

Learning about Communion

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Preacher: Andrew Wingfield

[0 : 00] Good morning, everybody. Good morning. A very warm welcome to you this morning. Welcome to Union Baptist Church. I'd like to welcome you especially if it's your first time with us or if you're visiting us. It's great to have you with us. My name's Andrew and I'm Associate Pastor of this church. This is a special all-age service in which we're going to all be together as people of all ages celebrating the fact we're all God's children and we're going to be sharing communion together at the end of this service. Now in the service we're going to be particularly focusing on our ministry with children and young people here at Union Baptist Church. We'll be celebrating what's going on and explaining our mission for this work. Now I just want to remind you a couple of things which are coming up. Last week we had an update, a special meeting to update us on the Living Stones project and thank you so much. It was wonderful to share lunch together and share that time together.

Thank you for those of us, those of you that were able to join us for that. If you're on our mailing list you would have received an email with links to the videos that we shared at that meeting so you don't need to miss out on that. If you're not on the mailing list please contact us through the website and we'll get you on to that. After the service today we're having what we call a surgery. It's nothing medical, it's an opportunity to ask questions about anything about the project and we're having this after the service in the quiet room which is the room up there in that corner. You can get to it through that way or you can grab your coffee first and go through from the other way. There are two other surgeries coming up during the week and details of that in our in our bulletin, the this week sheet.

Now the other thing that's coming up which is very exciting is our weekend at home which is coming up in February and that is on the 18th to 19th of February and it's a great time to be together for the day on Saturday, have some teaching, have some fun stuff, share time together, build relationships. Enjoy that time. Please sign up for that on the website. I'd like to invite our musicians now who are going to prepare to lead us in worship and as they do that I'm going to lead us in a prayer. Let's pray. Father God we thank you that we can worship you today. You've made it possible for us to draw close to you because of your son Jesus and we're so thankful for that. Help us to praise you this morning in Jesus name. Amen. Okay let's stand and we're going to sing together. Into the night.

[2 : 35] I'll wave the castle and play between us.

In the night. In desperation. In desperation. I turned to heaven.

And spoke your name. Into the night. And through the darkness. Your loving kindness.

Torn through the shadows of my soul No work is finished, the end is written Jesus Christ, my living hope Who could imagine so great a mercy What heart could fathom such boundless grace A God of ages stepped down from glory To wear my sin and bear my shame The cross has spoken, I am forgiven The King of kings calls me his own

Beautiful Saviour, I'm yours forever Jesus Christ, my living hope Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope

[5 : 23] Then came the morning that sealed the promise Your buried body began to breathe Out of the silence, the roaring lion Declared the grave has no claim on me Jesus, yours is the victory Jesus, yours is the victory Jesus, yours is the victory Then came the morning that sealed the promise Your buried body began to breathe Out of the silence, the roaring lion Declared the grave has no claim on me Jesus, yours is the victory Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free

Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me Dieses, yours is the Divine, truth is the merged owner of God Jesus, my living hope Jesus, your bread will take us free Lord, my God, my God, my God If you, your Lord, of God, you have moved to you.

Jesus, oh. Jesus Christ, my living hope Jesus Christ, oh. Jesus Christ, my living hope living hope we thank you that you have broken every chain we thank you that there is salvation in your name and we praise you today for what you've done for us we thank you for your salvation we thank you for reaching down and rescuing us we praise you that you are our rescue and we want to shout your praise let's continue to worship he's our rescuer he's our rescuer we are free from sin forevermore oh how sweet the sound oh how grace abounds we will praise the Lord our rescuer there is good news for the captive good news for the shamed there is good news for the one who walked away there is good news for the delta the one religion failed for the good Lord has come to seek and save he's our rescuer he's our rescuer we are free from sin forevermore oh how sweet the sound oh how grace abounds we will praise the Lord our rescuer he's busy for the blind man riches for the poor he is friendship for the one the world ignores he is passion for the weary rest for those who strive oh the good Lord is the way the truth the light yes the good Lord is the way the truth the light he's our rescuer he's our rescuer hey we are free from sin forevermore oh how sweet the sound oh how grace abounds we will praise the Lord our rescuer so come and be shameless come and be fearless come to the foot of calvary there is redemption for every affliction here at the foot of calvary there is redemption for every affliction here at the foot of calvary come and be shameless come and be fearless come to the foot of calvary there is redemption for every affliction here at the foot of calvary he's our rescuer hey he's our rescuer hey we are free from sin forevermore oh how sweet the sound hey oh how grace abounds hey we will praise the Lord our rescuer we will praise the Lord our rescuer amen do please sit down and helen who is our deacon for children and young families is going to tell us about our mission for that thanks Helen good morning yes it is my privilege to come and share the mission we have for our children and young people team and firstly I thought I'd share with you the process that we went through in determining that mission so first of all as a whole group as a team we came together we prayed about it we discussed it we brainstormed ideas and we were

brainstormed ideas and we crafted the exact idea the vision we had for what we wanted for all of our children and young people we then took that to the elders and deacons who could question it they had some suggestions so we went back and refined it and then we took it to the whole church meeting in autumn and again people had time to give suggestions and feedback feedback and after all of that process we have what we're bringing before you today something we are really excited about we think it's godly we think it's focused and we think it's enabling so shall we have a look at the mission for children and young people thank you so we came up with with God's help through prayer to build an engaging fun caring environment so that children young people families and their leaders equip each other and grow now that's quite exciting but we didn't want to leave it there because we know that it really needs to be interwoven it needs to be practical it needs to be something that resonates with everybody so we then if that's the what had a look at the how how are we going to do it what is it going to look like and we came up with the second half of the mission which is thank you that remember it's the children the young people their families and the leaders together we are going to grow as we hear about Jesus as we learn through the Bible as we know God personally and as we tell others about Jesus so having got our mission the next step is to embed it to really make it something that is at the heart of all that we do and that's part of today that's part of bringing it to everybody here you see our mission as a whole church family is this we have agreed that we are a community of Christians who love God follow

Jesus and share the hope we have in him so part of being that community is working together part of being that community that family of believers is that we know the mission we have for the children they don't sit side by side or completely separate they are interwoven together so what are we asking this morning well I've got three things that I'm asking from everyone this morning first of all that we engage that we engage with the work with the purpose we have secondly that we inquire about it ask come and ask come and ask myself as deacon Aaron as deacon Andrew as elder you see anyone wearing the purple tops if you see the children the families ask inquire how's it going what have you done what's coming up and the third thing encourage encourage us by your questioning encourage us by your engagement encourage us by your prayers so today is all about

that engagement and hopefully it will also lead to the inquiry and to the encouragement now this morning three of our groups from across the week are going to come and share some of the work they are doing I wish it was every group we have so many exciting things that we could be sharing with you however you'd still be here at lunchtime so we've just picked three but if you want to hear more do ask do ask any one of us and we would love to tell you part of the engage is also about really understanding really knowing what the mission is now you know that I teach and when we're planning for how we teach when we're thinking about how we get children to engage to understand the mission is something new we generally think and plan for people in four different ways there are often four different ways people engage four different types of learners and I just wonder as adults do you resonate with them too we have people who learn by reading and writing they have to read it they have to write it down and that way they absorb that information some people are auditory learners they have to hear what it is to truly engage with it some people are visual learners they need visual clues about what we're trying to do and some people are kinesthetic learners they need to learn by experiencing it they need to learn by experiencing it and actually doing it well we've thought about that too and we've tried to make sure that our mission has each of those elements in and indeed throughout the morning we're going to incorporate each of those elements so for the reading and writing we're going to have banners rather like we have here the front sometimes it might be with the children in the front sometimes it might be with the children in the front sometimes it might be with the children in their groups we're going to have small banners so again it's visible when the children are learning and bookmarks so that they can be taken home it can go in the children's

[18:07] Bibles or when they're praying or when you're praying as families so those who want to read of the mission will have it auditory we are never going to tire of telling you about it and sharing with them and throughout the learning they do on a Sunday or Sunday throughout the week we will be continuing to tell them about it we have the visual clues that you can see now with the symbols so if nothing else something really concise and memorable that they can take away and we have some kinesthetic learning too and I wonder if you would join in with me this morning as I show you what they are so first of all we are hoping that the children and the young people will hear about Jesus hear about Jesus hear about Jesus fabulous thank you we hope that they will learn and that's the taking in of information so that they will learn through the Bible we pray that they will know Jesus personally and when they do we pray that they will tell others about him so that they will hear learn know know and tell now throughout the morning you're going to have all of those so whichever style that appeals to you we hope we've got it there for you you will see it written throughout you will hear about it but I have some very willing and capable volunteers that have my visual signs scattered around the church so if you could wave them now for me thank you throughout the service if you hear one of those refer to hopefully they will wave if they don't can you give them a prompt so that we will see those visual clues throughout the morning if you hear some of those keywords could you so if you hear someone say here if we hear someone say here if we hear someone say here if we hear someone say here if we talk about learning if we talk about knowing Jesus personally or if we talk about telling if you could join in and then hopefully by the end of this service we will have engaged I hope you do inquire I hope you do encourage us as we encourage the children and the young people now I'm delighted to welcome Sarah who's going to do the first of our slots telling you all about explorers on Ruth 2 thank you hello everyone can you hear me I'm not very good at these oh good should I use that one okay we're from explorers so we're the naught to threes group and there's Ruth and me we're part of the team and Alex too and I think Joey might be coming up as well and then explorers we're all about knowing we're all about knowing some things we're all about knowing God and that we all matter to God we're all about knowing each other and we're all about knowing God's love for us so Ruth over to you okay let me just get my prop so we run explorers oh yeah sorry forget about that yeah so we run explorers in the morning so it's ages 0 through to 3 and we have a lot of fun but one of the really important aspects of what we do is getting to know the parents

quite often the parents will stay in it's not always easy to go out into church sometimes they won't go into church just because they're not sure of their faith or they're tired and so we can just be a friendly face we can have a chat with them we can make them tea or coffee or just go through anything that they're struggling with and yeah that's one really good aspect of what we do and that's my prop coffee and of course the children are very busy in explorers they do we have to keep track

so we do lots of playing and I think Buzz you've got a puzzle there haven't you so that's one of the things that we do we also have snack of course it's very very important to have snack we also have stories my sparkly bag so we have the stories we have lots of singing don't we do you want to hold the scene we have lots of singing and we have lots and lots of fun yeah so hi I'm Alex and I have two what no three I've three kids now sorry I've got three kids and all the explorers three and a half Joey is two and Katie is well seven weeks and what they tend to do is like they follow the structure which is amazing it's the first playgroup really or crèche sorry that I've been to where they actually teach the children even at this age you know even at the age of like two and three and a half and at first when Sarah told me I was a bit like really you're gonna do a Bible study and stuff like that not Bible study read a Bible and I was like oh I don't know how that will work but the amount of stuff that these two kids take in sometimes at the time they're sprinting around or running around and then they come home and then they start talking about it so it's absolutely amazing and sometimes they do a craft or some coloring related to the Bible story and Buzz likes to show me you know I did this and he can tell me what it's about and he likes to sing they sing as well after the Bible story and again the amount that they just absorb is amazing and we sing these songs at bedtime as well and so it's so worthwhile and just even from a tiny age they just get used to having that structure from reading the Bible from singing songs about

Jesus and hopefully we just pray it will stay with them for the rest of their lives Thank you and we're going to go and explore a little bit and we want everyone to know that they all matter to God just as all the pieces matter to this puzzle it's not complete without it we all matter to God from the little ones all the way up thank you Thank you Brilliant well thank you so much Sarah and Ruth and Alex and Buzz and Joey and it's so exciting to hear about what's happening in Explorers and we have lots of other groups can we just go back to the third slide on the mission because we just wanted to mention on Sunday mornings we have four groups for children Explorers Adventurers Navigators and Trailblazers Navigators and Trailblazers just remember E-A-N-T think of an electronic Ant E-A-N-T Explorers Adventurers Navigators Trailblazers and for young people we have Salt and Light and during the week we have Babies and Toddlers Discoverers and Chill for young people and we're going to be telling you about some of those groups later on this morning and some of those we'll be telling you about in weeks to come

Now we're going to have a Bible reading now but we're going to do this in a way which is now Helen introduced us to a grown up word which I can't say it thank you kinesthetic which means learning by doing right so we're going to hear where's my big ear okay thank you Reuben we're going to hear the word of God but we're going to hear it by acting it out we're going to act out the story it's a well known Bible story it's a well known Bible story you may know the story as the parable of the prodigal son or the lost son but I need some people to help me act it out first of all I need a narrator Chris Chris has already volunteered I haven't got any other volunteers so far so I do my beautiful wife Miriam is going to be our props department I need to have about seven people I need a father and two sons and there's various other parts as well who Brandon you got your hand up well done you come down okay Elliot you can come down now you can be two sons that would be great now I need a father someone who's like a father kind of a father kind of figure someone who's this is an all age drama by the way someone who's kind of you know known as a father figure Mick Horsburgh it's really good to see you again thank you Mick grandfather that'll yeah that'll do JJ you can come up I've got a part for you Jameson you can be can you be my can you be my servant not my servant the servant in the drama okay if you come over here who else do I need I need a citizen this very very simple Bethany yeah you can be a citizen and the stars of the show are you I need, later on, we need a couple of people to be, act the part of pigs, because they feature in this story. Jess, well done. Need another pig? This is an all-age drama. I'm just going to remind you of that. It's an all-age drama.

[27 : 37] Okay? So anyone can do this. There's no speaking involved for this part. Ah, Oriana, well done. You come on down. And have I got a servant? Have I got a citizen?

Yes. Citizen. Great. Okay. Okay. Well, what I need is the... Mick, you're going to be the father. And I need an older son. Brandon, you're an old... Okay. You're going to be an older son.

Okay. Elliot, can you be the younger son? Everyone else, if you can just go over to the side over there, and we'll call you on as and when we need you. Now, I'm just going to... What could possibly go wrong?

A lot of things, actually. So, Mick, can you stand in the middle? Brandon on this side. Okay. Chris, you're going to... Right from over there. Younger son, Elliot, come over here. And so Chris is going to narrate the story, and you're going to ask it out, and Miriam and I will help you with directions and props and things like that.

It's easy. So, let me just open this. So we're ready. Not yet. Not yet. We're all good? So, we're all good.

[28 : 39] Good. Great. So, Jesus continued. There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father...

Father... Okay. Now, I've got a line for you to read. Do you think you can read this line? Father, give me my share of estate.

Okay. Brilliant. Thank you. So, he divided his property between them. So, father, you've got some coins there. I need you to count out the coins. You could not.

Did I tell you it involves maths? No. Something about that. Okay. Can you count out the coins? We'll help you with the maths. Count out the coins. Tell us how... Oh, that's a good way of doing it. One for you. That way we get it evenly.

One for you. That's great. One for you. One for me. One for you. You. Have we got an odd number?

[29 : 36] We don't. We don't. We don't. Phew. Okay. Well done. Good job. So, not long after that, the younger son got together all he had.

Okay. So, younger son, you need to take your money. Okay. And over here, we've got a suitcase for you. You need to... You can take that with you. Take the box with you.

But you need to pack your suitcase. Don't put these things one by one in the suitcase. So, pack your possessions. Okay. Yeah, don't worry about folding it.

That's... Yeah. Boys never fold things when they pack. Okay. Got socks? Don't forget your toothbrush. No, don't worry. It's in there. It's in there.

It's in there. No, no. It's in there. It's in there. Okay. Let's zip it up. Okay. And you're ready to set off now.

[30 : 32] So, if you come down here with your money. Go down there. Bye. Yeah. Done. Okay. Right. I'll help you. So, then... You come down here.

Yeah. Okay. Read us the next bit, Chris, and we'll see what happens next. Great. So, then he set off for a distant country, and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

Okay. So, we need to set up some wild living opportunities for this boy. So, we need some shopkeepers, which Miriam is going to arrange, selling things which are bad for him.

So, just hold up the sign. Right. That's for you. Okay. Just wait here, and we'll send you around. So, that's for you to give out. So, in a minute, you're going to spend your money.

Hold up the signs, please, if you've got a sign. Okay. That's for you to give him when he comes.

Okay.

[31 : 29] Right. That's for you to give when he comes. That's for you to give when he comes. Okay. That's for you to give him when he comes. Okay. So, Elliot, you're going to leave the suitcase here.

You can go around and spend your money. You can, every time we see a sign, give them a coin, and they'll give you something. So, here we go. Okay. Give them a coin. Okay. You get your kebabs.

Okay. I'll hold that. There you go. I'll carry that for you. Yeah. Okay. Chips here. Okay. Oh, I'll get that. Right. Pizza here. Okay. Let's collect your pizza for you. There's a drink there.

Okay. Drink your drink. There you go. Right. There's more on this side. Oh, there's a kebab van over here. Judy's kebab van. Okay.

Go and get a kebab. Okay. Well done. Okay. What's next? Okay. Okay. Got another drink there. Okay.

[32 : 27] You get the money. You get the drink. There you go. Have a drink. More chips? Chips. Chips. Okay. Okay. Right. Come back up now. Okay. You just stand here.

Okay. I think we're ready for the next part. So after he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in the whole country. Okay. Okay. So you're empty handed now.

There's nothing left in your box. And you're feeling a bit hungry as well. Okay. Okay. And he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country.

Okay. Okay. So, sorry. Father and older son, you can sit down over here. We'll set the scene for the citizen of the other country. So here's the citizen.

Okay. And the citizen has got a couple of pigs. So we're just going to get them lined up with their costumes. I said pigs. Pigs.

[33 : 30] Okay. Let's just add you up the set. Let's we do that. Okay. So, okay. So, okay. So, pigs, you can come onto the stage now. Come on. Just come here.

Okay. Okay. Now, now, younger son, you're going to introduce yourself to the citizen. Who's this person here? And you're going to be asking them for work. So can you ask them for work?

On the younger son, can I please have some work? Okay. Sure. Okay. What? Okay. So the citizen of that country sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

Okay. Now, the pig food looks remarkably like Cheerios. Now, if you're not allergic to Cheerios, you can actually... So you can actually...

If you hold out your hands, pigs, and you can give them some of the pig food, which looks like Cheerios. Okay. Let's do that. Okay.

[34 : 27] So you're feeding the pigs. Well done. Okay. Yeah, that's great. Okay. Okay. Carry on, Chris. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

Looking very hungry. Oh. When he came to his senses, he said... Okay. So I've got a line for you to read. Okay.

So if you can... How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death.

I will set out and go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

Make me like one of your hired servants. So he got up and went to his father. Okay. So you're going to go on the journey to your father, and you're going to walk up here.

[35 : 33] It's a long journey, and you're going to walk round the back, and then back round the other aisle. Okay. So if the pigs and the citizen can leave the stage, take the food, and so our father's going to be here.

Older son, you can just stay there for now. You'll come in later. Okay. And the father is looking.

Okay. Just wait there. Just wait there. Younger son. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him.

He was filled with compassion for him. Okay. Just wait there, Elliot. Just wait there. Just wait there.

He ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him. You can high-five him. Sorry. Okay. It's okay. Yeah. Okay. And then you go with him. The son said to him. Okay.

We've got another line here. Okay. Can you read that one? Father, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and against you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

[36 : 39] But the father said to his servants. Sorry.

Just finding your line. Here we go. Which one? This one. Quick. Bring the best robe, and put it on in. Okay. So the servant's going to come with the robe.

Okay. Elliot, can you just move over this way? Okay. It's the best robe. I'm going to put that on him.

Now, bring the fattened calf, and kill him.

Oh, sorry. Sorry. Chris first. Okay. I think you've got a line. Well, we need to put a ring on his finger.

Yes. Should we do that?

Have I not given the, sorry, sorry, this is the, I've given you the wrong line. Here you go. Can you read that one, Mick? Because I gave you the wrong line. Can't get the staff, can you?

[37 : 42] Father, director. Put a ring on his finger, and sandals on his feet. Okay. So we've got some, we've got some sandals. I'm wearing it.

Okay. You can put them on. Okay. Okay. Here's number three. Sorry about that. It's all right. Bring the fattened calf, and kill it. Don't look away if you're squeamish.

No, look away if you're squeamish. Hang on, that's a, that's quite, that's quite a skinny calf, and it's a bit stripy. Can we, we've got a fattened one, please.

Can we try again? Go and ask, go and ask the props department. Go and ask Miriam, see if we can get a fatter one. Here you go. Here you go. Okay. You have to use your imagination there.

Take that. Okay. There we go. That's, that's actually a panda. Never mind, never mind. Another line for the father.

[38 : 41] Here we go. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine, he was dead, and he's alive again.

He was lost, and now he's found. Okay, so you guys are going to celebrate now. We've got some party blowers for you, some party hats. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's okay. Yeah. Okay. So we need some, so we need some dancing, some celebrating. Okay. That's the music. DJ, music. There we go.

Brilliant. Okay, let's give him a clap. That's, that's the end of part one. Brandon, you've got much more to do later. Okay, so if you want to go and sit down, you can stay there, or you can sit where you were, but I'm going to get you back later, and the father, and the servant, and the younger son, we need you later.

Okay, everyone else, you can sit down. Thank you. We're going to do part two later. You can, you can eat some of them. Yeah, and you can share them. Yes. brilliant.

[40 : 08] Well, thank you so much to everyone who took part in that first part of our drama, some brilliant acting there. now what we've done is to hear i can't see the sign well done jess to hear about jesus because this was a story that jesus told now we're going to learn thank you mick learn from the bible about what this means for us now this story started with a happy scene the father and two sons a happy life but the younger son wanted to experience more he wanted more excitement more freedom so he asked his dad to get a share of his inheritance the money he would have got when his dad died now how do you think that made the dad feel in the time when jesus told this story for a son to ask this of his dad meant that the son wished his dad was dead but the son was off he was just so excited he had so much fun to have he had a bag full of money and he spent it on things that he wanted but which weren't good for him but the trouble was after a while his money ran out and then there was a famine in that country and the food ran out the only job that he could get was feeding pigs and you might think well it's not bad feeding pigs but this man was a jew and pigs were ceremonially unclean so this would be this would have been the most horrible worst disgusting job that this young man could have and as he fed the pigs he was hungry and he longed to eat the food that the pigs were eating but his thoughts turned to back home and he probably thought what have i done and as he thought some more he thought well my father has hired servants who have food to spare while he's starving to death so he started thinking if he goes back to his dad and says sorry he might just be allowed to be a servant and then he can gradually pay off the debt to his father so he sets off on that long journey back to his dad as we saw and i wonder what he was feeling on that journey home i think he would have been quite worried that his dad would have been very angry with him but it says in luke 20 verse 15 while he was still a long way off his father saw him and the only way his father could have seen him is if his father had been out looking for him he loved the son and he missed the son so much he went out every day to look for the son hoping that he would come back for the son how is he feeling you know how you feel when you've done something wrong and you know you've done something wrong and you notice you know you need to say sorry and you get a kind of a horrible kind of knot in your stomach does anyone else get that is it just me i think we get that don't we i think that's what he was feeling and when the dad finally saw the son it says in verse 20 he was filled with compassion for him the son had hurt him but he felt nothing but love and filled with compassion he ran to the son now that was actually very unusual in the times the story was told because a man in the father's position would never run anywhere that would be quite a strange or quite an embarrassing thing sometimes you see people running who don't normally run this often happens at the station you some might see a businessman who's all dressed up very smartly in his suits with his briefcase and he's running because he's late for the train and he's obviously doesn't do much running and it's quite funny to it's quite funny to it's quite funny to see it would have been like that for this dad it would have been kind of funny and embarrassing but the dad didn't care what anyone thought because he was just overwhelmed with love for his son he threw his arms around the son i think the son would have been totally surprised by the dad's reaction but he knew he had something to say what he'd probably been practicing all the way home in verse 21 father i've sinned against heaven and against you i'm no longer worthy to be called your son and i think as he said that he felt the the shame and the pain of knowing that he'd betrayed his dad but the dad wasn't angry he was just so happy he called his servants to bring the best robe probably not a bathrobe he put it put it on the sun and a ring these were signs of great honor and the son said i'm not worthy

to be your son but the dad said you are my son well we need to hear this today and we need to tell others thank you tell others this wonderful story that describes god's love to us because what did the father do the father had a massive party to celebrate this is how god celebrates when we come

[53 : 41] So, Discoverers is for 8 to 11-year-olds. We meet on a Friday from 5 to 6.15. And really, we are just there to have fun and enjoy ourselves.

It's a place where children can bring their friends along and learn about God. We eat toast. We eat toast. We play games. We do crafts. We occasionally do a little bit of baking.

And we just generally have a lot of fun. Each week is based on Bible study. So, we read a little bit from the Bible. And we make sure that we, the children know that everything is based in the Bible. So, it's not just Miriam's good idea or Jackie's good idea or Jamie's good idea. But what we're learning about is from the Bible. The last few weeks, we've been learning about the armor of God. And we are just going to play one of the games that we have played during those weeks. Great. Okay. So, Eric, can you come down, please? Come play the game.

[54 : 42] Brilliant. That's an even number. We could have two more people who would like. Oh, of course. Oriana and Luke. Come, come, come. Okay. So, these guys all come to Discoverers regularly.

If you are this age and you have not come to Discoverers yet, you need to get there. We have a lot of fun. Righty. That is only three pairs. We do need two more, don't we?

Is that right? You're with Jamie. Okay. We need two more people to make another pair. So, Daniel, do you want to come play? Who else is the right age? Reuben, do you want to come play? It's a really easy game.

I promise you. Cool. Okay. So, Jamie, if you go with Daniel or Reuben and Bethany, you go with the other so that you can... Okay. So, in your pairs, one of you needs to take a shoe off.

Preferably the one that's had a shower this morning. So, we always play lots of games at Discoverers. And we try to make the game slightly loosely related to what we're talking about.

[55 : 38] So, as Jackie says, we've been doing the armor of God. So, a couple of weeks ago when we were doing about the shoes, we played this game. And hopefully you'll find it entertaining. Okay.

So, for the two of you that never played this game before, basically, you have to know where your head is, where your shoulders are, where your knees are, and the fact that that's a shoe.

Right. Because what happens is I'm going to shout out one of those things, and you have to point to it. Okay. And then when I say shoe, you have to be the first one in your pair to get the shoe.

Okay. If you aren't, then you have to sit down and you're out. Okay. Are you ready? Head. Knees. Shoulders. Head. Shoulders. Head.

Knees. Head. Woo. Shoulders. Shoe. Oh, okay. If you didn't get the shoe, come sit down. If you got the shoe, then take it to your next opponent, who is still standing up.

[56 : 40] Okay. Who have we got left? We should have two pairs left. Oh, well, you just have to grab it harder. It looks like Oriana's got it. Right. Sit down, Luca. Sorry. You just have to grab it the hardest.

Right. Are you ready? We need a shoe. Are you ready? Shoulders. Head. Shoulders. Knees. Head. Shoulders.

Head. Knees. Quick, quick, quick, quick, quick. Head. Knees. Shoulders. Knees. Shoe. Oh, okay.

If you didn't get the shoe, sit down. Grab it hard. One of you has got to have it. Don't rip it. Okay.

Right then. Elliot, well done for being a gentleman. Sit down.

Okay. Eric and Oriana, can everyone see them? Come center stage. It's a bit of a big shoe. I think that's making it easier for them. Right. Are you ready? Remember, grab it hard at the end.

[57 : 35] Okay. Right. Head. Knees. Knees. Oh. Shoulders. Head. Shoulders. Knees. Head. Shoot.

Oh. Well played. Brilliant. Okay. Thank you, everybody. You can go and sit down. So, yeah, we play lots of silly games at Discoverers, generally have a lot of fun, but we also learn about God.

Thank you. Thank you. Well, thank you very much to the Discoverers team and everyone who took part in that.

That sounds great. And I do encourage you to tell your friends about that and come along, school years three to six, come along on Friday nights at five o'clock for Discoverers. And now Miriam's going to lead us in our prayers.

Great. Let's pray. Father God, thank you that you are our loving Father who loves us as your children.

[58 : 42] Thank you that there's nothing we can do to stop you from loving us. Even if we turn away from you and hurt you, you welcome us back and forgive us because Jesus has taken the

punishment for us.

We thank you so much for the amazing blessing it is to have children and young people. Help us to grow in faith with our children and young people and to listen to what you're telling us through them. We pray that you'd help us here at Union Baptist to build an environment which is so welcoming to children, young people and their families. May we as a church be a place where they feel at home, where they're safe, where they have loads of fun and where they're cared for.

As we think about the buildings that you've blessed us with here and following from what we shared last week about the Living Stones project, we pray that you'd lead us to consider how we can make our buildings fit for future generations.

We give thanks to you for all the leaders that serve with our children and young people's ministries and pray that you would fill them with joy, wisdom, energy and love for your children as they serve.

[59 : 57] So thinking about hearing about Jesus. We pray that you'll give us more opportunities for children and young people to hear about you, especially those that don't normally come to church.

We thank you for the opportunities we already have, especially in the week, through babies and toddlers, discoverers and chill, to share the amazing good news of Jesus as we build relationships with children and young people and their parents.

We pray for preparations for the holiday club that we've got coming up in April. We pray that you'll use that opportunity to enlarge your kingdom and then learn through the Bible.

We pray for our leaders who teach weekly from the Bible, that they will be able to communicate your truth clearly in an engaging way. Know Jesus personally.

We pray that our children and young people would come to know Jesus personally as Lord and Savior and that they would have a very real experience of you working in their lives, helping them through difficult times and giving them peace, joy and purpose.

[61 : 04] And then the last bit is tell others about Jesus. We pray that you would equip our children and young people to tell their friends about you and what it means to know you. We thank you for many of them who've already invited friends to our activities here.

And we pray that you would give others courage to talk to their friends about what we do here. Lord, please do big and amazing things through your children here. We ask all this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you, Miriam. We're going to have our second part of our dramatized reading now. So I need Chris and Mick and Elliot and Brandon to come and join me.

And the servant, you're in this part as well. JJ, if you can come up and get ready. So we've got the father with the younger son who's come back and you're celebrating.

Have your party hats on if you've still got it. And the start of the scene, you're celebrating. So DJ, cue the music, please.

[62 : 11] Meanwhile, the elder son was in the field. Okay, so the elder son.

Okay, you're going to be walking along here. Okay. When he came near the house. I need the servant here, please. Okay, servant, come here.

Okay. You can stay partying, Elliot. I just need to grab the microphone. Okay. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.

Okay. Okay, so you come up to the servant. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.

Okay, now I need you to read this. Your brother has come and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back and safe and sound.

[63 : 17] Well done. The elder brother became angry. Okay, so can you turn around and do your clenched fists and stamp your feet? I'm angry. And he refused to go in.

So, not going in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. Okay, so Dad, out you come. He's good at that.

Okay. But he answered his father. Look, all these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

But when this son of yours, who has wasted your money, comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him. The father replied. My son, you are always with me.

And everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad. Because this brother of yours was dead. And he's alive again.

[64 : 25] He was lost and he's found. Okay, thank you very much. That's the end of that. Well done, everyone. You can collect up your bits. Okay.

Just leave the bits there. Pardon? Yeah, yeah. You can keep it. Yeah. Okay, thanks, Elliot. You can go and sit down now. Well done. Okay. So thank you so much again to our brilliant actors for illustrating that story.

We've now seen a different side to the story, haven't we? We've had the happy scene of the party. The celebration that the son had gone away had come home. But there was one person who wasn't so happy.

This elder brother. Now, he was angry to hear that the son had come back. Why was he angry? Well, he thought, why should the father throw a party for the son who'd been so bad?

Now, in the time that Jesus told this story, sons would be expected to address their dads very politely, saying things like, my esteemed father. I quite like that idea, actually, as a dad. But the elder son, in verse 29, he said, look, all these years I've been slaving.

[65 : 37] That was such a rude way to say it. And how does the dad respond to this disrespectful and rude outburst from the older son? I think how I would respond if I was the dad.

But amazingly, he replies with gentleness and love and tenderness. He says, my son, despite how you've insulted me publicly, I still want you in the feast. I'm not going to disown your brother, but I don't want to disown you either.

Will you come and join me in the feast? Now, this parable has the title, in our Bibles it has the title, the lost son. But really it should be called the lost sons, because there are two lost sons in the story. Now, one is bad according to the way that we normally think, and one is good according to the way that we normally think. But both are separated from the father. The father has to go out and invite each one of them to come to his feast of love.

Now, we see in these two sons the two basic ways that people, like us, try to find happiness. The first is through personal freedom. It's the idea of doing things my way.

[66 : 40] That's the younger brother. The other way is by rule keeping. We might call this being religious or being an approach of moral conformity. And this is what the older brother does.

Now, have a think, which one do you tend to be more like? Because we tend to go one way or the other. The rule keeper, the older brother, says, I'm not going to do what I want. I'm going to do what tradition and the community wants me to do.

The other person, the younger brother, the person who wants to do it my way, says, I'm the only one who can decide what's right or wrong for me. I'm going to live as I want and find my true self and find happiness that way.

So what did the younger brother want most? He wanted to make his own decisions and to have control of his portion of the wealth. He did it by breaking rules, by going against what the community expected to show that he was an independent person.

But what did the other brother want most? Well, actually, it was the same thing as the younger brother. He had the same bad attitude to his father as the younger son. He wanted the father's wealth rather than the father himself.

[67 : 46] While the younger brother went far away, the older brother stayed close, but he tried to keep all the rules. That was his way to try to get control. The hearts of the two brothers were actually the same.

Both of them didn't like their father's authority. They each wanted to get a position where they could tell their father what to do. Each one of them rebelled, but one of them rebelled by being bad, and one of them rebelled actually by being good or trying to be good.

Both of them were separated from the father's heart. Neither of them loved the father for who he is. They were trying to use the father for what they could get rather than enjoying him for who he is.

Now, what we've done is to hear the story. Where's the ear? Well done. But there's something for us to understand, to learn, to learn about what it says, particularly about sin.

We normally think of sin as not keeping God's rules, but Jesus explains through this story that there's more to it than that. To be friends with God, we have to say sorry to him. And adults, we use the word repent to say sorry for the wrong things that we've done.

[68 : 53] But if that's all we do, we might just stay like the older brother. To truly become Christians, we need to repent of the reasons we ever did anything right. We have to admit that in wrong things we've done, and some of the right things we've done, we've been trying to get around

God or get control of God.

The older brother felt he had the right to tell the father how the robes, the rings, the livestock of the family should be used. Do you believe that God should help you because you've worked so hard to obey him and be a good person?

That's what the older brother believed. If that's the case, then Jesus may be your helper, he may be your example, your inspiration, but he's not your saviour. You're trying to be your own saviour.

At the end of the story, the older brother has an opportunity to make the father happy by going to the feast, but he refuses because the father's happiness was never his goal.

Jesus doesn't put a third brother into the story. It would have been interesting if he had. A good brother, a truly good brother, one who's willing to pay any cost to seek and save those that are lost.

[70 : 01] The younger brother had a selfish older brother who complains about the cost of saving the younger brother. But actually we have a truly good brother rooting for us when we come back to Father God, and that's Jesus.

Jesus is the son that truly loved the father and obeyed the father for all the right reasons. He paid the price for us so that we can be welcomed back home to God. He took our shame when he died on the cross.

Do you know that Jesus has done that for you? Do you know him? Where's our no sign? Thank you. Do you know him as your saviour?

Or are you trying to be your own saviour? We're going to move straight towards our time of communion now and to prepare for that. You know, at the end of the story of the lost sons, there's a feast to celebrate coming home into the love of the father.

At the end of the Bible, in the book of Revelation, there's a feast. It's a wedding feast. Now if we put our trust in Jesus today, we can be sure that we will enjoy that feast.

[71 : 08] But in the meantime, Jesus has left us a special meal, which we call communion. It's to remember the price that Jesus paid to bring us back to the father and to look forward to that amazing meal that we'll share with him in person in eternity.

So we're going to prepare ourselves for communion now. Now Jesus told us to have this special meal as a special way to remember how he rescued us.

Now we're going to hear... Where's the ear? There it is, thank you. We're going to hear about Jesus, about the first time that he had this special meal with his friends.

This is a reading from Luke's Gospel that we're going to listen to and watch acted out on this video. Thanks, Gary. When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

And he said to them, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.

[72 : 30] After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among you.

For I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it.

And gave it to them saying, This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Jesus welcomes us to the table today. But we need to prepare our own hearts to come.

[73 : 39] We're going to say a prayer to say sorry for our sin, for the wrong things we've done and the wrong attitudes that we've had as we were thinking about. So let's say this prayer together.

And I'll say the words in normal type. And I'd like you to join in with the words that come up in bold type. So we say, Father God, we come to you as your children.

We are sorry for the times we have let you down. Please forgive us and help us. We're sorry for not loving you with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our strength and with all our mind.

Please forgive us and help us. We're sorry for not loving other people as much as we love ourselves. Please forgive us and help us.

We're sorry for when we've chosen not to be moved by things that upset you. Please forgive us and help us. We're sorry for when we've ignored someone instead of helping them.

[74 : 38] Please forgive us and help us. We're sorry for when we've been too busy to spend time with the people that you want us to. Please forgive us and help us. We're sorry for when we've not used our possessions, money, time and talents the way you would want us.

Please forgive us and help us. We're sorry for not loving you for who you are. We have lived to please ourselves and not you. Please forgive us and help us.

We have sometimes done the right things for the wrong reasons and have thought we can earn something from you. Please forgive us and help us. Thank you that you can forgive us because Jesus died for us.

Help us by the power of the Holy Spirit to live the way you want us to. In Jesus' name. Amen. Now we're going to celebrate this special meal together as Jesus' followers have done for thousands of years.

So if you're able to, join in by saying we're ready to the questions that are going to come up. We're about to do what Jesus told us to do, to remember him. Are you ready to remember him?

[75 : 47] We're ready. We're about to do what Jesus told us to do. Sorry, we repeated the question there. Okay, we're ready to prepare the table now.

If you're joining us on the live stream, thank you so much for joining us. Our live stream is going to end now, but if you would like to receive communion at home, please contact us. And one of our pastoral team would be delighted to visit you at home and bring communion.

So please do contact us if that would be helpful. Now it's time to check if the table is ready. And I'd like to ask the elders who are going to help serving, just if they can just come and sit on the front row here so that they're ready too.

So what have we got on the table? We're going to check the table. We've got bread here. Now the bread is a symbol that Jesus' body was broken for us when he died on the cross. It's ordinary bread, but there will be a gluten-free option in a small metal dish next to the other pieces of bread. Now the wine we'll have in little cups is to represent that Jesus gave up his life. His life was poured out so that we could be forgiven.

[76 : 57] Jesus likened the wine to his blood and we use non-alcoholic wine here. So now the table is ready. When we serve the bread and the wine, we'll have four stations at the four tables which are at the front of the sanctuary here.

In a moment I'm going to serve the elders and then they'll serve from each of the four stations. And our ushers will show you when to go up to the front.

Now if you're on this side, you go to the two tables here. If you're on this side, you go to the two tables here. The key is as you're queuing, please keep to the left so that other people can go back past you.

People who are up in the gallery, you'll be told when you can come down. And you can come down the stairs and come to the front here and an usher will show you when to come. If you're not able physically to come to the front, please let the ushers know and we'll bring communion to you after we've served the others.

Now receiving bread and the wine is something that we do as individuals who've decided to follow Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. If that's something you're not sure about or not ready for today, then we invite you to come and have a prayer of blessing.

[78 : 05] And just tell the person serving you'd like to have a prayer. Now for parents and carers of children, we invite you to bring your children or young people with you. And we'll say a prayer of blessing for your children or young person.

Unless you tell us that you would like them to receive the bread and wine and that's something that you've had a conversation with them about. It's good to say thank you to God before any meal, especially this one.

So let's pray. Father God, we thank you for what you've done for us. Even though we've insulted you, hurt you, turned our backs on you, you welcome us back. You run to us and take us home. You honour us and you welcome us to your table to share a feast with you. We don't deserve that, but you've done that for us because Jesus took the punishment, the shame that we deserve, and he paid the price for us when he died on the cross.

Thank you for this special meal to remember what he's done for us. Amen. Amen. So let's remember together. Jesus took the bread and he said, this is my body, which is for you.

[79 : 06] Do this in remembrance of me. After sup, he took the cup and he said, this cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood.

Whenever you drink it, do this in memory of me. So I'm going to serve the elders now. And if our deacons who are ushering can get into position to do that, the deacons will be served at the end.

Thank you.

The blood of Christ will shed for you. The blood of Christ will shed for you. The blood of Christ will shed for you, Anthony. The blood of Christ will shed for you.

So if you can go over there. Mike, you stay here. Take care of that. I'll serve you. I get to come up with my family. Yeah. Thank you.

[81 : 04] I take the bread of life, broken for all my sin. Your body crucified to make me whole again.

I will recall the card poured out in sacrifice to trade the sinner's end for your new covenant.

Hallelujah. I live my life in remembrance.

Hallelujah. Your promise I won't forget.

I'll walk salvation's road with fear and trembling.

[82 : 27] You're way born as my own. As Christ is formed in me. Hallelujah.

I live my life in remembrance. Hallelujah.

Your promise I won't forget.

If ever I should lose my way If ever I deny Your grace Remind me of the price You paid Hallelujah I

live in remembrance Oh, we're thankful, Lord We're thankful, Lord Oh You've been so, so good to

me You've been so, so good to me Won't you think where I would be

If not for You If not for You Oh, we're doing so You've been so, so good to me You've been so, so

good to me Won't you think where I would be If not for You If not for You If not for You You've been

so, so good to me You've been so, so good to me Won't you think where I would be If not for You If

not for You

[85 : 13] If not for You As far as heights reach from the depths As far as east is from the west So

far Your grace has carried me Until I see You Until I see You face to face Until at last I've won my

race Remind me you're not finished yet Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah

Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah I live in remembrance Previously I live in remembrance hungry

numbers wonderful

You Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[88 : 15] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[90 : 45] Thank you.

Thank you.

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[93 : 15] Thank you.

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[95 : 45] Thank you.

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[98 : 45] Thank you.

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Thank you.