



Call to Worship

We fix our eyes on you Jesus, our Lord, our Saviour and King. Come fill our hearts with your endless love and send the wind of your Spirit to blow new hope through our lives. Come light up our souls to rise in faith, to stretch out and take in your kingdom. Come pour out your Spirit upon us as we stand together as brothers and sisters in the Lord. Come lift up our heads, brush away the shadows of guilt and shine your grace into our minds. And so Lord, we arise to worship. We shake off the shackles of a fallen world and join with heaven to sing your praise. We will declare your goodness now and celebrate your greatness forevermore! We have come to worship you, our God, the Lord God Almighty.

Opening Hymn: I love to tell the story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXFzw3Ukc8&t=69s>

1. I love to tell the story of unseen things above
Of Jesus and His glory of Jesus and His love
I love to tell the story because I know 'tis true
It satisfies my longings as nothing else would do

Chorus I love to tell the story
'Twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old old story
Of Jesus and His love

2. I love to tell the story more wonderful it seems
Than all the golden fancies of all our golden dreams
I love to tell the story it did so much for me
And that is just the reason I tell it now to thee
3. I love to tell the story 'tis pleasant to repeat
What seems each time
I tell it more wonderfully sweet
I love to tell the story for some have never heard
The message of salvation from God's own holy Word

Opening Prayer and the Lord's prayer

Lord God Almighty, today we recall your faithfulness. Thank you that you walk with us every day, that you are with us always. We proclaim that your promises are true and your goodness and love never fail. In this moment

we come to you and lay our lives before you. May we honour, worship and adore you with every fibre of our being.

Loving Father, we proclaim that you are the Holy One, the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come. Your beauty and majesty are beyond compare. On this day we join with all those who worship and confess you as Lord, from generations past and present, and with all the angels that sing in heaven of your greatness and splendour.

Lord we adore you. Lord we love you. Lord we bow down and worship you. Receive the sacrifice of praise we've brought into your house. In Jesus' name, Amen

Bible Reading Acts 4:5-12 (Zoom Service)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN8tzdG6QNo>

Bible Reading (Second Service) Acts 4:5-12 (NIV)

The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.' Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Children's Address: Filled with Holy Spirit

Reflection: They had been with Jesus

Most people struggle to live lives that conform to some kind of prevailing norm, to "fit in" with what's going on around us, to follow the trends – in fashion, in music, in our shopping habits, our behaviour and so on. We are tempted to blend into the general mass of people around us in our behaviour, appearance and attitudes. If we are

too distinctive in the way we look, think or act, we end up being branded as dangerous, crazy or even odd.

Today, Christians are tempted to try to fit in, to hide away our identity and values and to avoid, as much as we can, the hassles that might ensue if people found out that we are followers of Jesus Christ. Yet the clear message in God's Word is that God's people are to stand out, to be easily identifiable. ***I am not saying that we should live and behave as if we holy or better than everyone else around us – I am not! I am referring to our being, to use the words of Jesus himself, "the salt of the earth", "lights for the world", "a city on a hill" and so on. We are called to stand up, to stand out as Christians, as followers of Christ... A poem by Maya Angelou... the last three stanzas,***

When I say..."I am a Christian", I'm not claiming to be perfect. My flaws are all too visible, but God believes I'm worth it.

When I say..."I am a Christian", I still feel the sting of pain. I have my share of heartaches, which is why I speak His name.

When I say..."I am a Christian", I do not wish to judge. I have no authority. I only know I'm loved.

And here in this story of Peter and John, from which we've just read, we have a great example of people who were clearly distinctive, who stood out from the crowd due to their involvement with Jesus. We picked up the story in Acts 4, but it begins in Acts 3 – with the healing of a disabled man at the temple gate called beautiful. Peter and John invoke the name of Jesus to heal the man. Naturally, this causes quite a stir among the other worshippers who recognise the man as someone who had been sitting begging for a long time. Peter seizes the opportunity to tell the curious onlookers what has happened and who is behind it all – Jesus.

Unfortunately, he is cut off before the end of his speech and the two men – Peter and John – are whisked off to jail by the Temple guards. Next morning they are taken up to the Sanhedrin (a council of prominent citizens who also function as a court) and asked, : "By what power or what name did you do this?". The answer is Jesus! Jesus had changed their lives.

Luke makes a point here of contrasting their courage with the fact that they were "unschooled and ordinary men". The disciples were a real bunch of peasants – fishermen, minor government clerks, with little or no education. Yet here they are after the tremendous events of Easter Day and Pentecost, bold and articulate, willing to stand up for their beliefs in front of the most influential men in their nation. Their ordinary lives had been radically altered: they no longer conformed to what was going on around them. Paul impresses upon us the same necessity for change in Romans 12:1,2. We are to be transformed, we are to have our minds and attitudes renewed so that we approach the issues of the world around us with a different perspective, with different standards

Hymn/ Offering (Second Service)

Offering - Paul Baloche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCh7AFvEVjk>

Prayer for offerings, thanksgiving and intercession

As we bring our offerings to you, we give back to you from the abundant blessings you have given us. May our gifts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord our God. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honour, and power and strength, be unto you our God forever and ever. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Holy One, God of the firefly and fiery forest, of the monarch and milkweed, the born and unborn. The God of each created one. The God who is with us in our awe and anguish. We bow in reverence, praise, gratitude, and longing. We bow, resting into your vast mercy. We open our arms wide. Our sight extends, we see and reach to bless:

- The people of **Ukraine**.
53 migrants from **Mexico, Honduras** and **Guatemala** who died in a semi-truck on the **US/Mexico** border. For their families who grieve, for the many who currently cross, who think of crossing, for the complex political situation across borders.
- Those killed in a prison riot blaze in **Colombia**.
- The People of Japan mourning the killing of their former Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe
- Our own country following the many resignations including that of our prime minister
- Tomato farmers in **Tanzania** who are struggling with a fertilizer shortage as they try to grow food during a global food crisis.
- The people of **Bangladesh** where floods have left dozens dead and 4 million people stranded.
- Honey bees in **Australia** affected by a deadly parasite.
- Those suffering due to an unprecedented heatwave in **Japan**.

Lord God, we bring our arms in to hold close all these cherished of God. Then we lift our arms and release them into the wide Presence of God. Feeling the energy flow from our limbs. All the longings of our hearts and the ache of our bodies. All the news we read, all the pain we hear of and see. May all bodies and hearts know the release into Love, into the Freedom. Where we can proclaim the words of Julian of Norwich, "All will be well and all will be well, all manner of things will be well." Where we can say, "all is well" our feet rooted into the earth, Amen.

Final Hymn (Zoom Service)

Crown Him with many Crowns

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imJ46zluE8>

Dismissal/blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24-26, NIV)