

Order of Service 21st November 2021

Holy Communion

When Angels Shout!

Welcome

Welcome to Hearsall at home for 21st November 2021. Our service today includes Holy Communion. We reach the penultimate talk on Job, and think of *When angels shout*. And, for next week, you need only read the last chapter of Job, chapter 42, to be ready.

Call to worship

Scripture says that even angels long to look into the mysteries of our salvation which was won for us by Christ's passion on the cross; mysteries we now freely proclaim and celebrate. Let's say it loud: In Christ, God has saved us! We sing, *Far and Near...*

Song (WT 82) Far and Near Hear the Call

Verse 1

Far and near hear the call,
Worship Him, Lord of all.
Families of nations come,
Celebrate what God has done.

Verse 2

Deep and wide is the love
Heaven sent from above;
God's own Son for sinners died,
Rose again, He is alive!

Chorus

*Say it loud, say it strong!
Tell the world what God has done.
Say it loud, praise His name,
Let the earth rejoice, the Lord reigns!*

Verse 3

At His name let praise begin,
Oceans roar, nature sing.
For He comes to judge the earth
In righteousness and in His truth.

Chorus x 2

*Say it loud, say it strong!
Tell the world what God has done.
Say it loud, praise His name,
Let the earth rejoice, the Lord reigns!*

Opening prayer (From 'Theology of Work' website)

Let us celebrate today the providence of God and the gift of work.
We give thanks to you, God our Father, Maker of the universe,
for the unity and order of created things;
for the resources of the earth;
for the gift of human life;
for our share in the continuing work of creation.

O Creator and Lord of all, we thank you for the hidden forces of nature now brought within our control by scientific discovery. We thank you for creative vision and inventiveness, and for the different abilities and skills which you have given us and which we use in daily work. Help us to use all your gifts wisely and faithfully, for the benefit of humankind, that all may rejoice in your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who 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 those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Our journey through Job is nearing its end. We sing now a playful song about this serious book... *Hang in there Job.*

Song Hang In There Job

Verse 1

Well, a long, long time ago, there lived a man named Job.
He had asses, sheep, cattle, and silver and gold.
Then old Lucifer said to the Lord one day,
'I bet, good old Job will curse You,
If You let me take all that away.'

Chorus

*Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hang in there Job.*

Verse 2

Well, the Lord, knowing Job, let the devil try his hand.
Said, 'Take anything you want, but don't take my man.
He's my servant and I love him, so
You can take anything but I won't let Job go.

Chorus

Verse 3

Then poor old Job, lost everything he had;
That old devil turned all his good luck to bad.
He lost his riches and all his children too
But he still loved the Lord, no matter what He said to do.

Chorus

Hallelujah, hallelujah,

Hallelujah, hallelujah,

Hallelujah, hallelujah,

Hang in there Job.

Verse 4

Then the devil went up to the Lord and said,

'You've really got a good fine man; I've taken everything away

And I just don't understand - he will not curse you and worship me;

You've really got a good, fine man. I'm going to let Job be.

Chorus

Verse 5

Then the Lord went up to Job and said, 'You really are a good, fine man,

And I know there're a lot of things you don't just understand,

But to show you that I love you, I'll tell you what I'll do.

I'll give you twice of everything that ol' devil took from you.

Chorus

Offering

Lord, you love us, and, in our imperfect way, we love you. With thankful hearts we choose to share our gifts, and we ask you to use them to bring hope into the world. Amen.

Our prayers of intercession today are led by Nick Leonard.

Prayers of intercession

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ has promised that you will hear us when we ask in faith; receive the prayers we offer.

We pray for...

Christians in other countries, especially where there is suffering, danger and persecution; those sent out as missionaries, Christians in our country; the Baptist Church, our church here at Hearsall, our minister and deacons. May your Church be

an example of your presence in the world. Guide us as we make decisions that you have placed upon us for the future of this church in this community. Give us conviction, strength and unity of spirit to see through the task you have given to us.

Strengthen your people for their witness and work in the world. Fill your people with your Spirit, that they may faithfully live the gospel. Unite in the truth all who confess your name, that we may live together in love and proclaim your glory in all the world.

Father, hear our prayer,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God,
we praise you for your creation, and all you richly provide.

Teach us to live in harmony with your creation.

Show us how to do whatever we can to save your world from the harm which mankind has already done to the earth.

Father, hear our prayer,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We pray for...

the peoples of the world and their leaders; countries in crisis; the Queen who is struggling with health issues, leaders of national and local government; the police and those who administer our laws; all who have responsibility; all men and women in their daily work.

Give wisdom to those in authority in every land, and give to all peoples a desire for righteousness and peace, with the will to work together in trust, to seek the common good and to share with justice the resources of the earth,.

Father, hear our prayer,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We pray for... those in need:

those who suffer; the sick; the poor; the distressed; the lonely; the unloved; the persecuted; the unemployed; those who grieve; those who care for them...

Comfort and heal, merciful Lord, all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other trouble. May they find a firm trust in your goodness; help those who minister to them and bring us all into the joy of your salvation.

Father, hear our prayer,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We pray for...our community:

one another; our local community; those caring for people in need; people known to us. We commend to your keeping, Father, ourselves and each other, our families, our neighbours, and our friends. Enable us by your Spirit to live in love for you and for one another.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen

Many thanks, Nick, for those prayers. We hear now our Bible readings from Job and from Mark.

Readings

Job 38: 1 - 21

The LORD speaks

38 Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:

² 'Who is this that obscures my plans
with words without knowledge?

³ Brace yourself like a man;
I will question you,
and you shall answer me.

⁴ 'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?
Tell me, if you understand.

⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!
Who stretched a measuring line across it?

⁶ On what were its footings set,
or who laid its cornerstone –

⁷ while the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?

⁸ 'Who shut up the sea behind doors
when it burst forth from the womb,

- ⁹ when I made the clouds its garment
and wrapped it in thick darkness,
¹⁰ when I fixed limits for it
and set its doors and bars in place,
¹¹ when I said, "This far you may come and no farther;
here is where your proud waves halt"?
- ¹² 'Have you ever given orders to the morning,
or shown the dawn its place,
¹³ that it might take the earth by the edges
and shake the wicked out of it?
¹⁴ The earth takes shape like clay under a seal;
its features stand out like those of a garment.
¹⁵ The wicked are denied their light,
and their upraised arm is broken.
- ¹⁶ 'Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea
or walked in the recesses of the deep?
¹⁷ Have the gates of death been shown to you?
Have you seen the gates of the deepest darkness?
¹⁸ Have you comprehended the vast expanses of the earth?
Tell me, if you know all this.
- ¹⁹ 'What is the way to the abode of light?
And where does darkness reside?
²⁰ Can you take them to their places?
Do you know the paths to their dwellings?
²¹ Surely you know, for you were already born!
You have lived so many years!

Mark 9: 2 - 8

The transfiguration

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach

them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters – one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' ⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: 'This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!'

⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

Let's join all the angels of heaven in declaring the wonders of the risen Lord in our next song...

Song (WT 7) **All Heaven Declares**

Verse 1

All heaven declares
The glory of the risen Lord.
Who can compare with
The beauty of the Lord?

Chorus

*Forever He will be
The Lamb upon the throne;
I gladly bow the knee
And worship Him, alone.*

Verse 2

I will proclaim
The glory of the risen Lord,
Who once was slain
To reconcile man to God.

Chorus x 2

Forever, You will be

The Lamb upon the throne;

I gladly bow the knee

And worship You alone.

And Lord, may my words and our thoughts be pleasing in your sight. Amen.

Sermon

When Angels Shout!

Think of a vending machine... It's a straight transaction. You put in coins; you get out Dairy Milk or Doritos... Some people think of God like this vending machine... You put in prayers and a righteous life; you get out happiness and prosperity. It's a fair deal; a straight transaction. Job's friends thought of God in this way.

But some people come to this vending-machine-God, put in their coins of prayer and a goody-goody lifestyle, and then nothing comes out of the machine... So they tilt it and bang it with their fists; and they kick it and swear and curse... And they think, *What a useless vending machine!*

Maybe things get even worse. They put their coins in for their Dairy Milk or Doritos and out comes... a rat or a toad or even a poisonous gas. That's like Job, yes? He was a good and religious man, but he suffered personal disasters.

So his friends drop by and say, *man, you put in your coins and poisonous gas seeped out of the dispenser...? Hmmm, they say, we know about this vending machine. That happens when you put in dud coins... Fake coins... You must have put in fake coins, right?*

And Job says, *No! I put in decent proper pound coins and ten piece coins; and I got out a poisonous gas. What are you talking about?*

And the friends say, *no, man, no, we've studied the manual; we know how this thing works. If you get the poisonous gas, you must have put in fake coins. You've got to go see the caretaker, apologise, give some real coins, and it will all be sorted out.*

And Job knows for sure that he put real coins of the realm into the machine: sparkling, newly-minted things straight from the bank... but his friends keep insisting he must have put in false, counterfeit, dud coins.... And then they say *you probably tried to put in euros or dimes from your last holiday... or French francs you found at the bottom of your grandmother's drawer....*

And Job gets more and more frustrated and he says *You know what: This vending machine is horrible; in fact it's evil! You put in the right money; sometimes you get Dairy Milk or Doritos, and sometimes, well sometimes you get lethal gas; that's how it works. Or doesn't work. It's a useless, vile, dangerous machine!*

This offends the friends' theology greatly. And then as they fume, and Job abuses the machine, and rants and raves, the machine starts to smoke... and then there's a flash of light at a short circuit and then.... BANG... The vending machine blows up in a puff of smoke...

Friends... God is not a vending machine! He's not a good vending machine who gives you just what you pay for. He's certainly not a capricious vending machine who sometimes gives the right choice and sometimes the wrong... **He's not a vending machine at all...**

Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm or the whirlwind or the violent tempest! The vending machine is a smoking ruin on the ground as God reveals the vastness of space and time. In response to all their debate, God takes Job on a magical mystery tour!

In chapters 38 to 41 of this amazing book, we are treated to a vision of the angels shouting for joy at the birth of the universe; to a glimpse of the power of the deep oceans held back by God's command; to the light of the dawn that comes to good and bad alike simply revealing what is; to the very source of light itself; to the mysterious abode of the dead of which Job knows nothing; to deep snow and torrential rain; to deserts and grasslands; to the Pleiades, Orion, the Plough and all the constellations of the night sky; to a sense that the stars and the earth must each obey the same laws; to the lioness crouching in her den; to ravens, mountain goats, wild donkeys and oxen; to ostriches outrunning horses; to horses with flowing manes; to hawks and eagles scanning the earth for food....

We see God's glory and splendour, and the proud and the wicked meeting their ultimate demise, as they must; we see a great earth-monster Behemoth, a bit like a hippo, but for all its terrifying power still subject to God's overlordship; we meet at length the monstrous Leviathan, a bit like a crocodile, but breathing fire like some terrible dragon of the deep, terrorising those who travel the oceans, yet God can control it with a fish hook! Yes there is dark power in such creatures, and maybe these strange animals, leviathan and behemoth symbolise chaos and evil, but even so, for all the fear the universe may hold, God is supreme, primary, ultimate; he is the source of everything from stars to microbes; he is the ground of being in which every creature lives and every object exists; he is the destiny all must meet...

And you, you thought of God as a slot machine? Job responds, midway through this magical mystery tour:

*'I am unworthy – how can I reply to you?
I put my hand over my mouth.
I spoke once, but I have no answer –
twice, but I will say no more.'*

So what do we learn about humanity's standing with God through Job? Four things briefly: holy awe, human limits, divine profligacy, relational faith...

Holy awe... At last Job feels the grandeur of God. God is not like a souped-up version of some earthly king or successful businessman. He's not Vladimir Putin writ large or Mark Zuckerberg on speed... He's not a vending machine or a sugar daddy or an influencer or a heavenly entrepreneur...

We might call God a king or a lord or a shepherd, but these words are feeble things compared with the raw reality of God, reality we may, from time to time, feel in our bones. In the majestic survey of life, the universe and everything disclosed in chapters 38 to 41, the text is doing its level best to give its hearers and its readers a sense of the transcendent otherness of God.

Secondly, **human limits...** In view of this transcendent otherness, all human talk about God is experienced as being fundamentally limited in character. Five guys are down on earth having a heated and personal debate about whether God gives little rewards to good people and punishments to bad people... And all such talk is seen

for what it is... a presumption, if taken in absolute terms, a stepping beyond the limits of what humanity can properly do, or be, or say, or know.

Of course, it's okay to talk about God. It's good, even, to reflect on his or her greatness, mercy, holiness and love... So, where's the limit, exactly? The limit is in supposing that we **actually know** for sure who God is or how God works. In my metaphor, it's like reducing God to a slot machine. God will never be contained in human ideas about God.

Chapter 38 - 41 illustrate this through what we might now call scientific knowledge. The survey, I have described as a magical mystery tour, underlines Job's ignorance. He knows virtually nothing of the origins of the universe; the vastness of space-time; the ecology of the natural world on land or sea or air; the psychology of the hidden terrors represented by leviathan and behemoth; the mystery of human consciousness after physical death... He has sometimes in this book longed to be dead, but this text reminds him that he has no concept of what that actually means. As a man, he has limited intellectual powers; he has limited knowledge; he has limited experience of how a person might face their own mortality...

Whereas God is shown as the one who sets the limits. Those limits, in words ironic for the 21st century reader facing climate change, are even applied to the threat of the rising seas:

*'Who shut up the sea behind doors
when it burst forth from the womb,
when I made the clouds its garment
and wrapped it in thick darkness,
when I fixed **limits** for it
and set its doors and bars in place,
when I said, "This far you may come and no farther;
here is where your proud waves halt"?*

Limiting the rise of sea levels was mere child's play to God. Humanity crosses certain limits at its peril.

Thirdly, **divine profligacy**... Profligacy is defined by one online dictionary as *wild extravagance*, and that's what I mean here... Even millennia before the modern

scientific era, the vastness and wonder of all God has made was apparent, at least to deeper thinkers in ancient times. And I recall looking at the Pleiades as a boy through binoculars and seeing, not just the seven sisters, as they are popularly known, but a densely-populated jewel-box of numerous faraway suns, dazzling in different shades...

The ancients could gaze at an unpolluted sky and see the vastness and majesty of the heavens as countless stars merge their light together into the Milky Way. We now know this is gazing into our own galaxy.

Together with all the wonders of creation, Job, and we along with him, are invited to glimpse the wild extravagance of God's creation from Sirius the dog star to the raven searching out food for its young... The creation, even in Job's day, was improbably and unnecessarily vast, out of all proportion to what humans required, and filled with countless unknown wonders.

Which leads to my fourth point: **relational faith**. God creates and upholds this superabundant universe out of sheer joy and delight. In his grace, he even allows the behemoth and the leviathan to exist. His design includes the folly of flightless birds, nesting their eggs on the ground; wild donkeys wandering the hillsides, regardless of human ambition; lands of icy wildernesses where only specialised life can take hold... The angels shout in delight; the children of God sing for joy at it all; light itself is his creation; he is the reason there is something rather than nothing; and within all this array of wonder he sets human beings, formed in his likeness...

A slot machine theology in which spiritual activity and faith is reduced to a mere transaction is a gross affront to the divinity. Job's friends were wrong, deeply wrong, to suppose that God just gave good things to good people and bad things to bad people. Job was wrong to suppose that the transaction was skewed or malevolent.

God simply **is** and God calls us to relate to Godself in wonder, awe, reverence and even ultimately in love. The book of Job begins with Satan saying to God,

skin for skin;

a man will give all he has for his own life.

So right at the start, faith **as a transaction** is on the lips of the devil, not God! Whereas true faith comes by freely entering a relationship with God in love and delight, not because he gives us stuff that we might want.

* * *

Nowadays science has pushed back the limits of knowledge far beyond what Job and the ancients could have conceived. Does this mean that all I have said no longer applies? Not at all.

It's a mistake to locate God in the **gaps** of human knowledge. For example, we need not seize on some anomaly in the theory of evolution as evidence for the necessity of God. The more we discover about the universe, the more wonderful it seems, and God, the source of everything that is, is seen to be greater with every single discovery. If God is only in the gaps in knowledge, then as knowledge expands, God diminishes. The opposite should be the case. Science, as it reveals the mind-boggling vastness and intricacies of the universe, reveals that the greatness of the God behind it all is far beyond all human comprehension. But mysteries remain; explorations continue...

Is the edge of the universe invisible because galaxies at its extremities are moving virtually at the speed of light, so that light from them never reaches us? Is then the universe infinitely large? Why do most galaxies, including our own, contain massive black holes? What is dark matter in the universe, which seems to weigh about six times the mass of all the stars? Is there extra-terrestrial life, and is it possible for such life to travel between star systems? What is the nature of time itself; why do we have that sense of moving forwards in time, but never backwards?

Can human consciousness ever be adequately understood? Might we be able to download human consciousness into an avatar as an emulation of our personality? Could artificial intelligence escape human control, become vastly greater than ourselves and lead to the destruction or enslavement of humanity, as many sci-fi scenarios have suggested?

Let our awe and wonder be magnified with every scientific discovery. But let Christians and other religious people remind the world at large of the limits of humanity. This is not to limit scientific exploration itself, but rather to emphasise that

humanity is finite, so that the journey of exploration goes on forever. There is always more; there is always God.

The theme of the limits of human ability is directly relevant to the politics of a divided world, a world threatened by war and climate change. One nation plays god to the peril of the planet. And humans need to stand in proper relation to the God who made all that is. Human beings are only **part** of the show, embedded in the universe and we are not external players able to manipulate everything without risk or cost. This is the limit we must always respect.

There is something benevolent and marvellous in the fact that the laws of the universe are set just at the right levels for life to develop. And in the midst of this divine profligacy, God reaches down and invites you and me into a free, loving relationship.

We see it in Jesus. The three disciples saw him clothed with dazzling light conversing with Moses and Elijah. Peter wanted to house the three illustrious personages, perhaps to contain them within his own reality. Such an idea is completely out of kilter with the deeper reality of God. He will not be contained, housed, bargained with, explained away, manipulated or controlled.

A cloud covered them all and a voice spoke those now-familiar words:

This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!

Jesus' words explained that he came to usher in a new relationship with God. He came to suffer and be rejected - to die on a cross and be raised on the third day. This was not, as some have thought, a case of God bargaining with the devil - a transaction to buy back lost souls. Rather it is the ultimate expression of what was hinted at in Job.

To relate to God is never a deal in which we give good behaviour and God gives blessings in return. God invites us into a relationship with him, and that relationship is all about love and grace. The cross showed us that God's love is stronger than hatred, and God invites us to rest and to live delighting in his freely given love, and never presuming to think we can bargain for our salvation, as if God were a market trader, some bloke on ebay, or, indeed, a vending machine.

You are loved regardless of your health, your fortunes, your misfortunes, your status, your prospects, your age, your education... And God invites you to love him in exactly the same way.

Let's sing together of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, Mary's son...

Hymn (BPW 444) **Lord Jesus Christ**

Lord Jesus Christ,
You have come to us,
You are one with us,
Mary's son.
Cleansing our souls from all their sin,
Pouring Your love and goodness in;
Jesus, our love for You we sing,
Living Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
Now and every day
Teach us how to pray,
Son of God.
You have commanded us to do
This in remembrance, Lord, of You;
Into our lives Your power breaks through,
Living Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
You have come to us,
Born as one of us,
Mary's son.
Led out to die on Calvary,
Risen from death to set us free;
Living Lord Jesus, help us see
You are Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
I would come to You,
Live my life for You,
Son of God;
All Your commands I know are true;
Your many gifts will make me new;
Into my life Your power breaks through,
Living Lord.

Holy Communion

Sisters and brothers, it's right that we call to mind the meaning of this Supper. It is a remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ for the sin of the world; an encounter with the risen Lord; a feeding on him in faith; a communion with one another in his body, the church; and a looking forward to the day when he will come again. Therefore, we need to come in faith, conscious of our weakness, renouncing our sin, humbly putting our trust in Christ, and seeking his grace.

Prayer of confession

Lord, we come to your table trusting in your mercy and not in any goodness of our own. We are not worthy even to gather up the crumbs under your table, but it is your nature always to have mercy, and on that we depend. Forgive us our sins for your name's sake, and empower us to turn again to the path of life. And now feed us with the body and blood of Jesus Christ, your Son, that we may forever live in him and he in us. Amen.

Scripture

We hear these precious words from Isaiah chapter 53:

Who has believed our message

and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot,

and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,

nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by mankind,

a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

4 Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.

6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

8 By oppression and judgement he was taken away.
Yet who of his generation protested?
For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was punished.

9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death,
though he had done no violence,
nor was any deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

11 After he has suffered,

he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.
For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Jesus said:

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live for ever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

Words of institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Thanksgiving

Lord Jesus, for this bread and for this wine we give you our thanks. We remember with glad hearts the fruitfulness of the earth, the skilful labour of human hands, and the joy of sharing food and drink with those we love. We think of your own precious body, broken to make us whole, and we thank you. We think of your own precious blood, spilled to make us clean, and we thank you. Together with all your people gathered across space and history, we look forward to the great wedding supper of the lamb, when folks from every corner of the globe will sit down with you in peace, harmony and everlasting praise. Praise you Jesus! Amen.

Breaking of bread and distribution

Jesus said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me,’

Sharing the cup

In the same way after supper, Jesus took the cup.

Jesus said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

Closing prayer

Father of all, we give you thanks and praise that, when we were still far off, you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us so we and all your children shall be free and the whole earth live to praise your name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let's take our place as the saints who work on the earth and sing out songs of love all our days. We sing, *You holy angels bright*.

Hymn (BPW 23) **You Holy Angels Bright**

You holy angels bright,
who wait at God's right hand,
or through the realms of light
fly at your Lord's command,
assist our song,
or else the theme too high will seem for mortal tongue.

You faithful souls at rest,
who ran this earthly race,
and now from sin released,
behold your Saviour's face,
God's praises sound,
and all unite in sweet delight to see him crowned.

You saints, who serve below,
adore your heavenly King,
and as you onward go
your joyful anthems sing;
take what he gives
and praise him still, through good and ill, who ever lives!

So take my soul your part,
triumph in God above:
and with a well-tuned heart
sing out your songs of love!
With joy proclaim,
Through all your days in ceaseless praise, his glorious name.

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;
And the love of God;
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with us all, evermore.
Amen

Sung Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you
Wherever he may send you;
May he guide you through the wilderness;
Protect you through the storm;
May he bring you home rejoicing
At the wonders he has shown you;
May he bring you home rejoicing
Once again into our doors.