

## **Café church style service for 29<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

Call to worship

Please can everyone join in with the bold words:

Come to God with your longings:

**our heavenly Father knows them all.**

Come to God with your belongings:

**our loving Saviour holds them all.**

Come to God alone and together:

**the Holy Spirit is here for all.**

A gathering prayer

Father God, you give us so much, and yet we long for more.

Help us to open ourselves to you today, and draw us closer to you.

Help us to be open to one another, and draw us closer together.

**Amen.**

| SoF 27 | | MP 37 | | CH4 550 |

**Hymn:** As the deer pants for the water

So my soul longs after You.

You alone are my heart's desire

and I long to worship You.

Chorus

You alone are my strength, my shield

To You alone may my spirit yield.

You alone are my heart's desire

And I long to worship You.

I want You more than gold and silver

Only You can satisfy.

You alone are the real joy giver

And on You I can rely

You're my friend and You are my brother

Even though You are the King

I love You more than any other

So much more than any thing

## Summer's coming!

- PowerPoint pictures – what's coming soon?
- Today we hear about Jesus coming soon, and we explore feelings of longing, and the need to feel we belong and are loved – which, whether we can see the signs or not, we are in Jesus.



## Questions

- What aspects of longing can you find in the painting?
- How does it feel to belong?
- How can we share God's invitation so that all can feel part of things/belong?

## Share the Word

Can you think of stories you know that begin, 'Once upon a time...'. If you had to write the story of their lives starting with those words, what would come next? The Bible tells a very big story of God's very big love for the world, and it begins with something like 'Once upon a time...'. Can anyone remember what the first words of the story are – i.e. from the beginning of Genesis. They are, of course (with slight variations according to the translation): 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...'. So, how does the story end? (Invite people to offer suggestions). Today's reading takes us to the very end of the story – which, it says, is still to come!

## Revelation 22.12-14,16-17,20-21

### Hymn: Offering during this hymn

1 And can it be that I should gain  
An int'rest in the Saviour's blood?  
Died He for me, who caused His pain?  
For me, who Him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! how can it be  
That Thou, my God, should die for me?

Refrain:

Amazing love! how can it be  
That Thou, my God, should die for me!

2 'Tis mystery all! Th'Immortal dies!  
Who can explore His strange design?  
In vain the firstborn seraph tries  
To sound the depths of love divine!  
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore,  
Let angel minds inquire no more. [Refrain]

3 He left His Father's throne above,  
So free, so infinite His grace;  
Emptied Himself of all but love,  
And bled for Adam's helpless race;  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;  
For, O my God, it found out me. [Refrain]

4 Long my imprisoned spirit lay  
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,  
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;  
My chains fell off, my heart was free;  
I rose, went forth and followed Thee. [Refrain]

5 No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in Him is mine!  
Alive in Him, my living Head,  
And clothed in righteousness divine,  
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,  
And claim the crown, through Christ my own. [Refrain]

Often, when we pray, we forget that we are just talking to God, and when we talk to anyone it's only a conversation if we allow time for them to respond and talk to us. Now let's be very quiet as we try to hear what God wants...for us...or for our church. If you can't hear anything, can you imagine what God might want for us, both individually and as a church family?

Let's listen to Jesus' prayer now;

**Rachel reads John 17.20-26**

## Offering

### An activity to explore our longing for Jesus' coming

**You will need:** paper plates, coloured pens.

- Using the paper plates and coloured pens can you make a pie chart of your life, slicing the 'pie' (i.e. the plate) so that each segment represents a role or relationship, an activity or an area of your life. The size of the segment could represent its relative importance in your life, but it doesn't matter – you should do whatever makes sense to you.
- When you have finished, think about how comfortable or uncomfortable you are with the idea of Jesus as Lord of each area of those segments of your life.

### A prayer of confession

Your call to the very first disciples, Lord, was 'Come, follow me.'

We follow you today, Lord.

But sometimes we can fall out of step with you.

Our longing to walk closely with you

can get hijacked by our longing to belong to the 'in crowd' of the moment.

And our behaviour makes us poor witnesses for you.

Lord, we are sorry; help us to live unselfishly.

At times our words may not be nice

and we're at fault of quarrelling with one another.

Lord, we are sorry; help us to live in unity.

Sometimes fear of the consequences of speaking out and sharing of you can silence us.

Lord, we are sorry; strengthen our faith.

Help us to make the most of every opportunity.

To be better witnesses for you

so that others will come and know the love and joy of belonging to your family.

Amen.

## Hymn: **Be Still And Know That I Am God**

| SoF 41 | JP 22 | MP 48 | | CH4 755 |

Be still and know  
That I am God,  
Be still and know  
That I am God,  
Be still and know  
That I am God.

I am the Lord  
That healeth thee  
I am the Lord  
That healeth thee  
I am the Lord  
That healeth thee

In thee, O Lord  
I put my trust  
In thee, O Lord  
I put my trust  
In thee, O Lord  
I put my trust.

### **Celebrating our belonging together**

**You will need:** A5 paper, crayons or coloured pens, glue sticks, several large sheets of paper headed 'We belong to Jesus'.

- If Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the A-to-Z of everything, then whatever letter our name begins with, we can belong to him.
- I invite you to draw an outline of your initial, decorate it and cut it out.
- Before you leave today, please stick your initial onto the large sheet of paper.

We will now pray for each other and the world in our **prayers of intercession.**

Loving God, we so long for the world to be at peace – but war rages on. So, we pray today for those who live in war zones, especially in Ukraine where the battles are increasing and the casualties are rising, but also for those places that have slipped out of the news but where fighting continues. We pray for all who have had to leave their homes as a consequence of war and cruelty.

Lord Jesus, come into our world afresh  
and turn longing and fear into belonging and peace.

**Amen.**

- Compassionate God, we long for our children and schools to be safe and our hearts are breaking at the tragedy in Texas. We pray for those who have been killed and injured, for children and teachers traumatised by the shooting, for grieving families, for the emergency services and for those entrusted with the making of gun laws.
- Lord Jesus, come into our world afresh  
and turn longing and loss into belonging and comfort.

**Amen.**

- Generous God, we so long for every child to be fed and for every community to do well – but hunger and poverty scar the lives of so many. We pray for those turning to violence and crime to get what they need, for those protesting and campaigning and for the places where there is civil unrest due to the cost of living. We pray for a fair sharing of the earth's resources, and for decent farming practices and trade deals.
- Lord Jesus, come into our world afresh  
and turn longing and shortage into belonging and plenty.

**Amen.**

- Wise God, we pray for politicians and those in power, for our own government, for the newly elected government in Australia. We pray for those engaged in diplomacy across the family of nations, and for all those who abuse power. We pray for transparency and accountability for all those who hold public office.
- Lord Jesus, come into our world afresh  
and turn longing and power into belonging and servanthood.

**Amen.**

- Living God, we pray for your church around the world and in this place. We long to see your kingdom come, and we ask that you will use us to be your hands and feet and voice, wherever there is need or isolation or grief. We pray you will help us to be good stewards of

your creation, good listeners where people are struggling, and good companions where people are searching for you.

- Lord Jesus, come into our world afresh and turn longing and loneliness into belonging and fellowship.

**Amen. Come Lord Jesus. Come soon.**

## A group discussion

### Helping people feel that they belong.

- Working in groups, share and discuss experiences of belonging – or not – e.g. how did you feel when you moved to a new area, or went to a new school or place of work, or visited a new church? What did other people do that helped or hindered you on your journey to belonging?
- Next, reflect together on who might find it hard to belong to your church – e.g. because of their age, marital status, ethnicity or disability (but do not limit it to this list). Why would it be hard for them? What could you do as an individual, or as a church community, to make people feel more welcome as visitors, and to feel that they belong more quickly if they decide to join you?

### Hymn: Father God I wonder

SoF 92	MP 128	CH4 186
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Father God, I wonder how I managed to exist  
Without the knowledge of Your parenthood and Your loving  
care

But now I am Your child, I am adopted in Your family  
And I can never be alone

'Cause Father God, You're there beside me

I will sing Your praises  
I will sing Your praises  
I will sing Your praises  
Forever more

I will sing Your praises  
I will sing Your praises  
I will sing Your praises  
Forever more

## Exploring the significance of being 'first' or 'last'.

- With the people on your table can you list from 1<sup>st</sup> to last everyone according to age; then alphabetically; by height; by favourite colour from the rainbow (Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet); by birthday in the month; by number of legs in your household including pets; (can you think of other ways?) How does it feel to be first or last?
- Wherever you are in the line, including first or last, Jesus stands beside you. Sometimes people on the edges, the fringes, do not feel that they belong – or not fully. So, as we reflect together on this simple experience of belonging in different ways, who might feel that they are on – or even beyond, if that were possible – the edges of our local church or community? Given that such feelings are unlikely to come from nowhere, and inequalities are seldom random, what can we do to address them?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we belong to you.

Thank you that you have brought us together as one family.

We thank you for each person gathered here.

We pray, too, for those who do not know you,

that we would share your invitation to belong, with them.

**Amen.**

Hymn;

### **God's people aren't super brave super heroes**

God's people aren't super brave super heroes

They don't have muscles from their heads to their toes

They're not gladiators, that's easy to see

In fact, it's amazing, they're just like you and me.

Sometimes scared, shaking and a' shivering

But let's realise, we've got God on our side,

And He can do, absolutely anything

(Repeat X 2 from top)

## A simple worship activity

### Responding to Jesus' invitation.

- Looking at the table of Jesus invitations to 'Come' notice which one(s) seems to speak to you and, why. Allow several minutes for this.  
If you feel comfortable doing so, you might like to discuss and pray with each other.

Come, follow me	Come and offer your gift	Come to me
Come to the wedding banquet	Come and share your master's happiness	Come, you who are blessed by my Father
Come with me	Come and be healed	Come, for everything is now ready
Come down immediately	Come, and you will see	Come to me to have life
Come to me and drink	Come out!	Come in
Come now	Come at once!	

### Go with God

- Using the sticky labels and pens. work in twos or threes, and create for each other a simple badge with a picture or symbol to show they belong to Jesus, or to your church family. Think about what you have explored in today's worship as you do this. Exchange badges and wear them when you return home!

### Two hymns back-to-back: **Come on and celebrate**

| SoF 73 | | MP 99 |

Come on and celebrate  
His gift of love we will celebrate  
The Son of God who loved us  
And gave us life  
We'll shout your praise O King  
You give us joy nothing else can bring

We'll give to You our offering  
In celebration praise

Come on and celebrate  
Celebrate, celebrate and sing  
Celebrate and sing to the King  
Celebrate and sing to the King

### **Jesus put this song into our hearts**

SoF 299	MP 376	CH4 692
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Jesus Put This Song Into Our Hearts  
Jesus Put This Song Into Our Hearts  
It's A Song Of Joy No One Can Take Away  
Jesus Put This Song Into Our Hearts.

Jesus Taught Us How To Live In Harmony  
Jesus Taught Us How To Live In Harmony  
Different Faces, Different Races, He Made Us One  
Jesus Taught Us How To Live In Harmony.

Jesus Taught Us How To Be A Family  
Jesus Taught Us How To Be A Family  
Loving One Another With The Love That He Gives  
Jesus Taught Us How To Be A Family.

Jesus Turned Our Sorrow Into Dancing  
Jesus Turned Our Sorrow Into Dancing  
Changed Our Tears Of Sadness Into Rivers Of Joy  
Jesus Turned Our Sorrow Into A Dance.

### **A sending out prayer**

Lord, we have come together,  
and now you send us out with your blessing.

As we go out,

**come, Lord Jesus!**

As we go home,

come, Lord Jesus!

As we go to work, school or college,

**come, Lord Jesus!**

Wherever we are,

**be with us, Lord Jesus!**  
**Amen.**