**Salendine Nook Baptist Church – Church Together**

**Sunday 9th February 2025 – The People Of God And Communion**

**Welcome**

In today’s Service we will be looking at: **1 Corinthians 11 v. 17 - 34**

The theme for our service today is: **The People Of God And 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 **Participate In Communion With An Open And Honest Heart!**

**Call To Worship**

**Psalm 62 v. 5 - 8 NLT**

I wait quietly before God,

For my hope is in him.

He alone is my rock and my salvation,

My fortress where I will not be shaken.

My salvation and my honour come from

God alone.

He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy

Can reach me.

O my people, trust in him at all times.

Pour out your heart to him,

For God is our refuge.

**Song Suggestion**

Be Still For The Presence Of The Lord

**Opening Prayer**

Father God, we thank you this day for all the bright things of life. Help us to see them, and to count them, and to remember them, that our lives may flow in ceaseless praise of you. We thank you this day, for the Good News of Jesus, that he loves each and everyone of us. We thank you for the pleasures of life that we can enjoy, and for all the blessings that you have bestowed to us.

Teach us this day Lord, to serve you as you deserve. To give and not to count the cost, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to seek just for the reward it brings. Help us to be a shining light and example to those around us, that your name may be glorified, in order that your presence may be known.

Give us grace, O Lord, not only to hear your word with our ears; but also help us to receive it into our hearts and lives, so that we be your witnesses wherever you may send us and we ask all of this through the wonderful name of Jesus.

**Amen**

**Moment Of Reflection**

The purpose of the Lord’s Supper is to receive from Christ the nourishment and strength and hope and joy that come from feasting our souls on all that He purchased for us on the cross, especially His own fellowship. **John Piper**

**Bible Reading**

**1 Corinthians 11 v. 17 – 34 NIV**

**Correcting an Abuse of the Lord’s Supper**

17 In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. 18 In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. 19 No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God’s approval. 20 So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord’s Supper you eat, 21 for when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk. 22 Don’t you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter!

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 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.” 25 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.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

27 So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. 29 For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. 31 But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. 32 Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.

33 So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. 34 Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment.

And when I come I will give further directions.

**Offering**

If you feel that your 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.

**Song Suggestion**

Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

**Church Together Thought**

Someone once said: ‘I remember vividly a particular service of Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper. The minister was an Anglo - Catholic priest for whom this was the first opportunity to officiate since the onset of a long illness. Only three people were present apart from himself, not very inspiring you might have thought, but for him it was a precious and holy time. His voice broke several times with emotion as he ministered to us, for to him, it was such a high privilege. Indeed, it was for all who shared with him’.

The whole thrust of Paul’s comments to the Corinthian church about the Lord’s Supper was to reprimand those Christians who were debasing its meaning and importance as we read in **1 Corinthians 11 v. 17 - 34**. They were doing so by their divisions, their selfishness and drunkenness. Paul warns them that such a careless attitude can have serious consequences, as he describes in **1 Corinthians 11 v. 27 - 32**.

We are told in **Mark 14 v. 22 – 24** that The Lord’s Supper is for remembering the death of Jesus, his broken body and his shed blood and for realising his work and presence now. Jesus’ sacrifice was for everyone. All who share this meal thoughtfully are reminded of his sacrificial love, which enables them to share a common life in him.

The Corinthian Church must therefore respect each other in the love of Christ, recognising ‘the body of the Lord’. This means the church, not just the Corinthians, but also the worldwide company of believers.

There are several different ways in which the Lord’s Supper is interpreted and practised, but these need not destroy our unity. Recognising who it is and what it is that we are remembering, we need to make a confession.

Often when we take the broken bread and the poured - out wine, we are adding to a spirit of division and are not ‘recognising the body of the Lord’ as told in **1 Corinthians 11 v. 29**. This means that we are ‘eating and drinking in an unworthy manner’ and are ‘guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord’ **1 Corinthians 11 v. 27** tells us. **1 Corinthians 11 v. 28** tells us that there is always a need for us to examine ourselves before we share in communion. We are not asked to agree on every point before we receive the bread and wine.

The same person as earlier goes on to say: ‘There were, at that celebration of the Lord’s Supper which I have described, people from different church backgrounds and at least three different understandings of its meaning. Yet we could not have been more deeply united in our faith and love of Jesus. We shared the signs of his loving sacrifice for us: the signs of our oneness in him. Contrary doctrines fell away as of no importance. We ate together of the living bread and drank together the wine, which speaks so vividly of Christ’s life blood shed. Our thankfulness for the mercy of God, and our unity in the Lord who died and lived for us, were immeasurably deepened and strengthened.’

Is it like that for you? Will it be like that for you?

There seems to be three points from **1 Corinthians 11 v. 17 – 34** which relate communion to formal meals as we see them in today’s world:

**FIRSTLY, IT IS A REAL MEAL!**

Breaking of bread ceremonies in our churches are, in one sense, real meals. Because Jesus told his disciples to repeat what he had done at the Passover meal, as we see recorded in **1 Corinthians 11 v. 23 - 26**, the early Christians almost immediately started meeting in each other’s homes on the first day of the week, which we see in **Acts 2 v. 46. 1** **Corinthians v. 24, 25** tells us that their purpose was a simple one — that Jesus should not be forgotten as new generations of Christians grew up. At first these occasions were about a mixture of food and worship, though the meal inevitably got more formal over the years.

**SECONDLY, WHEN WE RECEIVE AN INVITATION, WE NEED TO SEND BACK A RSVP!**

Invitations often say: ‘Let us know if you are coming’. At some stages of church history, and in some churches today, people are encouraged to prepare themselves — even let the minister know beforehand if they will be attending the communion service. Some churches have sacramental confession. In others the service is very infrequent, yet when it happens there is a greater emphasis on preparation than where it is held weekly or more often.

Whatever our pattern, we must take communion seriously. Paul implies that if we abuse this spiritual meal, it will do us more harm than good as we are told in **1 Corinthians 11 v. 27 - 30**.

**THIRDLY, WHEN WE ARE INVITED TO A MEAL, WE MUST SHOW TABLE MANNERS!**

**ILLUSTRATION**

The Astronaut Buzz Aldrin on the day of the moon landing shared this very sobering thought, when he wrote: we awoke at 5.30am, Houston time. Neil and I separated from Mike Collins in the command module. Our powered descent was right on schedule. With only seconds of fuel left, we touched down at 3.30pm. Now was the time for communion.

I unstowed the elements in their flight packets. I put them and the Scripture reading on the little table in front of the abort guidance - system computer. Then I called Houston. ‘Houston, this is Eagle. This is LM Pilot speaking. I would like to request a few moments’ silence. I would like to invite each person listening in, wherever and whomever he may be, to contemplate for a few moments the events of the past few hours, and to give thanks in his own individual way.’ For me, this meant taking communion.

In the blackout I opened the little plastic packages which contained bread and wine. I poured wine into the chalice my parish had given me. In the one - sixth gravity of the moon, the wine curled slowly and gracefully up the cup. It was interesting to think that the very first liquid ever poured on the moon, and the first food eaten there, were consecrated elements.

Just before I partook the elements, I read the words which I had chosen to indicate our trust that as a man probes into space, we are in fact acting in Christ. I sensed especially strongly my unity with our church back home, and with the church everywhere. I read, ‘I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.’

**1 Corinthians 11 v. 17 – 19** tells us that one reason the Corinthians were in trouble is that they abused this special meal by the way they behaved towards each other. It was important they did not shy away from the divisions among them because this was the way to test what was genuine within their lives and relationships.

The different income levels and lifestyles of church members made it difficult for them to mix. In the Corinthian church it seems they all arrived at different times, the rich brought more than the poor and there was no real sharing. **1 Corinthians 11 v. 20 - 22, 33, 34** tells us that perhaps some of them drank too much!

The practical details mentioned by Paul probably do not apply to our church worship, but they may remind us of divisive issues which are more subtle and divide us as a church in 2025.

**Song Suggestion**

Breathe On Me, Breath Of God

**Prayers of Intercession**

**As we pray this week there will be a pause between each pray for us to be able to pray ourselves.**

Heavenly Father, we come before you today, and we thank you for teaching us from your word, the Bible. We thank you for hearing us when we cry out to you in moments of despair and anguish, and we also thank you for the ability to praise you and glorify your Holy name.

**Pause & Pray**

Loving Father, we praise you today for good health and daily food, for the shelter and care of our homes, the love and loyalty of our family and friends. Thank you for the teaching and example of Jesus, for forgiveness and salvation, and for his presence with us always and for the service into which he has called us. Help us today, we pray, to thank you not only with our lips, in praise and prayer, but also in lives full of hope and love; for you and for each other.

**Pause & Pray**

Gracious Lord, we thank you for all the bright things in life; for the wonder of creation that is around us and the joy that brings to us. Help us to see the wonderful things in life and the beauty of your creation, to remember them and to count our blessings, that our lives would flow in ceaseless praise of you.

**Pause & Pray**

Heavenly Father, we pray for those who govern over us. We pray for our Prime Minister who leads this country and his elected cabinet. We lift before you our Royal Family, and all the complexity of their lives at this present time. We pray for those countries around the world that are at war, we continue to remember in our prayers, Ukraine. We also pray for those countries that are hostile to other countries at this present moment.

**Pause & Pray**

Loving Lord Jesus, we again today pray for our families and friends. We thank you that Jesus knows our every situation. Help us today we pray to face the different situations with dignity and love, and give us peace in our hearts and minds.

**Pause & Pray**

We continue to pray for those who are unwell, both at home and in hospital, or hospice. We think of the elderly, the housebound and those in care homes. We pray for all those who care for their needs. So again, as we share a moment of silence together today, we bring before you those known only to ourselves and name them before you, Lord Jesus.

**Pause & Pray**

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.

**Pause & Pray**

Please accept these our prayers, in Jesus name.

**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.

Lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

And the glory, forever and ever.

**Amen**

**Moment Of Reflection**

The Corinthian Church was in danger of God’s judgment because they didn’t take communion seriously.

How seriously do you and I take communion?

**Song Suggestion**

O Lord My God! When I In Awesome Wonder

**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**