

# Church Together

Joseph – Pharaoh & Freedom

12th May 2024

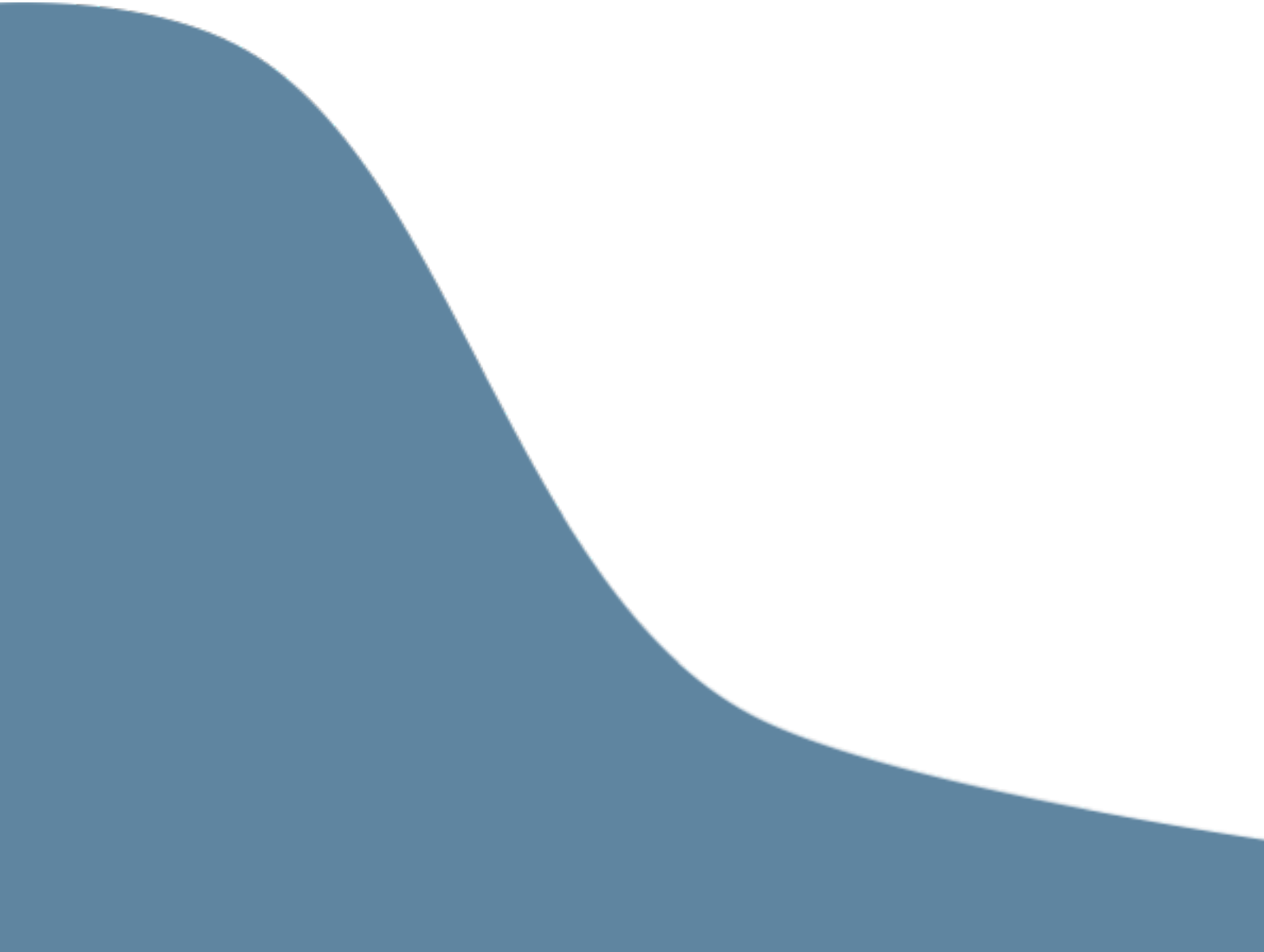


# Welcome

Today's Service we will be looking at: **Genesis 41 v. 1 - 40 & Genesis 41 v. 41 - 57**

The theme for our service today is: **Joseph - Pharaoh & Freedom**

We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for today's service and that you would be able to **Know That When We Are Loyal to God, We Will Know The Freedom That Comes To Us From God.**



# Call To Worship

## **Psalm 145 v. 8 – 11 NLT**

The Lord is gracious and merciful,

Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord  
is good to all,

And his compassion is over all that he has made. All your  
works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,

And all your faithful shall bless you.

They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, And tell of  
your power.

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# Song Suggestion

I Know Not Why God's Wondrous  
Grace



# Opening Prayer

Almighty God, Father of all, we give you this day all of our thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all people.


We bless you and thank you for your creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love that is shown to us in the redemption of the world by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory that comes through him.

Give us, we pray, such a sense of all your mercies that our hearts may be forever thankful, and that we can show forth your praise, not only with our lips but in our lives also, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.

We pray this our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory for ever and ever.

**Amen**





The true expression of Christian  
character is not in good-doing  
but in God-likeness.

Oswald Chambers

[@oswaldchambers](#)

# Bible Reading

**Genesis 41 v. 1 – 40 NIV**

## **Pharaoh's Dreams**

41 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile, 2 when out of 3the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. 4 And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up. 5 He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. 6 After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted—thin and scorched by the east wind. 7 The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream. 8 In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him. 9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. 10 Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. 11 Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. 12 Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. 13 And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was

impaled.”

14 So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”

16 “I cannot do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh, “but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.”

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile, 18 when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds. 19 After them, seven other cows came up—scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt. 20 The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first. 21 But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

22 “In my dream I saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk. 23 After them, seven other heads sprouted—withered and thin and scorched by the east wind. 24 The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians, but none of them could explain it to me.”

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream. 27 The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterward are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched



by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.

28 "It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. 29 Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt, 30 but seven years of famine will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land. 31 The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe. 32 The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.

33 "And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. 35 They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. 36 This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine."

37 The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials. 38 So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?"

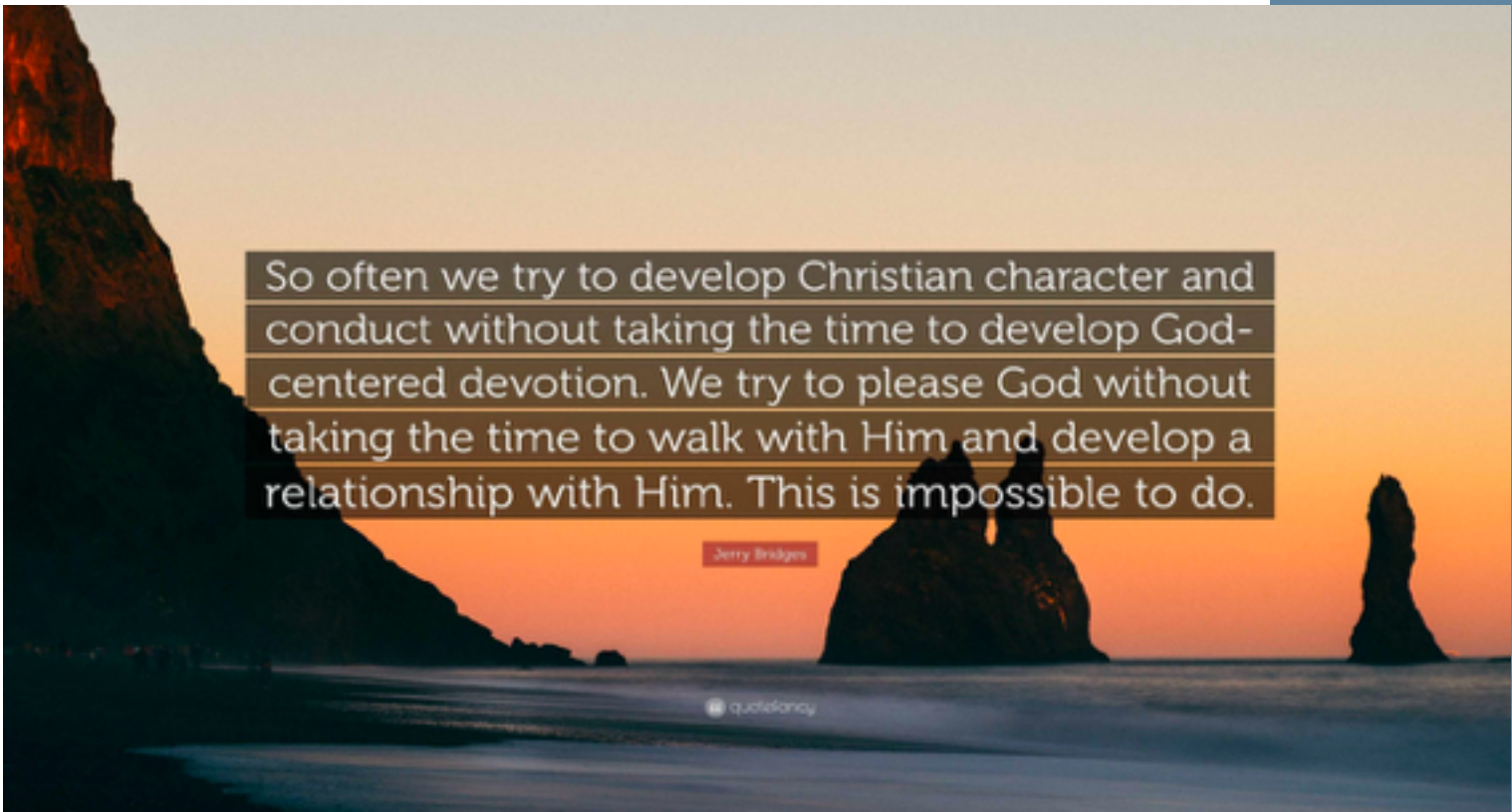
39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. 40 You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you."

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# Song Suggestion

Take My Life And Let It Be



A scenic view of a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue. In the foreground, there's a sandy beach. In the middle ground, several large, dark rock formations are visible in the ocean. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark box in the center of the image.

So often we try to develop Christian character and conduct without taking the time to develop God-centered devotion. We try to please God without taking the time to walk with Him and develop a relationship with Him. This is impossible to do.

Jerry Bridges

quakofancy

# Bible Reading

**Genesis 41 v. 41 – 57 NIV**

## **Joseph In Charge Of Egypt**

41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt." 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. 43 He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, "Make way!" Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

44 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt."

45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt.

47 During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully. 48 Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it. 49 Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

50 Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.

51 Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." 52 The second son he named Ephraim and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

53 The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, 54 and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. 55 When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you."

56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. 57 And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.





# Church Together

## Thought

**Genesis 40** ends on a note of disappointment. Having shown compassion to the Chief Cupbearer, Joseph had hoped that the Chief Cupbearer would put in a good word for him with Pharaoh. However, when the Cupbearer was set free, he promptly forgot Joseph. Two years have passed by before the events that are recorded at the beginning of **Genesis 41**.

Joseph could have hurled lots of questions in God's direction: 'Why didn't you save me from my brothers?' 'Why haven't you fulfilled that dream that caused all this trouble?' 'Why didn't you stand up for me when I was true to you?' 'Why did you let the cupbearer forget me?' Yet, Joseph does not complain against God, nor does he protest against other people.

In times of great need, we may have experienced being let down by people to whom we have shown kindness. Even if the closest of friends or family let us down, God says to us: 'I will not forget you. See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.' as we read in **Isaiah 49 v. 15, 16**. When things go wrong, we so often demand, 'Why?' When we're in trouble, we cry, 'Help!' When things go well, though, do we always give God the credit, or do we simply bask in the limelight?

When Pharaoh flattered him, Joseph shifted the focus away from himself and turned the spotlight on God. A seed is sown and lies buried underground, with no signs

of growth. Then it shoots up and becomes a beautiful flower or a majestic tree!

Joseph was just a teenager when he was sold into slavery, and when freedom came, he was 30 years old.

The better part of his youth was spent as a slave or prisoner. Then, overnight, he shot up to the position of governor, second only to Pharaoh himself.

Those 'underground' years were finally bearing fruit.

Having proved himself faithful in 'little' things - working hard, both as slave and prisoner, saying 'no' to temptation - Joseph was entrusted with great things.

Perhaps you've dreamed about having a great ministry for God but find yourself like Joseph, forced 'underground' - confined to the home with small children, caring for an invalid or older relative, or plodding away at a dreary job.

Maybe you feel unseen, unheard, unrecognised. Don't while away your time planning a great escape. In

themselves, these are precious ministries for God and can also lead to new opportunities or developments.

Think of the Apostle Paul in prison, barred from preaching, yet still writing letters, and never dreaming that those

letters would be published in the bestselling book of all

time! Be like Joseph - faithfully live out those

'underground' years, trusting God to work out his plans for your life.

Joseph's big break comes when he has ceased striving for it. At home, he'd thought it would come within the family. In prison, he'd hoped it would come through the right connections.

Here it happens despite his 'connections' having let him down. Looking at Joseph's qualities provides an

inspirational model for our own behaviour and attitudes.

Pharaoh's experts were known to be skilled, but maybe we need to consider reasons why they could not interpret the dreams as seen in **Genesis 41 v. 8** which says: 'In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him'. Maybe they were simply baffled; possibly they couldn't see beyond Egypt's glory; perhaps they were scared to give Pharaoh bad news.

However, when we contrast Joseph's qualities, the following comes to light:

**JOSEPH'S RELIABILITY** as seen in **Genesis 41 v. 9 – 13**.

Joseph had proved himself in lesser situations. We should never underestimate the importance of tackling the smallest tasks with integrity. Jesus teaches us this in **Matthew 25 v. 21** which says: "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

**JOSEPH'S AMENABILITY** which we find in **Genesis 41 v. 14**.

Joseph was prepared to 'look the part'. We don't always feel comfortable fitting into unfamiliar surroundings, but Joseph saw it as a bridge, a means to an important end.

**JOSEPH'S SPIRITUALITY** reflected in **Genesis 41 v. 16**.

Joseph was centred in God and bold in witnessing. He would not deny God to secure personal safety, because he had come to know God as his safety.

**JOSEPH'S COURAGE** which is recorded in **Genesis 41 v. 25 – 32**. Joseph was prepared to bring bad news to Pharaoh. Are we prepared to tell the truth, even when it is 'bad news'?

We find in **Genesis 41 v. 33 – 36 JOSEPH'S HELPFULNESS**.

Joseph bravely suggested a strategy for the crisis. Even in a strange land, he does not withhold help. We too should engage with the challenges of workplace and community to make them better places.

**JOSEPH'S READINESS** is portrayed in **Genesis 41 v. 46 - 49**. Pharaoh appoints and Joseph is ready to roll. We need to be willing to follow up our suggestions with personal, responsible action, and not be afraid of the consequences.

**FINALLY, THERE IS JOSEPH'S OPENNESS** as seen in **Genesis 41 v. 50 - 52**. Egypt was a place of darkness, but Joseph saw it as a place for God to transform. We need to have a similarly positive view of the world, and not to look at the negative all the time.

Picking holes, especially in someone else's situation, is easy. Knowing how to fill up those holes is harder. Joseph did not stop at spelling out disaster, but filled with the Holy Spirit, he also suggested how to avert disaster. Too often Christians spend their days pointing accusing fingers - at school authorities, politicians, even the church - while refusing to become part of the solution because it demands too much in the way of time, money, energy, or risk.

In a world of rapid moral decay, if you dare to be salt or light, you stand out, because you 'taste' or 'look' different. Even a pagan king recognised the Spirit of God at work in the life of Joseph.

When non - believers look at us, do they see the same selfishness, greed, and immorality they find all around? Or do we choose to be that one solitary candle, glowing bravely in the darkness, radiating Christ's love?




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# Song Suggestion


Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah





Godly character flows out of devotion to God and practically confirms the reality of that devotion.

Jerry Bridges

 quoteFancy

# Prayers Of Intercession

*Our minds are so often full of words, and what is worse our hearts are often clogged up with thoughts and ideas as well, which leaves little room for meeting God in simplicity and stillness. So this morning we are going to have space to pray ourselves, guided with leads and prompts.*

So first, let us take a little time to notice how many good things surround us, how much there is that we take for granted, and how much our lives have been blessed this last week with good people and enjoyable experiences.

## **Silence**

We pray now for some of those people and places in the news, things we will read in the Sunday papers when we get home, or maybe have seen on our TV screens during this past week. We hold them now within God's love.

## **Silence**

We turn now to pray for the Church, for any of the big issues facing it at present and we pray for our own church, particularly with many opportunities and any problems that lie before us. We ask for guidance and grace for the Church.

## **Silence**

Between us all, we know many people who are struggling today with illness, crises, big decisions and major changes in life. God's care for them is even greater than ours, but let us show our own love and concern for them

as we pray, naming our own people in quiet trust before God.

**Silence**

Each of us has things on our mind, perhaps things we hesitate to mention to anyone else. But our heavenly Father understands us totally, and wants only the very best outcome for us. Let us pray to him in the honesty of our own hearts.

**Silence**

These, Lord, are the prayers of your people this morning. We ask you to take each one of these prayers and answer them in your own time and in your own way. And in the meantime give us expectant and trustful hearts. For Jesus' sake we pray.

**Amen**

# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

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No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.





# Poem – Stand In Faith

**Stand In Faith** is a Christian poem that encourages Christians to trust in the Lord and stand in faith knowing God will do what he promised in his Word.

**Stand in faith**

Even when you can't see your way

**Stand in faith**

Even when you feel like you can't face another day

**Stand in faith**

Even when the tears want to flow from your eyes

**Stand in faith**

Knowing that our God will always provide

**Stand in faith**

Even when you feel that all hope is gone

**Stand in faith**

Knowing that He is always there for you to lean on

**Stand in faith**

Even when you feel like giving up

**Stand in faith**

Because He is there ... saying, "Just look up"

**Stand in faith**

Even in those times you feel so all alone

**Stand in faith**

Hold on and be strong, for He is still on the throne

**Stand in faith**

Even when it's hard to believe

## **Stand in faith**

Knowing that He can change your situation, suddenly

## **Stand in faith**

Even in those times you feel it's hard to pray

## **Stand in faith**

And believe that He has already made the way Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen

## **So stand in faith**

Because you already have the victory!

# 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.  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power  
And the glory, forever and ever.  
**Amen**

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# Song Suggestion

Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah



# Blessing

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Lord, let us go from here in peace,  
May your Word be fulfilled with us.  
May your blessing be ever with us,  
As we seek to be your witnesses in the  
world.

May your grace, love and fellowship,  
Be with us until we meet again.

**Amen**