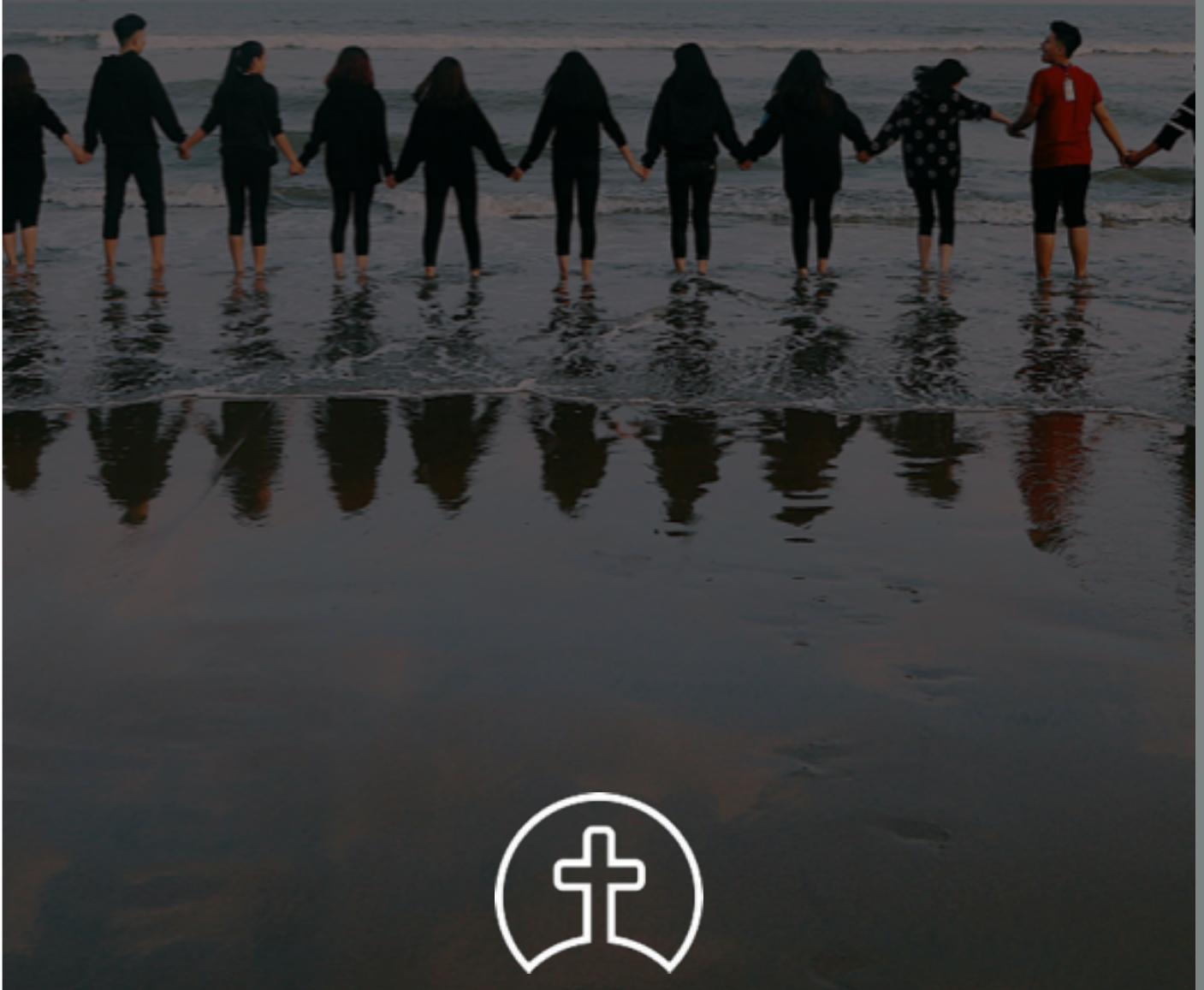


Church Together

Effective Ministry Requires Dedicated Teamwork

16th June 2024



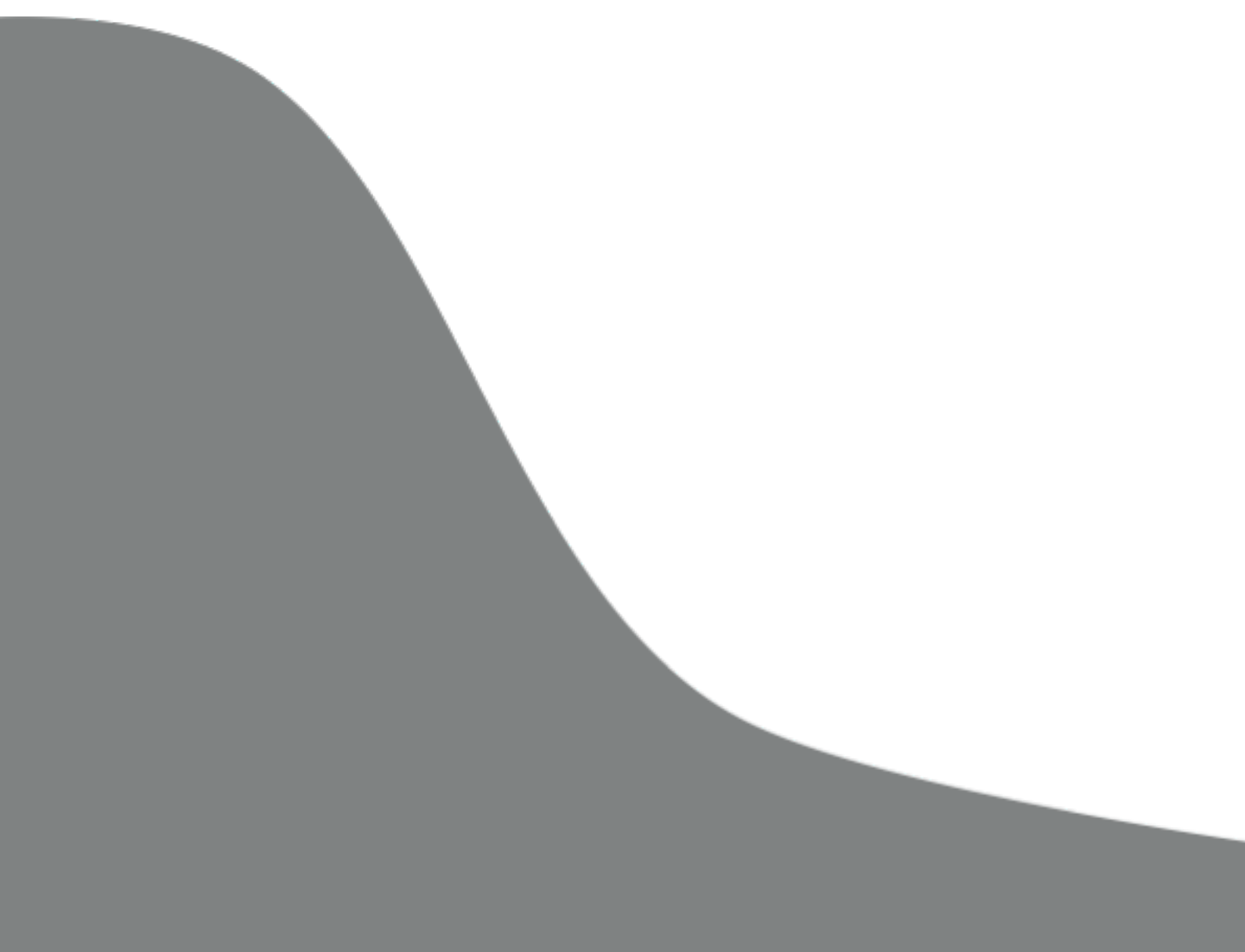
Welcome

Today's Service will be looking at: **Acts 18 v. 1 – 23**

The theme for our service today is: **Effective Ministry Requires Dedicated Teamwork**

Today our service also includes: **Communion**

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 **Be Part Of God's Team, So That Ministry Is Effectively Accomplished!**



Call To Worship

Psalm 106 v. 1 – 5 NLT

Praise the Lord!

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!

His faithful love endures forever.

Who can list the glorious miracles of the Lord?

Who can ever praise him half enough?

Happy are those who deal justly with

Others and always do what is right.

Remember me, too, Lord, when you

Show favour to your people;

Come to me with your salvation.

Let me share in the prosperity of your chosen Ones.

Let me rejoice in the joy of your people;

Let me praise you with those who are your heritage.

Opening Prayer

Father God thank you that you have brought each of us safely to this place today. Help us to remember this day, that we are your chosen people, loved by you, and cleansed by your Son Jesus, our Saviour and that we are renewed by the work of the Holy Spirit, who is at work in the hearts of all those who surrender their lives to you.

Loving Lord, as we read your word in Scripture today, inspire us as we learn more about your majestic ways.

Thank you that today we dwell in your kingdom and live in your presence and love. Thank you that as we gather together we join with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ across this nation and throughout the world to glorify your Holy name. Come be with us, inspire us and lead us in our time together today, we pray.

Loving Lord Jesus, as we gather here we thank you for our fellowship and friendship that we can share together. We ask that you will strengthen us, restore us and inspire us with your eternal love. Lord, would you fill us with your peace so that as we move forward in life we would pour out your love and grace to others that we meet throughout the course of this coming week.

Refresh us in our faith we pray, that in your willingness to accept us help us to enjoy our standing as your much loved children, and enable us to live lives in which you take delight today, we pray.

We ask these prayers as we come to you this day, in the precious and glorious name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Amen

Song Suggestion

Lord Jesus Christ, You Have
Come To Us



Follow God's Design



Everybody Has a Part

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

(Eph. 4:16)

Bible Reading

Acts 18 v. 1 – 23 NIV

In Corinth

18 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, 3 and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. 4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. 6 But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, 'Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.'

7 Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshipper of God. 8 Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptised.

9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: 'Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.' 11 So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

12 While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews of

Corinth made a united attack on Paul and brought him to the place of judgment. 13 'This man,' they charged, 'is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law.'

14 Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to them, 'If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanour or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. 15 But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law – settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things.' 16 So he drove them off. 17 Then the crowd there turned on Sosthenes the synagogue leader and beat him in front of the proconsul; and Gallio showed no concern whatever.

Priscilla, Aquila and Apollos

18 Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchreae because of a vow he had taken. 19 They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. 21 But as he left, he promised, 'I will come back if it is God's will.' Then he set sail from Ephesus. 22 When he landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch.

23 After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and travelled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Song Suggestion

Amazing Grace, How Sweet The
Sound



Communion

As we gather today we come to share in this act of Communion together, remembering the love and sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the Cross. We remember the price that he paid for our sins and for our forgiveness. We gather together here in Church as the body of Christ in order to share the bread and the cup together. We come in faith, conscious of our weakness, seeking to renounce our sin, humbly putting our trust in Christ, and seeking his grace, as we look forward to the day when he will come again.

A prayer of Thanksgiving:

Heavenly Father, we offer you this day our praise and thanksgiving; we thank you for raising Jesus to life again and exalting him so that we might call him 'Lord', as we offer our faithfulness to him and seek to share in his ways. Loving Lord, we thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit, powerfully present in your people and your world, for the fellowship of your church, and for all the means of grace and the hope of glory. Living God, fill us with your Spirit, that as we share this bread and this cup we may feed on the body and blood of Christ, and be empowered for service in your world. Heavenly Father, accept our prayers and thanksgiving in the name of Jesus, the light of the world and the life of your people.

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I received from the Lord what I also pass 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.

1 Corinthians 11 v. 22 - 26

After all have received the bread and the cup and after a period of silence, we end with these words in a Prayer of Thanksgiving for the blessings received at the Table:

Leader: Your death, O Lord, we commemorate. Your resurrection we celebrate. Your final coming we await. May the glory be to you, O Lord.

Response: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Loving Gracious God, we praise you for what you have given and for what you have promised us here. You have made us one with all who know you as Lord and Saviour. You have fed us with the bread of life and renewed us for your service. Now we give ourselves to you and we ask that our daily living may be part of the life of your eternal kingdom, and that our love may be your love in the world where we find ourselves., through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray these things.

Amen

Church Together

Thought

In the earliest days of the Christian church, the body of Christian believers wasn't governed by bureaucratic agencies in faraway cities. The early Christian Church were God – fearing people who rolled up their sleeves and got to work. Even more important, everyone's contributions were accepted, no matter how large or small that contribution was. It didn't matter whether one was a Jew or Gentile, male or female; all that mattered was that they had a love for Jesus and a willingness to serve him and indeed each other with all their heart.

One important couple who served the church in its formative days was Aquila and Priscilla. They were Jews who shared Paul's faith in God as well as his trade, they too were tentmakers, or leather workers. It's worth noting that both Aquila and Priscilla, when introduced here in **Acts 18**, also continue to appear throughout the New Testament and can be found in passages such as **Romans 16 v. 3; 1 Corinthians 16 v. 19 and 2 Timothy 4 v. 19.**

Though Paul was single and expressed that celibacy could be for some a better state for serving Christ than marriage, Aquila and Priscilla showed that it was possible to be married and to faithfully serve Christ at the same time. In their dedication to the cause of the Gospel, both Aquila and Priscilla played a crucial role in tutoring a brilliant speaker named Apollos, and their home was

used as a gathering place for the early Christian believers.

In the passage from **Acts 18 v. 1 – 23** we can see that it focuses on the importance of teamwork in allowing the spreading of the good news to continue as we meet Aquila and Priscilla, Silas and Timothy and see how they worked with Paul and supported him in his ministry.

The early Christians understood that everyone who had received spiritual gifts was to use them in the service of the church. As we have already alluded, it did not matter if the person was male or female, married or single.

Regardless of gender, social status, or occupation, all believers were expected to exercise their gifts to the glory of God.

No one is called to follow Jesus on their own; we are called into the family of God's people. Luke in writing Acts demonstrates how Jesus' words to the disciples found in Acts 1 v. 8 which says: 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth', have been carried out. As we look at this passage, we come across the final leg of Paul's missionary journeys as he takes the good news to Rome, the centre and hub of the Roman Empire.

Paul had always worked in teams and here from this passage in **Acts 18 v. 1 – 23** we see some of his reasons why teamwork is so important if the Gospel is to be shared with others.

FIRSTLY, PAUL RECOGNISES THAT TEAMS SUPPORT EACH OTHER

In **Acts 18 v. 1 – 9** we read: 'After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a

native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, 3 and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. 4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. 6 But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

7 Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. 8 Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent'.

It's in these verses that we see Paul as being discouraged. Perhaps Paul was discouraged because his Athens ministry, in previous chapters, had resulted in very few converts. That might explain the discouragement he felt in Corinth and account for the direct encouragement he received from God while there. We all go through hard times in life. However, if we continually seek God and surrender to his will, he will be there to encourage us when times get tough. God doesn't help us along to a certain point just to leave us to be destroyed.

It is likely that, when Paul first met Aquila and Priscilla, they had not come to faith in Jesus, but Paul saw their

potential and invested time in working with them. Working alongside them enabled him to explain the Christian message to them and to train them for the work ahead. It meant too that there was additional income to support the work. When we work together, we provide support in many ways: emotional; financial; spiritual. When they were ready, they began to help him with the teaching.

Their role in working alongside and with Apollos is crucial – look at the consequences that are found in **Acts 18 v.**

24 – 28 which says: ‘Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervour and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. 27 When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. 28 For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah’.

SECONDLY, PAUL IDENTIFIES THAT TEAMS RELEASE PEOPLE

When Timothy and Silas arrived, Paul was able to give more of his time to preaching and teaching. No doubt they were able to pick up some of the other tasks that he had been involved in, as well as bringing a monetary gift from Christians elsewhere, as we are told in passages like **2 Corinthians 11 v. 8, 9** and **Philippians 4 v. 14 – 17**. One of the problems with doing things on our own is that we end

up having to do everything, including things that we are neither skilled at nor called to do.

Watchman Nee once said: 'Alone I cannot serve the Lord effectively, and he will spare no pains to teach me this. He will bring things to an end, allowing doors to close and leaving me ineffectively knocking my head against a wall until I realise that I need the help of the Body as well as of the Lord'.

We need to gather with others so that together we can achieve more and do it in line with the gifts that God has given to us.

FINALLY, PAUL SAYS THAT TEAMS CONSOLIDATE THE WORK

Paul did not have long in Ephesus; he was to spend more time there on his next trip. But he was quite happy to leave Priscilla and Aquila to build on what he had started. Some people are natural pioneers; others are more able to build on the foundation that others have laid. If the work of the kingdom is to go forward, we need both in this generation.

Song Suggestion

Jesus Is King And I Will Extol Him



Prayers Of Intercession

Loving Heavenly Father, you know all there is to know about us. You share our joy in our health and you understand our weakness in our illness. You know us through and through, and in Jesus you have shared human joy and sorrow, human companionship and loneliness. You know our thoughts before we think them, and understand what we are trying to say better than we do ourselves.

As you know us so well, we pray that you would be a comfort and a guide to us, a strength and a challenge to us, so that we may serve you in wholeness of body and spirit. Heal us, and transform us. Renew us and draw us closer to you in the journey of this coming week, empower us with strength and courage and with the assurance that you are with us always.

There are many in need of you in our world today. There are many in need of your love in our world today. And there are many in need of your salvation in our world. Lord, today we pray that you would enter our lives, our churches, our towns and our cities, our country. Help us to be your eyes, ears, hands and feet in the places you have put us on our daily frontlines.

We give thanks that we can turn to you in prayer and in faith, lifting all those who are on our hearts this day that they may find comfort and strength in you today. Hear the prayers of our hearts now Lord, as we bring them to

you in the silence of these moments that are before us. Loving Lord, we pray for our own Government and different Governments around the world, that you will guide them in the multitude of decisions they are having to make concerning the welfare within their own countries. We continue to pray for the forthcoming General Election in July and ask that you would speak to each of the Political Parties. Guide them we pray, that their manifestos would be in line with your will and leading. We also want to pray for those countries that are facing war, famine and hostility; may your Holy presence bring them comfort and strength, we pray.

We give thanks for all those in the health service, for those carers who look after those in Nursing Homes and within their own homes, for staff in hospitals and many others who work on their frontlines; for those who minister to the sick and dying, who are giving so much of themselves to help others. Give them strength, we pray, to keep going in difficult and stressful times.

Lord we pray for all those who do not know you, especially in their time of need, and pray that their eyes will be opened to the love of Jesus Christ.

And finally, Lord we pray for ourselves. Help us Lord to follow your example in all that we do and say as we journey with you. We place ourselves, this Church and all your people into your loving care. Please accept these our prayers, in Jesus name.

Amen

Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

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.



Working together, we
can accomplish more.



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

Song Suggestion

To God Be The Glory, Great
Things He Has Done



Blessing

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