

# Church Together

The People Of God And Baptism

2nd February 2025



# Welcome

In today's Service we will be looking at: **Matthew 28 v. 18 - 20 & Acts 8 v. 26 - 40**

The theme for our service today is: **The People Of God And Baptism**

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 **One Day Know That Jesus Is Your Saviour And Be Baptised**

# Call To Worship

## **Psalm 121 v. 1 - 8 NLT**

I look to the mountains -

Does my help come from there?

My help comes from the Lord,

Who made the heavens and the earth!

He will not let you stumble and fall;

The one who watches over you will  
not sleep.

Indeed, he who watches over Israel

Never tires and never sleeps.

The Lord himself watches over you!

The Lord stands beside you as your  
Protective shade.

The sun will not hurt you by day,

Nor the moon at night.

The Lord keeps you from all evil

And preserves your life.

The Lord keeps watch over you as  
you come and go,

Both now and forever.

# Opening Prayer

Lord, we thank you that we are able to come and meet together in your name today. As we gather we come as individuals, but also we come as a fellowship of believers together. We recognise that although we are all different, we are all bound together through your love that was shown to us by Jesus. Therefore, we thank you loving Lord that we can come together this morning to worship and offer our praise and thanks to you.

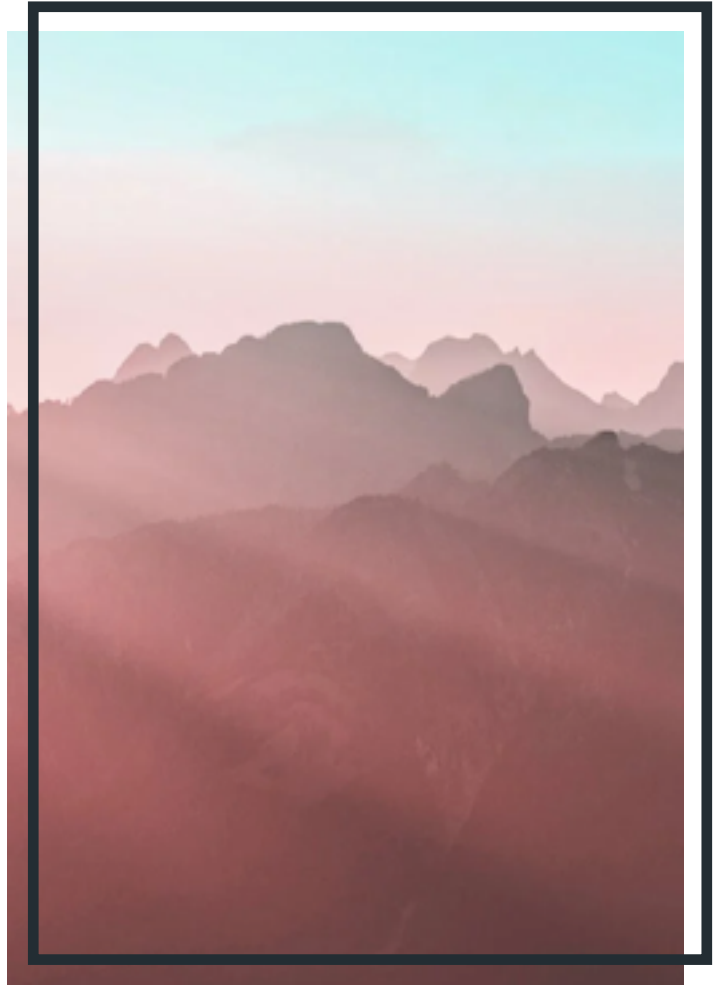
Be with us in our worship Lord as we look at your word this morning, guide us we pray as we try and understand what your word has to say to us both as individuals and as a church. Lord with you all things are possible, therefore, help us to live our lives full of your love and wisdom. Encourage us we pray to work together for your kingdom in and through your name we pray.

**Amen**

---

# Song Suggestion

To God Be The Glory

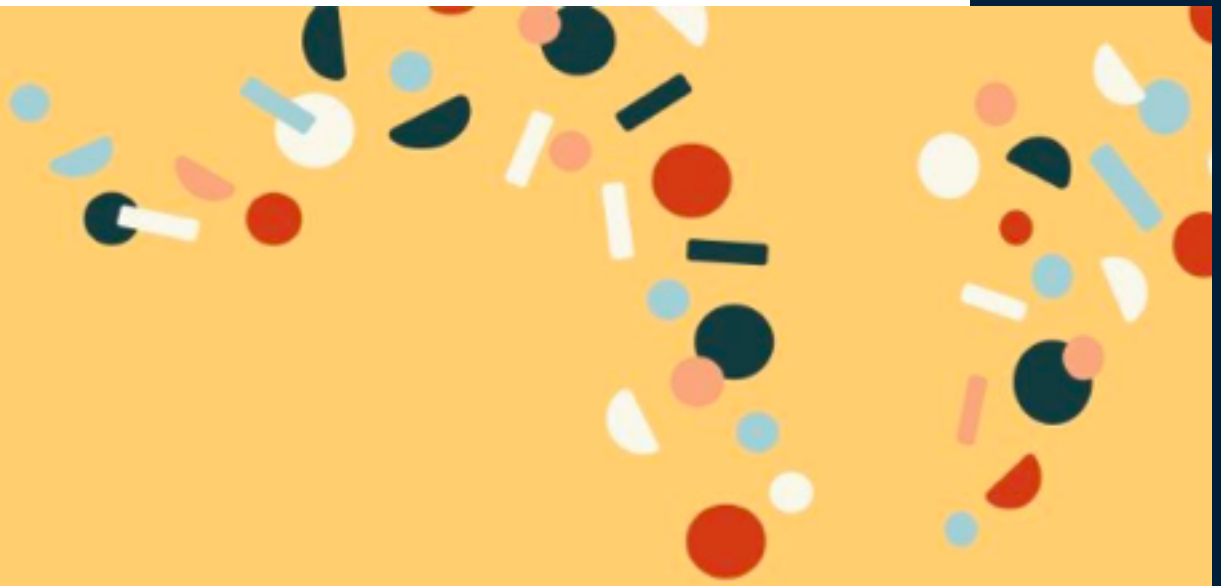


# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

---

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





"Go therefore and make disciples  
of all nations, baptizing them in  
the name of the Father and of the  
Son and of the Holy Spirit,"

Matthew 28:19

# Bible Reading

## **Matthew 28 v. 18 – 20 NIV**

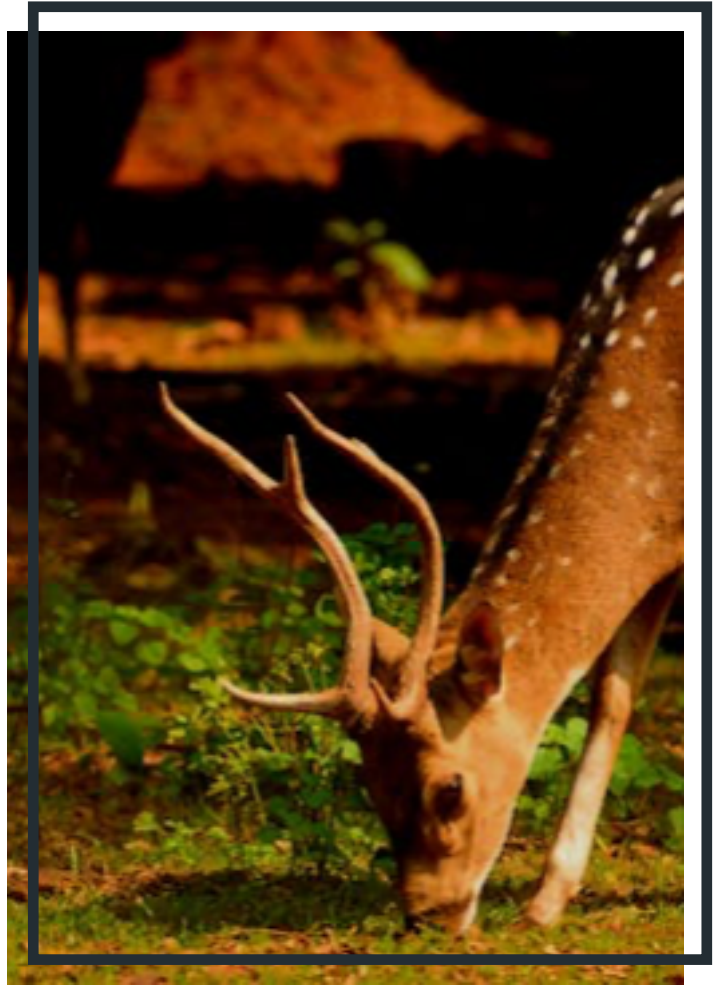
Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."



---

# Song Suggestion

I Know Not Why God's Wondrous  
Grace



# Bible Reading

**Acts 8 v. 26 – 40 NIV**

## **Philip and the Ethiopian**

26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

31 “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,  
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.

33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”

34 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” 35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

36 As they travelled along the road, they came to some

water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. 40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and travelled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

# Church Together

## Thought

When I joined the Scout movement I, like everyone else who had joined, went through a ceremony for which I was prepared and in which I made promises. Before that ceremony, I was someone who wanted to join; I wasn't yet a Scout. Afterwards, I was a Scout; very new and untrained, but just as much a Scout as any other boy or leader who had been 'in it' for many years. I was now allowed to wear the full Scout uniform and the Scout badge. I had made a new start, and the Scout movement now had a claim on my loyalty.

Many societies and tribes have their own ceremony which marks the time when a person moves from being someone who is waiting to become a member, to someone who belongs in the strongest possible way.

In the story of the Ethiopian, we have one example of the ceremony which, from the beginning, marked out people who committed themselves to follow Jesus Christ. For the man in the chariot, his baptism marked a completely new start in his life. He had learned about Jesus from Philip. He had a great deal more to learn, but his baptism marked his new commitment to be a 'disciple' and to his belonging to the community of Jesus.

Here is the big difference between the ceremony of becoming a Christian and other joining ceremony.

Baptism is about commitment to a person, that is Jesus, and not to a movement, country or political party.

We are told in **Acts 8 v. 35** that the Ethiopian heard 'the good news of Jesus'. This means that he heard of what God had done for him in Jesus. He responded to this by requesting baptism, about which Philip must already have spoken. His baptism was a sign, not only of what he wished to do, to make a new start in life as a disciple of Jesus, but also of what God had already done for him and everyone in Jesus.

**Matthew 28 v. 18 – 20** records the last words spoken by Jesus, in his earthly lifetime, to his first disciples. Jesus spoke of his authority and then commanded them to 'make disciples... baptising them... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you'. Disciples of Jesus are therefore people who want to learn the way and the message of Jesus, so that they can live their lives more and more in obedience to him.

St. Louis of France used to sign his documents not 'Louis IX, King', but 'Louis of Poissy'. Someone asked him why, and he answered: 'Poissy is the place where I was baptised. I think more of the place where I was baptised than of Rheims Cathedral where I was crowned. It is a greater thing to be a child of God than to be ruler of a kingdom: this last, I shall lose at death, but the other will be my passport to an everlasting glory.'

Different parts of the church have different practices and beliefs regarding baptism. What unites us as Christians is our common loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and the belief that we do not drift into being Christians, nor does baptism make us Christians. We are Christians because we have made a new start, because we have become Jesus' disciples.

Baptism, therefore, is a sign that God has made the first

move to offer us a new start and that we have accepted his offer and will live as Jesus' disciples.

Our sermon today is about the one, two, three of baptism! The focus being based on **Matthew 28 v. 18 – 20**.

### **FIRSTLY, WE HAVE ONE BAPTISM (Ephesians 4 v. 5; 1 Corinthians 1 v. 10 – 17)**

**Ephesians 4 v. 5** says: 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism', and **1 Corinthians 1 v. 10 – 17** says: 'I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. 11 My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12 What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power'.

From apostolic times entry into the church has been through baptism — a response to the commission of Jesus as found in **Matthew 28 v. 19**. Almost all Christian denominations have a similar ceremony, and those which don't have an equivalent. It is about belonging to the church of God, not a particular congregation or denomination. What matters is not who baptised a

person, but the fact that they are baptised as we can see from the passage in **1 Corinthians 1 v. 14 - 17**. Baptism should therefore unify us as God's people and not divide us.

## **SECONDLY, THERE ARE TWO BIRTHS (2 Corinthians 5 v. 17; 1 Peter 1 v. 3, 23)**

We are all born into the world, a natural birth, but the Bible also talks about a second birth when we become Christians. **2 Corinthians 5 v. 17** says: 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!' and we also find in **1 Peter 1 v. 3, 23** the following: 'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead' and 'For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God'.

Baptism is sometimes described as 'being reborn'. Even though some people remember a moment of 'conversion' at a different time, the occasion of baptism is still the outward sign of 'being born again'. As one dictionary of theology says: 'It is (not merely represents) a dying of self and a being reborn to a new life in Christ' Baptism is a symbol of death, burial and resurrection with Christ. Some years ago, a Brahmin believer in the Lord Jesus Christ was baptised in the meeting room at Broadway, Madras. He came to the ceremony wearing, as all Brahmins do, the **yagnopavita** or sacred thread, hanging round his neck. Immediately after his baptism, as he came out of the water, he snapped the thread and threw it into the water in which he had been immersed, thereby signifying that his life as a Brahmin had come to

an end and that he would thenceforth 'walk in newness of life' in Christ.

Baptism incorporates us into the crucified and glorified Christ and so we are reborn into a sharing of the divine life that Jesus offers us.

### **THIRDLY, THERE IS THE 'THREE – FOLD BAPTISM' (Matthew 28 v. 19)**

In **Matthew 28 v. 19** we read: 'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. Christian baptism therefore is a Trinitarian baptism – that is, baptism is in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For whenever someone comes to faith in Jesus, faith in God in three persons is always required.

The baptised person becomes a child in the family of the universal Father, a new person through the saving and regenerating work of Christ, and a participant in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We are told by Jesus that this is what we are to do. It is part of our witness. So, this morning is God prompting you and saying to you: go and be baptised (**Matthew 28 v. 19**)!



# Communion

Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty'. **Romans 5 v. 8** also tells us: 'God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us'.

## **An Invitation to the Table:**

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are strong, but because you are weak. Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help. Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more. Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you. Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body, his People.

## **A prayer of Approach:**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secret is hidden; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

## **As we prepare to receive the bread and the cup, we hear the words of The Institution:**

The Apostle Paul tells us of the institution of the Lord's Supper, when he says: 'For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night that he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said: 'This is my body

that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me'. In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me'. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. **1 Corinthians 11 v. 23 - 26**

**A Prayer of Thanksgiving before we eat the bread and drink the cup:**

Loving God, we praise and thank you for your love shown to us in Jesus Christ. We thank you for his life and ministry, announcing the good news of your kingdom and demonstrating its power in the lifting of the downtrodden, and the healing of the sick, and the loving of the loveless. We thank you for his sacrificial death upon the cross, for the redemption of the world, and for your raising him to life again, as a foretaste of the glory we shall share. We give you thanks for this bread and wine, symbols of our world and signs of your transforming love. Send your Holy Spirit, we pray, that we might be renewed into the likeness of Jesus Christ and formed into his body. This we pray in his name and for his sake. Amen.

**WE NOW SHARE AND EAT OF THE BREAD AND SHARE AND DRINK OF THE CUP**

**A Final Prayer of Acclamation:**

Your death, O Lord, we commemorate. Your resurrection we confess. Your final coming we await. Glory be to you, O Christ. Amen.

# Prayers Of Intercession

Lord accept our lives just as we are, with all our faults and failings, but also with our talents and our strengths and use us for your service to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. We thank you Lord for all the many gifts and talents that we have received from you. Help us we pray in the mission of your church here at Salendine Nook, may we not be afraid to share the wonderful message of your salvation with all those we meet.

Loving Lord, we also pray for the many varied churches here in Huddersfield and the surrounding areas. We pray that we may work together more closely to use the different skills that each church has in order that your Kingdom may grow here in this part of Yorkshire. Guide us Lord, help us to see your vision. Help us to build on all that you have given us down through many years and past generations and guide us so that we may move forward in your name. Help us to connect with the wider community of Salendine Nook and may we be positive in all that we seek to do in your name. Encourage us when the going seem to be hard and tough, help us to be positive in the mission that you have called us too. Heavenly Father, we are mindful that there are many places and situations within our world that need our prayers at this time, we especially remember the ongoing situation in Ukraine, the Middle East and the USA. Bring

them peace and strength and help us through our prayers to pray for them and to offer our support in any way that we can.

We also pray this day for all those who work in the community to keep us safe. We remember in prayer, the emergency services, doctors and nurses. For voluntary services and for all who work in whatever way to bring relief, support, care and comfort to those who need it. Help us dear Lord, to be a people who are outward looking. Help us to see your plan for our future, both here in this church and in our own lives. Encourage us to grow in love for you and for each other as we strive to worship you in new ways; help us to see ourselves as the family of God in this place. May our enthusiasm never wain, but give us a deep sense of your presence among us, we pray.

Finally Lord, we give thanks for our families and our friends. We thank you Lord for those times of relaxation and fun that we can have with those who love us and care for us. Help us dear Lord, to have those times when we can build up good solid relationships with those close to us, in order that we might be strengthened and that we may be a blessing to others as well. All of these prayers we ask in your precious name.

**Amen**

---

# Song Suggestion

Christ Triumphant, Ever Reigning



# 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**





Why Should I Be  
**Baptized?**

*Baptisms*



BAPTISM IS AN OUTWARD  
EXPRESSION OF AN INWARD DECISION  
TO HAVE JESUS IN YOUR LIFE

I HAVE DECIDED TO

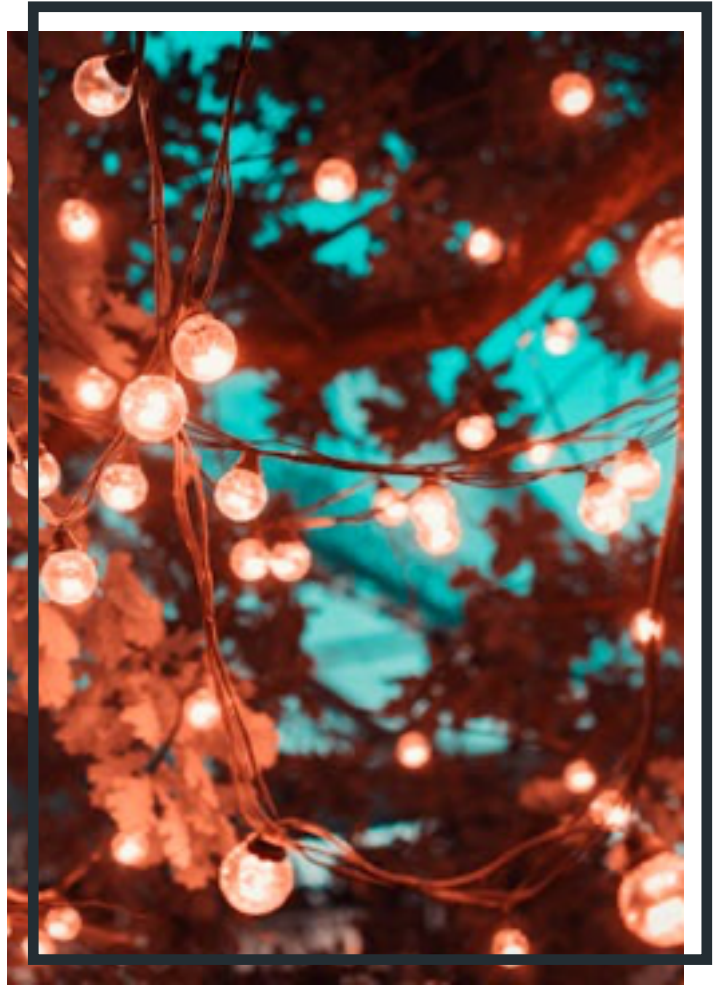
*follow Jesus*



---

# Song Suggestion

Immortal Invisible, God Only  
Wise



# 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.

**Amen**