

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP:

'Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth'
(1 John 3:18)

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Gracious God, we come rejoicing in your presence, and proclaim the glory of your kingdom, for your mercy reaches from the heavens to the very depths, and your kindness and grace are seen in Jesus Christ our Lord. Now receive our worship, all we have and all we are, for your glory's sake. **Amen.**

SONGS:

Men Of Faith

**Men of faith, rise up and sing
Of the great and glorious King;
You are strong when you feel weak,
In your brokenness complete.**

**Shout to the north and the south,
Sing to the east and the west:
Jesus is Saviour to all,
Lord of heaven and earth.**

**Rise up women of the truth,
Stand and sing to broken hearts,
Who can know the healing power
Of our glorious King of love.**

**Shout to the north and the south,
Sing to the east and the west:
Jesus is Saviour to all,
Lord of heaven and earth.**

**We've been through fire,
We've been through rain;
We've been refined
By the power of His name.
We've fallen deeper in love with You,
You've burned the truth on our lips.**

**Shout to the north and the south,
Sing to the east and the west:
Jesus is Saviour to all,
Lord of heaven and earth.**

**Rise up church with broken wings;
Fill this place with songs again,
Of our God who reigns on high:**

By His grace again we'll fly.

**Shout to the north and the south,
Sing to the east and the west:
Jesus is Saviour to all,
Lord of heaven and earth.**

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Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart

**Give thanks with a grateful heart.
Give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ, His Son.
(Repeat)**

**And now let the weak say 'I am strong,'
Let the poor say 'I am rich,'
Because of what the Lord has done for us.
(Repeat)**

**(Last time)
Give thanks.**

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Faithful God

**Faithful God, faithful God,
All sufficient One, I worship You.
Shalom my peace,
My strong Deliverer,
I lift You up, faithful God.**

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CONFESSON

Let us come before the Lord with humble hearts 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.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

CHRISTIAN AID VIDEO

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/appeals/christian-aid-week-film>

NOTICES, TIME OF SHARING, AND BANNINGS OF MARRIAGE

- Christian Aid collecting – this Friday and Saturday
- Church meeting next Sunday (19 May)

OFFERTORY SONG:

Lord, We Long For You To Move In Power

Lord, we long for You to move in power;

There's a hunger deep within our hearts,

To see healing in our nation.

Send Your Spirit to revive us:

Heal our nation,

Heal our nation,

Heal our nation,

Pour out Your Spirit on this land.

Lord we hear Your Spirit, coming closer,

A mighty wave to break upon our land,

Bringing justice, and forgiveness.

God we cry to You, 'Revive us':

Trish Morgan, Ray Goudie, Ian Townend, Dave Bankhead. © 1986 Kingsway's Thankyou Music. CCL Licence number: 839

OFFERTORY PRAYER AND PRAYER FOR SUNDAY CLUB

Loving God, in your generosity you have given us life through your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Now bless these gifts and our lives for your kingdom's sake.

We pray now for the Sunday Club, that both the children and adults would know the joy of your presence and the power of your Holy Spirit that together they may grow closer to you, in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

READING: 1 John 3:16-24 – Mike Acaster

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ if our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in

them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: we know it by the Spirit he gave us.

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

REFLECTION: How do we show the love of God?

If you were asked to summarise what you believe, what would you say? The great Swiss theologian Karl Barth was giving a lecture at a university in the USA. After the lecture, some students had an informal conversation with him. One asked him to state the core of what he believed. Karl Barth thought for a moment and then replied, "Yes, I think I can summarise my theology in these words: 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.'"

The heart of the Christian faith is the love of God shown in Jesus laying down his life for you. Jesus loves you. That is why he laid down his life for you. It was a voluntary act on our behalf. And because Jesus laid down his life for us, we are to do the same for others (1 John 3:16). Although some Christians may be called upon to lay down their lives for others in the literal sense, most of us are called to show love in less drastic ways. For example, 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?' (v17). Love moves from the superficial to the essence of a person. Love looks beyond what we like or do not like in a person. Love goes deeper.

John speaks of seeing a brother in need. Seeing someone else in need should stir us up to help, to have compassion on that person. Now when John refers to brothers, is he only referring to Christians? Or is his command to love to be extended to anyone in need, Christian or not? Here the term 'brother' is not limited to Christians since the term is being used here in a more general sense. John is writing about anyone in need, any fellow human being, Christian or non-Christian, male or female. Our love for God is a love that has compassion and pity on those in need, whoever they are.

It has been said that you do not need to murder in order to sin; hatred is murder of the heart. You do not have to hate in order to sin; all you have to be is indifferent to those in need. Sometimes the greatest sin we can commit is the sin of indifference.

Based on that we get to 1 John 3:18, one of the first ever verses I learned from the Bible. 'Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.' We are to put love into action by helping others we see in need. The word 'actions' here is the Greek word *ergon*. It is from this word that in English we get the word ergonomics. Ergonomics is the study of how equipment used within the workplace can best be designed, for example best designed for efficiency, productivity, comfort and safety. It can also describe the qualities of the design. Our love for others should be ergonomically effective in the sense that its distinctive quality should be that it is Christlike in every way. Our love should be effective and productive, bringing comfort and safety to others. It should meet the needs of others in tangible ways.

John also says we should love in truth. In others words, our love should be genuinely demonstrated in action. This is where the work of Christian Aid comes in. We see our fellow human beings in need, whether through poverty, drought, war or whatever, and if we do nothing, can we really say the love of God is in us? Christian Aid has the high aim of seeking to end poverty and injustice worldwide. Christian Aid works with local partners and communities across 29 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America and the Caribbean. The aim is to fight injustice, respond to humanitarian emergencies, campaign for change, and help people claim the services and rights they are entitled to, such as healthcare and education. If you want to know more about their work, go to their website, where all the information is available. But let me give you a flavour of their work.

In Burundi Christian Aid works for sustainable and resilient food production, where farmers receive a fair price for their goods, and food insecurity and malnutrition are combatted. We heard the story of Aline, who because of her husband was made homeless and destitute. There are many other women like Aline across the world. Christian Aid seeks to support them through loans, training and encouragement.

In Colombia Christian Aid's work focusses on the issues of reducing violence and building peace across communities. It also seeks to change the structures within the country that perpetuate violence, inequality and human suffering. Christian Aid works among vulnerable communities by helping them claim their right to land and territory and to hold the state to account.

And finally in Bangladesh, Christian Aid works to help marginalised communities so that they can have access to land, to water, to forests and basic government services. Being such a low-lying country, Bangladesh is used to flooding, but sometimes it can be a major disaster. Christian Aid helps with disaster risk, as well as working with partners who can offer technical expertise on tackling the effects of climate change.

To love means to love in action. This is what Christian Aid is all about – love in action. I hope you will support their work either financially or with your time and prayers.

To conclude, William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, once sent a one-word telegraph message to encourage his officers around the world. It simply said "Others!" In loving God, let us show that love in action by loving others, whether they be near or far. Let us love not just with our words but with our actions and in the truth that all people are worth something because they are loved by God, who gave his Son for them.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION: Christine McGrath

All these things we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

SONG BEFORE COMMUNION:

The Servant King (From Heaven You Came)

**From heaven You came, helpless babe,
Entered our world, Your glory veiled,**

**Not to be served but to serve,
And give Your life that we might live.**

**This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow Him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King.**

**There in the garden of tears
My heavy load He chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours', He said.**

This is our God

**Come see His hands and His feet
The scars that speak of sacrifice,
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered.**

This is our God

**So let us learn how to serve
And in our lives enthrone Him,
Each other's needs to prefer,
For it is Christ we're serving.**

This is our God

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THE PEACE

The Lord gives us his peace and invites us to share it.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Let us share with one another a sign of peace.

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.**

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

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

THE GIVING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

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:

One Shall Tell Another

**One shall tell another, and he shall tell his friend,
Husbands, wives and children shall come following on.
From house to house in families shall more be gathered in;
And lights will shine in every street, so warm and welcoming.**

**Come on in and taste the new wine,
The wine of the kingdom, the wine of the kingdom of God:
Here is healing and forgiveness,
The wine of the kingdom, the wine of the kingdom of God.**

**Compassion of the Father is ready now to flow;
Through acts of love and mercy we must let it show.
He turns now from His anger to show a smiling face,
And longs that men should stand beneath the fountain of His grace.**

Come on in ...

**He longs to do much more than our faith has yet allowed,
To thrill us and surprise us with His sovereign power.
Where darkness has been darkest, the brightest light will shine;
His invitation comes to us - it's yours and it is mine.**

Come on in ...

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CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING

**May we persevere in faith, May we go out in hope, And may we act and speak with love, By the grace of God, our Creator, Redeemer and Comforter.
Amen.**

**And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.**

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