people. Now it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.

²⁷At that time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸One of them, named Agabus, got up and predicted by the Spirit that a severe famine was about to come over the whole inhabited world. (This took place during the reign of Claudius). ²⁹So the disciples, each in accordance with his financial ability, decided to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. ³⁰They did so, sending their financial aid to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Reflection: The Gospel Spreads – through encouragement

Mike Gibbs

What has challenged or encouraged you in the teaching from God's Word today? What will you take away from this and into the coming week?

Prayers of intercession

Loving God, when the believers were scattered because of persecution the Gospel message spread. We pray for your Church today. Where we are scattered by the coronavirus and confined, we pray that your message of hope in Jesus Christ would be heard by more and more people. We pray that a great number would turn to you and believe in you in these days. May our land flourish by the preaching of your Word and the praising of your name. We also pray for our fellow Christians who are being persecuted because they call you Lord. Strengthen them with joy in your presence.

Loving God, the Gospel went to both Jews and Gentiles. We pray for this nation as lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted.

May the rate of infection stay low so that people can start to see the way ahead and not live in fear. We pray also for other nations where the virus is spreading. May those in authority, who are tasked with making life-changing decisions, have godly wisdom and compassion. May they not be driven by self-interest or greed.

Loving God, thank you that in a world in despair, you are our hope. Help us to remain true to you with all our hearts. In this season where some are reaching out for you, draw us to those people and give to each one of us the ability and desire to speak your word of encouragement and hope to whomever we meet. When we don't have the words, help us to remember your promise in Scripture, 'Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit' (Mk 13:11). All these things we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Communion Song

**Here is bread, here is wine,
Christ is with us – He is with us;
Break the bread, drink the wine –
Christ is with us here.**

**Here is grace, here is peace,
Christ is with us – He is with us;
Know His grace, find His peace –
Feast on Jesus here.**

*In this bread there is healing,
in this cup there's life forever;
In this moment, by the Spirit
Christ is with us here.*

**Here we are, joined in one,
Christ is with us – He is with us;
We'll proclaim, till He comes –
Jesus crucified.**

Holy Communion

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation; in your love you made us for yourself. When we turned away you did not reject us, but came to meet us in your Son.

You embraced us as your children and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.

In Christ you shared our life that we might live in him and he in us.

He opened his arms of love upon the cross and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.

On the night he was betrayed, at supper with his friends he took bread, and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

Father, we do this in remembrance of him: his body is the bread of life.

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you thanks, and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins; do this in remembrance of me.

Father, we do this in remembrance of him: his blood is shed for all.

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory, send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

As we eat and drink these holy gifts make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.

With your whole Church throughout the world we offer you this sacrifice of praise

and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

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 for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, **we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

The Body of Christ keep you in eternal life
The Blood of Christ keep you in eternal life

Prayer after Communion

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

Closing song

**In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!**

**My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.**

**In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied –
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.**

**There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine –
bought with the precious blood of Christ.**

**No guilt in life, no fear in death,
this is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home,
here in the power of Christ I'll stand!**

Closing prayer and blessing

Now may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your 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 with you and all whom you love, now and for evermore. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.