

# Communion Service - Behold the One They Have Pierced!

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Date: 18 February 2024

Preacher: Rev Angus Macrae

- [ 0 : 00 ]     who has been with us the last couple of services and will be with us again this evening. And we trust that he too will know God's blessing as he leads us in this worship of God.
- Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you for your warm welcome. What a joy it is to be with you, to be in a sense at home.
- My watch has got artificial intelligence going on and it spoke to me when I left my mother's house today and said it was three hours and 57 minutes to the Free North in Inverness.
- I'm not sure if I can manage that in the little car, the VW that we have. I don't think it'll work. So artificial intelligence aside, we are glad to be together and in the house of God.
- And wherever we are with God's people, with God's word, and with the help of God's spirit, we are at home and we look forward to the Lord, our host, welcoming us to his sign of the supper, to his table where he will feed us.
- [ 1 : 17 ]     So let us lift up our hearts to God and worship today, praising God in the words of Psalm 23 from Sing Psalms. Psalm 23 in Sing Psalms, page 28.
- The tune Tarwathi. The Lord is my shepherd. No want shall I know. He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow.
- He leads me to rest where the calm waters flow. Let us stand and sing praise to our glorious shepherd.
- Amen. The Lord is my shepherd. No want shall I know.
- He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow. He leads me to rest where the calm waters flow.
- [ 2 : 29 ]     My wandering steps he brings back to his way.
- In straight paths of righteousness making me stay. And this he has done his great name to display.
- Though I walk in death's valley where darkness is near.
- Because you are with me, no evil I'll fear. Your rod and your staff bring me comfort and cheer.
- In the sight of my enemies a table you spread.
- [ 3 : 38 ]     The oil of rejoicing you pour on my head. My cup overflows and I'm graciously fed.
- So surely your covenant mercy and grace Will follow me closely in all of my ways.
- I will dwell in the house of the Lord Almighty. Jesus.
- We can unite our hearts together in prayer as we come near to God. Lord, our gracious God and our gracious and good shepherd, we acknowledge our need of help today as we meet together for worship.

Draw near to us as you have promised in your word. And grant to us the joy of our Savior Jesus Christ, that shepherd of the sheep who died to unite his flock, to cleanse them and to feed them with his own body and with his own blood.

[ 5 : 14 ] We ask that we will not draw back in unbelief and that we will not be influenced by the tide of the times that we are living in.

To turn away from the Lord and from your word. But help us to be open before the eye of the Lord and before the voice of the Lord, that we might meet with God today and receive a blessing.

We bless the Lord for the gift of living bread, the manna that has come down from heaven, Jesus Christ, and for the written word of God, also living bread.

Nourish us with fellowship with yourself, with fellowship with our Savior Jesus, and with fellowship a shared life and love for one another and for all your people.

Be our teacher and increase our hunger and our thirst for the one who is the way and the truth and the life.

[ 6 : 30 ] And grant that we may delight in having the word of God broken for us, so that we might feed on it and share it with others. Give us a holy joy and a holy excitement, a thrill in our hearts, as we are reminded of truths we know already, and as we learn, perhaps, to see the truth afresh and anew, and to learn new things about our great God and King.

We pray for the young, for children, for young adults, for families, and for every individual who is part of the body of Christ in this place.

Bless this church as a light and a witness in this community, the office bearers, the ministers, and their families, and all who serve in different ministries and in different ways.

And even today, we ask that the kingdom of God will advance. We ask the blessing of heaven on the Gallic section of the congregation, meeting together, on Mr. MacDonald as he leads their worship.

We pray blessing on every gospel church, gathering as we do today, across our nation, and even in this community, when other congregations are also remembering the Lord's death until he come again.

[ 8 : 05 ] We ask that the blessing we long for will break out here and in every place where the Lord's people seek his face.

Show us how to help and encourage one another and how to pray for one another and how to pray for different fellowships and congregations that each might thrive to the glory of God.

We remember the sick and the suffering. We remember those with burdens and concerns today. Comfort those who are grieving and bring near to us the face of the one that we love and that we look forward to seeing when he comes in his might and power and glory.

May we welcome him. We recognize that many have gone before us and that they sleep in Jesus waiting for the day of his glorious appearing.

They already see his face but they await the resurrection and all the joy that that will bring. May we share in the hope of the church through ages past that in Jesus Christ death is swallowed up in victory.

[ 9 : 37 ] May we have no fear today. May we not be disturbed by the work of the wicked one but may we know that supernatural grace and peace that flows from the one who was wounded for us, who was crushed for us and who conquered death and was raised on the third day.

Lord, where there is darkness, shine your light. Lord, where there is fear, bring your peace and grant that today will be a day that we will remember for meeting the Lord Jesus.

Bless us and keep us and we pray through Jesus Christ seeking peace and pardon.  
Amen.

Boys and girls, I'm not going to take long to speak to you today. It's just lovely to see children and young people here. I grew up in this church and it was about 40 years ago when I was 15 that I first was helped to sit at the Lord's table and begin to know something of growing in the knowledge of God through the things that were being taught.

But that didn't happen without lots of people helping and praying for me as a child, family and Sunday school and what have you. And I want to thank God for all those people who taught me the way of Jesus.

[ 11 : 22 ] And I am sure there are people teaching you the way of Jesus as well. Some of you will be Christians, you will be believers, maybe very young and that's a wonderful thing.

And it's good to tell other people when we are praying and when we know that God is hearing our prayers. And it's good to ask for help but most of all it's good to ask the Lord himself to show us the next steps and the way that we are to glorify him.

And that might be even as a child or a young person finding out what it means to belong to God's people as a member, as a professing Christian and follower of Jesus.

That happened for me 40 years ago in this church. You can do the maths and you'll know how old I am. But I am thankful that God has never taken his eye off that boy who became a man.

And if you are walking with Jesus, girl or boy, whatever stage you're at, God will never take his eye off you.

[ 12 : 46 ] You can trust him. And we pray together the words that Jesus gave us. our Father, which 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever.

Amen. I believe the children are coming back into church at the end of our service and we pray God's blessing on all you do and learn together.

We are going to sing, we're going to read God's word now in John's Gospel, chapter 19. John, chapter 19. On Friday evening, Saturday evening, we began to work our way through this great chapter that speaks of Christ on the cross.

[ 14 : 01 ] We saw him as the man being presented to Jerusalem by Pontius Pilate. Did they want him?

Did they want Jesus for their king? Behold the man, behold the king. And they were rejecting him. We saw him as the son, God's son and Mary's son, but also as the one who carries shame to the cross.

And today, we are going to see him on the cross dying, so behold today, behold the one they have pierced. And that scripture is in John 19 from verse 28 onwards.

Then they led Jesus from, I beg your pardon, John 19 and verse 20, 28.

After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said, to fulfill the scripture, I thirst. A jar full of sour wine stood there.

[ 15 : 14 ] So they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, it is finished.

And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Since it was the day of preparation and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for that Sabbath was a high day, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.

He who saw it has borne witness. His testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you also may believe.

[ 16 : 49 ] For these things took place, that the scripture might be fulfilled, not one of his bones will be broken.

And again, another scripture says, they will look on him whom they have pierced.

This is the word of the Lord, holy and inspired. Thanks be to God. We sing praises from Psalm 40 in Sing Psalms, Psalm 40 in Sing Psalms, and we're taking up the singing at verse 13.

The tune is Herongate, Psalm 40, and at verse 13 on page 51, be pleased, O Lord, to rescue me, O Lord, come quickly to my aid.

Shall we stand and sing in Psalm 40 from verse 13? Be pleased, O Lord, to rescue me, O Lord, come quickly to my aid.

[ 18 : 15 ] May all who seek my love to take my life with shame and turmoil be repaid.

May all who plot my overthrow turn back disgrace the way they came me to my face be come upon not their own shame but let all those who seek your face be joyful in you all their days let those who love salvation say exalted be the

Lord always yet I am poor and in great need need Lord take on me I humbly pray you are my savior and my help come oh my God do not delay do not delay at this point we're going to focus on God's word for the next little while in the gospel of John and in chapter 19 be helpful to have that portion of God's word open the story of our savior on the cross on the cross on the tree behold the one they have they have pierced

I don't know if you've ever worked out how many days or weeks you have been alive it might be a strange thing to do but we know that the Lord Jesus life was cut short at around 33 years of age even that in the ancient world was a reasonable life span he was not old when he died but he had lived for over 30 years and that amounts to about 1700 weeks but the Bible but the Bible tells the story in great detail of only one of those weeks of only one of those weeks he lived for over 30 years but the Bible focuses on his last week and especially on his last day and especially on his last hours and especially on his last hours because the central story of the scripture is that the God who came among us the word who was made flesh died suffered and died tested death that is where all four gospels head about a third of Matthew

Mark and Luke and John is devoted to the last week and last day and last hours of the life of Jesus the very heart of our faith is that our God took our flesh and died for his people we have been commanded by Jesus in the sign of the Lord's Supper to remember his death we could have been given a sign to remember his birth and that he took flesh but that is not what we were given there are two gospel signs that bind us together as the covenant people of God the sign of baptism using water a sign of washing and using bread and wine in the supper of the lamb a reminder of his body and his blood and of his death but both those signs both baptism and communion are reminders of the cross they are reminders that we need to be washed and cleansed and receive new life and we need to be joined to be joined to the people of God and become members of his body parts of his body these two gospel signs are both connected to the cross and to the work of salvation of redemption right through history there are so many connections with the exodus with the way God revealed himself in the old covenant in the old covenant in the old testament and with all the acts of the Holy Spirit in the new testament

[ 24 : 38 ] I want us to see three things this morning in our message and the first is to focus on Jesus' last words Jesus' last words then we will think about Jesus' last strength and then we will think Jesus' last gift to us so Jesus' last words they are recorded for us in John's gospel and in the short reading that we had today we saw that Jesus was conscious that everything was now finished, fulfilled and he said to fulfill scripture to finish scripture to finish scripture I thirst a few verses later we hear the very last word and we know from the other gospels it wasn't a weak word it was a strong a loud word a single word in the Greek language that the new testament was written in and his last word was as a shout it is finished it is finished

I am thirsty I thirst he takes a drink in fulfillment of prophecy and scripture and having taken the drink it is finished and he dismisses his soul he bows his head he is in an instant physically dead and his soul his spirit is with his father in the kingdom of heaven the bitter cup that the father has asked him to drink has been drunk to the very last drop that phrase it is finished is often preached on it is a wonderful word tetelestai it is finished and lots of things have been said about it but what I want you to notice this morning in these last words of Jesus is just the emphasis on the thirst and the drink and it being finished that word spoken by Jesus on the cross it is finished it is actually in the text three times twice in kind of an identical form a verbal form a verbal form it is finished it is finished it is there in verse 28

Jesus knowing that all was now finished said but the next little phrase that is in brackets in the ESV to fulfill the scripture well the word for fulfilling is really from the same root as the word for finishing to fill to fulfill to fulfill and to finish you can see how they are connected even in English you get to the fulfillment you have finished then the word on the cross after the drink it is finished he came to finish the task that the father gave him he did not stumble the scripture was finished the scripture was fulfilled Jesus' last words but secondly we are going to think about Jesus' last strength what he did with the last grace and strength that God gave to him what was he doing what was he doing on the cross that took his last strength what was he doing as he took those last bitter sips of bitter wine on a sponge soaked with wine vinegar and held up to him on a hyssop plant on the branch of a hyssop what was he doing?

well we know he was fulfilling scripture deliberately and consciously others were fulfilling scripture maybe not realizing that they were doing it maybe their their own sinful inclinations and sinful wills leading them to do things that God had long before foreordained would come to pass for his glory and for our salvation but Jesus is using his last strength to fulfill the Passover to be the true Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world the one John the Baptist pointed to on the first page of this gospel God's Lamb the sin carrying Lamb of God the Passover is looking forward to its fulfillment in Jesus it is at a Passover that he gives his first sign in John's

Gospel chapter 2 the Passover that he went up to at Jerusalem at the beginning of his public ministry and the first sign by which he showed his glory and now his ministry is ending and the last great sign of John's Gospel of signs will be the resurrection of the Passover Lamb it is amazing how the scripture comes together and at the Passover he eats the Passover in Jerusalem with his disciples in the upper room and amazingly the Gospel of John doesn't focus on the action in the Passover with bread and wine the other Gospels will tell you about that John wants you to know about the conversation and the worship and the foot washing and the praying because John's

[ 31:16 ] Passover Passover is really going to happen not in the upper room with the apostles gathered around a table John's Passover is not on Thursday night but on Friday at the place of the skull at the place where the last strength of the Lamb is given is given to die as the Lamb I thirst it is finished what kept Jesus going was this desire this longing to obey his Father to the very end and he was sent to be that Lamb part of his mission was to be a perfect Lamb not a bone of his body could be broken when the soldiers came to hasten the deaths of the three men who were being crucified because the the Friday sunset would begin the Sabbath and it was a special Sabbath a Passover Sabbath a high Sabbath and there was no question the Jews would not be happy to have the land under a curse because a dead body was hanging on a tree cursed by God overnight and over a Sabbath it couldn't be allowed so hurry up the execution get rid of these men get rid of their bodies throw them in their graves well there's no need to hurry up the death of Jesus he has used his last strength to take the bitter drink that Psalm 22 and Psalm 69 said he would take and without a bone of his body being broken he is the perfect

Paschal Lamb Exodus 12 verse 46 Numbers 9 verse 12 the Lamb must be perfect and no bone can be broken not even as its blood is being drained from it or as it is being prepared to be roasted and consumed by those who are in fellowship with God and in fellowship with their Lamb who has died for them so that they so that they do not die so that they go free from Egypt go free from Pharaoh go free from the bondage that has held them Passover is liberation Passover is salvation Passover is the Lamb dead in every house and the blood of the Lamb on the doorposts of every house and Jesus is fulfilling that picture he is the source of life of life and freedom and his last strength is to say

I thirst Psalm 22 my tongue sticks to my jaws but Psalm 22 ends with worship and tell the nations the Lord has done it it's done it's achieved it's finished it's finished Psalm 69 they gave me poison for food and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink surrounded by wild animals surrounded by men like beasts he uses his strength to finish to finish isn't it strange that they picked up a branch of hyssop to give him the drink that he asked for to finish the mission he was sent to do hyssop the same plant that they used in the Passover in the book of Exodus to paint their door frames with the lamb's blood nothing no detail in this story is random or accidental

Jesus last words Jesus last strength and then thirdly Jesus last gift what did he give us as he was dying verse 30 when Jesus had received the sour wine he said it is finished and he bowed his head and he gave up his spirit verse 34 one of the soldiers came to break his legs but the one of the soldiers instead pierced his side with a spear and at once there came out what came out of Jesus' body his last gift to his people blood and water that could just be an incident being recorded because well that's what happened and that's what the witness saw saw but the verses that come after it make a big deal of it they are important to the writer of this gospel and as we've seen a few times in looking at this chapter and if you're familiar with the rest of John's gospel you will know that often John will refer to himself almost with a sense of embarrassment he will find an oblique way to refer to himself as the disciple Jesus loved the beloved disciple he's the one who's to take Mary home from the cross and we found out last night in verse 27 that from that hour

John was to take Mary and care for her and take her to his own home but from that hour does not mean that John and Mary left the cross right then because the hour is the moment this gospel has been moving towards of the death of the Lamb of God and I'm pretty firmly convinced that John was there to see how Jesus died and how that spear that lance was put to his side and how there was no heartbeat there was no life in the body to keep the fluids of his body together there was blood that flowed from his side a dead man and there was water that had been parted from that blood flowing from his side and in that order water first and then blood John saw it

[ 39 : 02 ] John is the eyewitness because he says he who saw it has borne witness his testimony is true and he knows that he's telling the truth that you also may believe for those things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled not one of his bones will be broken and again another scripture says they will look on him whom they have pierced his last gift to us is that he allowed his body to be pierced in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament and the proof that he was dead was that he was violently pierced with a spear and his blood flowed out of him and water flowed out of him what does that last gift mean?

in a gospel where there is often symbolism and meaning in all the details what does it mean? John Calvin believed that the Old Testament way of peace with God could be gathered together under two headings sacrifices of blood and washings the law the old covenant the way to draw near to God before Jesus came and before his sacrifice and fulfillment was a covenant was a covenant expressed in blood sacrifice and water washing I don't think Calvin is wrong to see God working and the Spirit working to bring life and salvation and cleansing through the blood shed that cleanses this is this is a one-off gift this is a gift that had never happened before although the worship of the old covenant pointed forward to it it was partial it was symbolic it was provisional it was a shadow now the Lamb of God true Lamb dies now the Passover Lamb is offered now his blood is offered to mark you safe from God's judgment now water is poured out cleansing water water that stands for the process of birth birth from water you must be born again you must be made new the Spirit often in Scripture using the symbol of water to describe his work the Spirit applying the work of the Son blood and water in the story of the Exodus in the story of the Passover the Passover the blood comes first on the night of the Passover the Lamb is consumed and the Lamb's blood is over the doorposts and the lintels and the people go free they are saved that night but they immediately journey to the sea and they pass through the waters of the sea parted for them by God and they are baptized into Moses in the water in the sea they are identified as God's people saved and marked as saved at Passover and separated from their old life that they are leaving behind and the pursuit of their enemies they pass through water blood and water in that order is at the cross surely it is an echo of the Exodus and surely it is a fulfillment of all the sacrifices of all the drink offerings of all the altars that were raised up and had water poured over them or wine poured over them under the old covenant what is his gift his last gift his blood makes

the sinful clean his blood sets the prisoner free it is finished and John who saw it bears witness and his testimony is true and he knows he is telling the truth you will hear him say something very similar in the next chapter that you also may believe believe do you believe in this Jesus do you believe that his obedience was for your salvation and that he has tasted death for you and that you will not taste death because of that do you believe that he has cleansed you every sin and washed you as his bride do you believe that you were there at the cross because he loved you and he knew your name and he was thinking about his father and about you then come and worship him at his table and come and remember him at his table and come and feed on him looking forward to the day when you handle his hands you see his face you hear his voice and you are with him forever forever

Lord God Adam slept and you took a bride from his side and gave the bride to the man in death our Saviour the second and last Adam slept and you have given him a bride out of his substance out of water and blood that flowed from his side love us today with the love of the cross and assure us today that we need fear nothing strengthen us to love you to serve you and to love one another through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

We are going to sing to God's praise from Sing Psalms and Psalm 34 Sing Psalms and Psalm 34 the opening verses the verses marked 1 to 4 of the psalm to the tune Jackson Psalm 34 verse 2 stanzas and then we will go down to the end of the psalm verse 17 the last 3 stanzas Psalm 34 the opening 2 and the last 3 verses of the psalm at all times I will bless the Lord I'll praise him with my voice the tune Jackson at all times I will bless the Lord I'll praise him with my voice because I glory in the Lord my glory in the Lord let troubled souls rejoice together let us praise the Lord the Lord exalt his name with me

[ 48 : 27 ] I sought the Lord his answer came from fears he set me free the righteous cry the Lord the Lord responds and frees them when distressed the Lord draws near the broken heart heart and rest use the depressed from all the troubles of the just the Lord will set him free the Lord protects his every poor and broken none will be the wicked are condemned to death all those who hate the just

God saves his own they're not condemned for in the Lord they trust they trust the Lord Jesus looked forward to being in the upper room with his friends and showing them that he was their Passover he was their lamb he was giving his body and his blood for them he looked forward to the climax of teaching and discipling his friends his friends in the upper room but the Lord Jesus looks forward to every time his people meet in his name to remember his death until he comes and just as eagerly he looks forward to sitting in his kingdom with you and with all his saints when death is no more and sorrow is no more and today is a help a reminder an encouragement to keep feeding because you will be feasting to keep near because you will be nearer to keep turning and confessing your sins because they have already been nailed to the tree we are called by Christ to live in communion with him with the triune God and to live in trinity fellowship and union with all those in whom God's love resides when we break bread together we are expressing our unity and our love for one another our need of each other our care and respect for one another we need the older ones we need the younger ones we need the ones who have many problems in their lives that need our care and support we need the straightforward ones we need the complicated ones and the blood is over the doorposts and it says stay together as the family stay together under the blood don't be jealous of one another don't despise one another forgive one another maintain unity if he is your lamb and you love him and these are your people and you love them there is one place where we need to be and that is eating and drinking in memory of him celebrating our saviour's love and victory his Passover his exodus and then at the table we are not saying look at me we are saying look at my saviour who gave his body and his blood to wash me what is the right way to come confessing our sins to the Lord in confidence that they are blotted out at the cross and to come expecting more of Jesus more of the Lord the Lord who has given us his all

I just want to pray that we might all be right with God and confess our sins and if there is someone who is not at the table who perhaps ought to be will you do something about that merciful Father you have given your son and there is no greater gift and he has given his body and his blood and the water that flowed he has given his all it is finished forgive us when we forget him and his sacrifice forgive us when we blunder into sin and forget that we are crucifying the Lord Lord all over again forgive us that our love is such a poor return for his love enable us to come and sit at this table today forgiven washed cleansed and in fellowship with God through Jesus Christ our Lord



Amen we will be seated if we are not already seated at the table for sharing in communion during the singing of Psalm 116 from the Scottish Psalter verses 11 to 19 from the Tunis Cunningham Psalm 116 from verse 11 when I was in my haste that all men liars be what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me we stand and sing I said I said when I was in my haste that all men liars be what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me

I'll love salvation take the cup on God's name will I call I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all dear in God's sight is his saints death thy servant Lord am I thy servant sure thine handmaid son thy guy the namex■ call. I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all.

[ 57 : 50 ] Within the courts of God's own house, within the midst of thee, O city of Jerusalem, praise to the Lord give ye.

Brothers and sisters, as we gather together at the Lord's table, it is right that we should remind ourselves of the words of institution and that we should use these to help us to prepare our hearts for where we are and what we are here to do.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11, for I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you. The Lord Jesus on the night which 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 also, he took the cup after supper saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

[ 59 : 27 ] For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

in the moment we're going to give our thanks in prayer and then express our thanks in sharing this gospel sign with one another.

The gospel of John has a Passover near the beginning and a Passover right at the end. The Passover at the beginning is marking the beginning of Jesus' ministry and after his first sign, what does Jesus do?

He goes into his father's house and he is appalled. They're making money and they're making a mockery and he wants to cleanse the house not because he's angry but because poor ones, sinful ones are not getting near the gospel through all the nonsense and the politics and the commerce and he makes a whip and he chases away these fakes and frauds who only care about power and money.

And the scripture was quoted, zeal, zeal for your heart has eaten has eaten me up.

[ 61 : 05 ] It's right at the beginning of the public ministry. He's going to purify a temple by exposing lies and showing the glory of God.

He's going to build a temple, unite a temple and it will not be a temple with stone and lime with gold and wools.

It will be a temple of his body. Well, he did that and his body gathers Lord's day by Lord's day to worship and the head of the body is with the body and he gave his body to nourish you his body.

So be encouraged. Jesus will build and is building his church across the world today.

It's a small part of it but his eye is on it and he loves it and he will never take his eye off his people. So lift up your heart in worship and in thanksgiving.

[ 62 : 27 ] Gracious Lord, we find ourselves again at a table that we do not deserve to be at but our shame and dishonor was nailed to the tree and so in Jesus' name and for his sake we draw near and we ask that today again the Lord will build his people up and build his house up give us a zeal for Christ and his work may we learn from his zeal to pay a price to be holy and to pay a price to be bold and to be witnesses and to pay a price to be on the side of truth may we not draw back in unbelief but may we go forward in faith and trust to the one whose side was torn so that blood and water flowed

Lord Jesus Christ head of this table feed us we receive this bread symbol and emblem and signpost of your body we receive this cup sign of your blood grant us faith and peace as we eat and drink may we do all this to your glory on the night that our saviour was betrayed he took bread and having given thanks he broke it saying take eat this is my body which is broken for you do this in remembrance of me our saviour took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant the new testament in my blood drink you all of it when you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the lord's death until he comes the bread of his presence the bread that speaks of his body the cup of his blood his covenant his love eat and drink the gifts of God to the glory of God it's lovely to see you and to be with you and to share and worship with you and there is a connection that we have with one another and with our lord when we are able to break the bread and share the cup with one another that is a wonderful signpost of the future of a world that we have not yet seen of a love and of a peace that we can hardly imagine today is supposed to strengthen us on the way when we come to the lord's table we come to experience two postures two ways of being one is lowly to humble ourselves but by design the other posture is not lowly but it is to be lifted up for he went down for us on the cross and he has now been lifted up and exalted so when we come to the table by faith we say even with some of the old church fathers from long ago that we have to repent not only of our wickedness but even of our righteousness our good things are not as good as we imagine we've got to give it all up and say Jesus you are the one I need that's going down and he reaches out his hand and he feeds us and he says let me lift you up spend the rest of this day as my ambassador spend the rest of this week as my ambassador go from this place and say my lord was good to me my lord gave his side to the spear for me my lord

washed me and I am clean rock of ages cleft for me let me hide myself in thee let the water and the blood from thy riven side which flowed be of sin the double cure save me from its guilt and power lord you have saved us and you have cleansed us you have encouraged us to come by way of repentance and self examination to a lowly place now lord lift us up in fellowship and communion with the one whose side was torn and riven for us and wash us and cleanse us that when satan comes the cross will be our defense our answer to his lies and accusations help us to go on in the strength of

God and to proclaim the glory of God keep us in love and in unity and keep us from the tempter through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen Closing praise is Psalm 72 in the Scottish Psalter the closing verses 17 to 19 His name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall shall we stand and sing His name forever forever shall endure last like the sun it shall men shall be blessed in heaven and blessed all nations shall shall have him call now blessed be the

Lord our God the God of Israel for he alone God th wondrous works in glory that excel and blessed be his glorious name to all eternity the whole earth let his glory fill amen so let it be go with the peace and grace and strength of God to serve the

[ 71 : 16 ] Lord may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father the fellowship of the Holy Spirit the Comforter be with you with all whom you love and with all God's people everywhere amen for are and for forever Thank you.