

Preparatory Service 13.6.26: The Heart of the Cross

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Date: 13 June 2026

Preacher: Reverend Dan Patterson

[0 : 00] Good evening. A warm welcome to the service this evening. It's good to see everyone. Welcome to those who are online as well. And a special welcome to Dan. Thank you for being with us tonight and tomorrow. It's good to have Dan with us. First time in Harris. And so he's seen a bit of Harris over yesterday and today. And the weather's not been amazing, but it's supposed to get better tomorrow.

But it's good to have you. And we look forward to God's work through you today and also tomorrow. The service tomorrow at usual times, 11 and 6. Morning service will be a communion service. The evening service will be more of a Thanksgiving service. And after that, there'll be a fellowship as usual. And we'll hear a little about Dan and how he came to faith, which may be news to Dan. But we'll have a time of informal fellowship at the end of that. At the end of this service, the session will just meet in the room on my left. If there is anybody who may know and trust the Lord and who wants to come forward for the first time to take communion, we would be delighted to meet with you.

And so the elders through the session at the end of the session at the end of the service. These, I think, are all the notices that I need to give at this stage. So Dan, I will just hand over to you, please. Thank you. Okay. Well, good evening. I was told I'd get a very, very good, good evening from you.

[1 : 39] So there's maybe a bit of sleepiness already descended upon the congregation. So good evening, everyone. Good evening. Ah, yes. Great, great.

Wonderful to be with you. I would like to begin just to say I'm very grateful to David and the Kirk session for the invite to come and be with you. And as David already said, it is my first time over in this part of the world.

And having heard so much about it, it's just been great to come and get a little bit of a tour and see it. And so I've been really looking forward to this weekend. I also bring with me the prayers and well wishes of the congregation of Poole U and Alt Bay.

You have been one of the congregations that we have prayed for over the years. We try and pray for different congregations and yourselves have featured in our midweek meetings.

So I do bring their best wishes to you as well. We are going to use our time tonight to refocus ourselves on the Lord, to rekindle, we could say, our hearts and minds on who God is and what he has done for us, using this opportunity to maybe reflect a little on our faith.

[2 : 57] And maybe if we need to dial up our faith a little, we can use this time to come to the Lord and say, you know, Lord, I've maybe let things slip.

I've maybe got myself into a bit of a rut. I need to wake up again. And so we're going to use this time through song, through prayer and through opening up God's word together, to draw close to the Lord, to be in his presence and to come to know him for the great and wonderful things he has done for us.

We're going to get started tonight singing the words of Mission Praise 1072. In Christ alone, my hope is found.

He is my light, my strength, my song. This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm. Let's praise God together, shall we?

Please stand if you are able and we'll sing together. Thank you.

[4 : 26] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Well, folks, as you take your seat, let us draw together in a time of prayer. Let us pray. Father in heaven, we have gathered together and we have sung the praise of your name.

[7 : 13] We finished up our singing, saying, here in the power of Christ I stand. Lord, those are wonderful words that convey deep truths to us, the truths that we find in the Bible, the Word of God, that because of Jesus, we stand before you.

And Lord, we can come to you and know your peace. We can know your forgiveness. We can know, Lord, your blessings. We can know your promises. We can know, Father, that one day there is a great reward waiting for us in heaven.

Father, there are so many wonderful things that Jesus has done for us. And so at the very outset of our time together this weekend, we wish to begin with praising you, with giving you the place in our hearts and in our minds, with our tongues and in our actions and words.

Lord, we want to give you the place that you are worthy of. You are a great God who has done great things, things that perhaps, Father, we can be negligent about, things that we can, Lord, take for granted.

Oh, Lord, you know how throughout the week we can get so busy and so caught up with our routines that sometimes, Father, we ignore you.

[8 : 31] We neglect our faith. We maybe even neglect the need to come together with other Christians and worship you. Oh, Lord, we pray tonight that you would indeed be in amongst our midst and that you would remind us, Father, that you are the great God who has done great things for us.

on our behalf, but for our benefit, for our good. You have, Lord, promised us things that we are not worthy of. You've offered us things, Father, that we could never achieve or earn on our own.

Father, in every way, you are a good Father who loves to give good things to your children. And so, Lord, we come in prayer tonight and we praise you. But as we do so, we recognize, Lord, that as we pray to you, our prayer lives are perhaps not always what they ought to be.

We all have struggles and we have our troubles. And sometimes, Lord, we face circumstances that have an impact on our spiritual life. And so, Father, sometimes we try and run ahead of you.

And sometimes we treat prayer as a last resort instead of a first option. Well, Lord, tonight we come to you and we confess that, Lord, we often get it wrong.

[9 : 43] And we need your grace and we need your mercy. We need your forgiveness. And so, Lord, we ask that this weekend would be like a reset for us, a time of renewal, a time of refreshment, a time for us not only to confess our sin, but also a time to bow before you in, Lord, the sure and certain hope that in the name of Jesus, you will lift us up, you will refresh us, and you will revive us.

So, Father, we ask at the start of our communion service weekend that you would bless our time together. As David reminded us, Lord, in the presence of two or three when we gather together, you are there.

You come in and you are meeting with us. And so we pray tonight, Father, that you would make your presence known. We want to claim that promise, Lord, and humbly ask that you would do the work in us that only you can do.

And so, Lord, we pray you would encourage every head bowed here tonight. Every head bowed not only online, but in the room, and that, Lord, as we go through the various elements of our service, we would know your voice speaking to us.

We would, Lord, hear you, and, Lord, in hearing you, we would humble ourselves before you, and we'd listen to you. Father, forgive us for our sin. We've maybe had a week where we've said things or done things or thought things that we know are wrong.

[11 : 12] And sometimes, Lord, when we come to communion, these things are right before us. And they cause us to doubt. They cause us to feel weak. And, Lord, they sometimes can keep us away from the communion table.

And so we pray, Lord, that we would know a measure of your forgiveness tonight. As we confess our sins to you quietly in our own hearts, we pray, Lord, that we would know the cleansing power of Jesus.

Lord, he left the riches of heaven and became poor. He took up the form of a man and he died on the cross for us.

Lord, it is so great that we can barely grasp it, that your love for us would extend to that measure. And so, Lord, we come to you in light of that and we confess our need.

We confess to you, Lord, that we are weak in many ways and we need your help. Father, finally, we ask for all those whose heads are bowed tonight who are perhaps struggling with circumstances that are out of their control, maybe not well or caring for someone who's not well or, Lord, their work isn't going well or they may be worried about finances, whatever it may be.

[12 : 26] Remind us, Father, that you are the God who we can call upon. You are the God we need to trust. We have to commit ourselves over to you. And so, Lord, whatever the circumstance we're in tonight, we pray for strength.

We pray for peace. We pray, Lord, that we would know the peace of God that transcends all understanding, that it would guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Father, we pray for all those who are sick and suffering and we do remember those who would long to be out tonight, but because of their suffering and they are unable to, we pray for them, Lord, and we ask that you would, Lord, restore them to the fellowship.

But, Lord, if that's not the case, that you would be close to them in their hour of need. And so, Father, we commit ourselves into your loving hands tonight. Would you bless us?

Would you shine your face upon us? Would you, Lord, send your blessing down upon us that we may rejoice in your goodness and leave at the end encouraged in our faith?

[13 : 28] For, Father, we come to you tonight through the power of the Holy Spirit, that in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we ask it all in his name. Amen.

Okay, folks, we're going to sing together again, this time from Psalm 51 in the traditional version. Psalm 51, and we're going to sing verses 7 through to 13.

Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed soul. Ye wash thou with me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow. Let's stand again, if we're able, and we'll continue in our sung praise together.

Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me, I shall be cleansed soul.

Here wash thou with me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow.

[14 : 48] Of gladness and of joyfulness, Make me to hear the voice, that so these very bones wish thou has broken me rejoice.

All my name in which is brought out, Life is high from my sin.

Take me to be by the grace.

Take me by the grace. thy sight darting thy holy spirit away restore me thy salvation joy with thy peace let me see and will I teach thy ways unto those that can't desert thee and those that sinners are shall then be spread thee if you have a bible please turn with me to 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 11 you'll find this in the the new testament the second half of the bible we've got Matthew Mark Luke and John Acts and Romans and then you'll hit

Corinthians as you look that passage up by way of introduction I just want to let you know that all I want to do tonight is really give you one verse just just one verse for you to take home and chew over one verse to put on the tip of your tongue the forefront of your mind and let it speak to your heart in the coming days and weeks ahead the verse I'm is verse 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God that's our key text for tonight but first of all we want to hear it in its context and so you can listen out for it as we read but we will begin at verse 11 verse 11 since then we know what it is to fear the Lord we try to persuade others what we are is plain to God and I hope it is also plain to your conscience we are not trying to commend ourselves to you again but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart if we are out of our mind as some say it is for God if we are in our right mind it is for you for Christ's love compels us because we are convinced that one died for all and therefore all died and he died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again so from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view though we once regarded Christ in this way we do so no longer therefore if anyone is in Christ the new creation has come the old has gone the new is here all this is from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ not counting people's sins against them and he has committed to us the message of reconciliation we are therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making his appeal through us we implore you on Christ's behalf be reconciled to God

[19 : 54] God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God as God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain for he says in the time of my favour I heard you and in the day of salvation I helped you I tell you now is the time of God's favour now is the day of salvation this is the word of the Lord the grass withers the flowers fall but the word of our God endures forever let me pray and then we'll come to our text for tonight Father as we now come to your word we ask that you would do the work in us that only you can do that you would speak to our souls and that you would draw us to yourself as your word says those who draw close to you you will draw close to them and so we pray now Father that you would do just that that you would bless the preaching of your word and together we would be in your presence and we would be refreshed by the message of the cross the message of our Saviour who gave his life to pay for our sin be near to us our Father bless us for we look to you and ask this in Jesus name

Amen Well folks as this is a communion weekend it will be no surprise to you that we are going to be talking about the death and resurrection of Jesus now if you were to go out into your community it will come as no surprise that most people can probably tell you that Jesus at some point in history was crucified on a cross I think most people would know that however where people may struggle is if you were to ask them why why did he die on a cross why did he suffer why did he go through all that agony why if he is the Son of God would God let him go through that experience well folks let me tell you the answer to that question you're not going to find it out in your community as if public opinion forms the truth and you're not even going to find it by looking in your own heart as if you get to just decide for yourself what the cross means no the only way you're going to get to the answer to that is by opening up your Bible the word of God and when you do that what you're going to find is that whilst the cross may look like the biggest defeat the world has ever known it's actually the greatest victory of all time not that probably on the first Easter Friday you would have thought like that in fact if you'd stood at the base of the cross when Jesus was dying you would not have said what a magnificent victory this is no you would have said what a crushing defeat our Lord and Saviour has been killed evil has won injustice has the last word and yet friends you and I know the empty tomb forces us to come back and re-examine that and when you do that what you see is that on the darkest day this world has ever seen

God was carrying out the greatest rescue the world has ever known a rescue Paul sums up for us in our verse for tonight when he says God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God friends in order to get our heads and our hearts engaged for communion tomorrow we're going to walk through that verse and we're going to do so by asking four simple questions four questions and when you get to the door I'm going to quiz you to see if you remember them when it comes to our salvation who started this who could do this what did he do what do we receive number one who started this Paul says very clearly in this great summary of what God has done for us

God made that's how it starts God made which is telling us the starting point of our salvation is not ourselves it is God we do not manufacture our own salvation and that matters a great deal if God had left your salvation none of you would ever be saved I include myself in it okay I want you to get saved none of us would ever we would not be able to obtain it now I know that's a hard truth to begin with tonight because the human heart is a place of great pride we like to tell ourselves I'm capable but when it comes to our sin and our need of salvation we need of salvation they don't work like that

God doesn't say in the Bible well if you just put in a bit more effort and if you can just try a bit harder curb some of your excesses get your habits under control then I'll see you over the line actually when you open up the Bible he says the complete opposite listen to this verse Romans 8 verse 8 the sinful nature is always hostile to God it never did obey God's laws and it never will that's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God you hear that?

[26 : 29] you know what that means? it means if getting right with God God was left up to you and I it would never happen because you see by default we don't run to God we run away from God we tell ourselves that if we can be decent that we'll somehow balance out the scales stand at the gates of heaven better than 99% of them that's what we like to tell ourselves but friends that's not what the Bible tells us the Bible tells us the Bible tells us that we have a problem that goes deeper than our habits deeper than simply our words we have a problem that goes so deep that we don't need a little help we need rescue I wonder if any of you remember a few years ago all those boys got

trapped in a cave in Thailand any of you remember that?

yeah it was on the news quite a lot what happened is they went deep into a cave system and the flood water came in behind them and completely cut them off and it became very quickly to everybody who was watching it that there was no way these boys could get themselves out okay this wasn't a case of or it wasn't the case of that they didn't know how to retrace their steps or they didn't have a map no they were utterly trapped and what became clear is that unless somebody was willing to go from the outside into that cave system and rescue them they would all die well friends what I want you to realise is that that is a picture of us spiritually with God we are unable to save ourselves from the situation we're in called sin we are trapped by it there's not a case that we can do something no there's nothing we can do but when Jesus came into the world this was him coming from the outside into our cave in order to rescue us it's never been about how often you go to church it's never been about how good you are it's never been about how kind you are all of that might have its place but that's not the basis of how you get saved from your sin the way you get saved from your sin is through what Jesus Christ did on the cross see when it comes to your salvation it's all of God it's his work it's his rescue do you know what that means?

it means if you want to get to know what salvation is the first thing you've got to do is you've got to humble yourself you've got to put that pride which says no it's up to me you've got to put it in check but friends can I say to you as you do that this is not only humbling because you know if salvation is off us but it's off God there is not one single person here tonight who cannot be saved realise that? there's not one single person in your community that God cannot reach every single one of you can say I am a Christian because of Jesus so who started this?

not you, not me not religion, not the church it was God secondly who could do this? when it comes to our salvation it may be asked Dan, why can I not save myself?

[30 : 11] why do I need this Jesus? I'm sure I bet when you go out in the community and you talk to people who don't go to church there's a lot of people out there who say to you Jesus, you know, he's optional you can't take him or leave him some people say to you well, all roads lead to the same place as long as we're sincere that's enough in the end well, think about it logically with me tonight friends if that were true why did God ordain the cross to take place?

and why when you open up the Bible does he place such emphasis on it? well, the answer to that is very simple Jesus died because no sinner can save a sinner not even themselves think about it the key criteria to saving someone is what?

that you yourself must not need saved for example, let's imagine there's two people in the water they're struggling to stay afloat it would be entirely pointless if one of them said I'm going to come and rescue you because no, the other one would say well my good man, you can't rescue yourself so how do you intend to rescue me?

well friends, in the exact same way this is why it had to be Jesus who went to the cross he's the only person who never sinned and so therefore he's the only person who never needed saving you know, some of you I don't know you personally but some of you have read through the Bible you've maybe got characters in the Bible well Mary, I liked her I liked Peter I liked John you know the honest truth is friends they're all sinful you're not reading your Bible and seeing they're sinful you're not reading it right you might even have some godly people in your own life people who are a really good influence on you grandparents and I'm staying with them so I better be kind as great as a guy as he is he's a sinner we're all sinners because the Bible says in Romans 3 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God so when it comes to Jesus friends let me tell you why it had to be him

Jesus is not simply better than us Jesus is different from us how? he's sinless that's what Paul's highlighting to you here God made who?

[32 : 55] him who had no sin you know Jesus he never lost his temper the way we do Jesus he never lusted he never lied he never turned his back on God he never resented God because his circumstances were hard how many of you are quick to ask God for things but then when you don't get what you want you sometimes think he's holding out on me why is he not listening to me?

Jesus never resented God because life was painful not once not in thought not in word not in deed and that friends is why he is the only one who can save you from your sin let me grab your imagination for a moment back in the Old Testament a lot of stuff in the Old Testament quite hard to understand isn't it?

what on earth is going on here? what you need to know is that one of the ways God taught his people is he would take something very ordinary an action or an item and he would attach to it a spiritual significance one of the things that he did this with was sin and forgiveness he wanted to teach the people that sin is really serious and forgiveness is really costly so do you know what God gave them?

he gave them the sacrificial system he said to them if you want to be forgiven this is what I want you to do I want you to take a lamb and I want you to sacrifice it but knowing the human heart he said I'm not going to allow you to be stingy I'm not going to accept just any lamb don't bring me your lamb with a gammy leg don't bring me one that's almost about to keel over and die I want you to bring me a perfect spotless lamb and so the people knew when they did that they would kill the lamb and that would illustrate to them how costly forgiveness is and how serious sin is so can you imagine back then if you were particularly aware that you had let God down all had bad weeks I bet weeks when you think oh I really mucked up this week you were aware of that I need to be forgiven what you're going to start looking for?

a lamb but you don't want just any lamb you've got to find the right lamb you've got to find the spotless lamb the perfect lamb so you're going through your flock you're looking until eventually you get that moment where you find it and suddenly the family would have went oh this is good I finally have what I need to be forgiven friends that is how you should feel about Jesus tonight you should have this relief you should have this relief that you have what is needed to be forgiven you have everything that is needed you didn't just need a better example you didn't need someone to point the way you needed someone who was perfect and spotless and was willing to die for your sin that's why when we come to communion part of what we are doing is we're using this bread and wine simple things with spiritual things attached to it but we're using it to say

[36 : 34] Lord look what you've done for me you're the one I need you're the one you're the spotless lamb of God shouldn't you be relieved to have Jesus tonight so who could do this it had to be Jesus half what did he do?

what did he do? we've already alluded to the cross but listen to how Paul describes it to you here he says he says who had no sin to be sin for us to be sin for us now that's the kind of phrase what on earth does that mean he became sin for us?

well let's be really clear tonight I'll begin by telling you what it doesn't mean it doesn't mean that Jesus suddenly became a sinner Jesus didn't do anything sinful say anything sinful or say anything sinful in fact when you read about the cross I think it's incredible even when the crowd mocked him even when they spat on him even when they nailed him to the cross beam of that cross he didn't sin now friends I don't know about you but all it takes for me to lose my composure is one tourist who doesn't understand how the white line in the middle of the road works which living on the west coast is quite often but Jesus under immense pressure maintained his composure so it doesn't mean Jesus became sinful or did something sinful what it means is when Paul says

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us it means that God laid on Jesus of our sin every proud thought you've ever had every selfish act every careless word every lustful thought every bit of anger all of it was laid on him you know friends in days like this when money is tight and bills are climbing when you need to save money there is one company that loves to see you struggling it's your credit card company you see they love it when you take that little bit of plastic out and you start swiping and we all know what it's like isn't it you're maybe on your holidays or you're out for the weekend and you think we treat ourselves to a wee coffee I'll just put it on the credit card just a wee treat and then you go into the shop and you see something you like it's not too much let's just treat ourselves to that as well

I'll just put it on the card and then you're in town Tesco's came to a wee bit more and I've got a wee bit less in the basket what am I going to do here I'll just put it on the card I'll pay it off next month and so before you know it is you go around the weekend and just a wee tappy here a wee swiipey here a wee pin and chip and you're having a great time you're having a great time that is until through the post because then in that moment all those little purchases that you have since forgotten about suddenly they don't look so little anymore because what stands before you is the totality of everything you have spent everything you have spent and then all of a sudden you realise just how big the bill is well I tell you that because see when Paul says God made him who had no sin to be sin for us what it means is all those little sins you know all those little inconsequential things that you've already forgotten about you remember the bad the bad things that you have even

all the little ones the entire totality of not just yours but mine and every single person recalling the name of the Lord Jesus Christ the whole total was placed on

[41 : 01] Jesus you know there's a hymn that conveys this so eloquently how deep the Father's love for us you know it remember how it goes behold the man whose sin was it on his shoulders?

ashamed I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers it was everyone else's sin no it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished his dying breath has brought me life I know that it is finished what did Jesus do?

he stood where you should stand he bore what you should bear he faced what you should face he took the totality of your sin on himself who started this?

who could do this? what did he do? what do we receive? let me wet my whistle sometimes when you ask Christians why did Jesus die on the cross?

the answer you can sometimes get back is to save us from hell that's sometimes the answer now let me tell you something tonight there's truth in that I'm not going to water it down certainly not going to ignore it but what I want to say to you is if that is as far as your understanding goes then you're coming up short tonight because the cross doesn't just simply save you from something the cross saves you for something it gives you far more than a simple rescue from a place called hell Paul says Paul says Jesus died on the cross so that in him we might become the righteousness of God now let me tell you why that little phrase matters to you this evening every Christian knows what it is to struggle with sin after you were saved all have that experience don't we?

[43 : 26] how many of you when you got saved woke up the following morning and you were perfect how many of you the night after your conversion got up in the morning and went now I know what it feels like to not struggle with sin anymore I've got perfect control over my tongue perfect control over my actions I tell you what I'm holy in every single way I'm never going to do something wrong again I don't think that was your experience was it?

certainly wasn't mine one of the hardest things when you're a Christian is that once you are saved you become more aware of how sinful you are and I would really like to tell you that as you get older it gets easier but it doesn't folks sorry to be the bearer of bad news as you get older it gets even harder because the more clearly you see God the more clearly you see your sin the more clearly you see your need for Jesus and so you know what happens around communion time?

the devil comes along and you know what he likes to say? he likes to say he likes to say you sure Jesus has forgiven you? he comes along and he says I bet you Jesus was willing to forgive you up to the moment you got saved but not after that I mean after that you knew better you knew you shouldn't be doing it you can't claim ignorance anymore the devil comes along and he says you sure God's going to keep accepting you?

how many times you made that mistake? how many times you prayed to God you promised him? you were never going to do this again and then you broke that promise oh there's no forgiveness for you and that's when Christians come along I don't know if I should take communion I don't even know have I lost my salvation?

I don't know how many times you've ever asked yourself have I lost my salvation? will God really forgive me after what I've done?

[45 : 27] well friends these questions come because we do not fully grasp the statement we just read when Jesus went to the cross when Jesus went to the cross it was not to simply forgive you or save you from hell it was to give you a new permanent standing with God a standing that means God is going to continue to accept you despite your struggles despite your weakness despite your falling to temptation even though you let him down and even though you get it wrong God is going to continue to accept you and love you and forgive you because Jesus is going to clothe you in his righteousness let me tell you a story I was down at the General Assembly and friends I can tell you I could probably put some of you asleep with a sermon but the General Assembly should be on the NHS for insomnia right you watch that now as I sat in the Assembly

I was very new to it an announcement was made the Lord High Commissioner will soon enter the Assembly floor all commissioners are to put on their suit jacket well friends at that everybody started getting up and putting on their suit jacket except me I froze because I didn't have a suit jacket I thought what am I going to do and that's when the follow up announcement came any commissioners who do not have a suit jacket friendly stuff friendly stuff well friends I started to pack up my stuff a little disappointed wondering what I was going to miss out when all of a sudden I felt a weight fall down upon my shoulders it was a suit jacket and I turned around and there was my uncle

a minister another commissioner I said and I said to him what are you doing he said you can have my jacket but Eric if I take your jacket then you're going to have to leave and he said if you take my suit jacket then you get to stay friends that's what Jesus does for us he wraps us he wraps us in his righteousness so that you and I and the forgiveness and the love of God but in order to give us that he left the great joy we have as Christians is that God is gracious and he is gracious to us because of Jesus and so friends you do not need to be afraid tonight that you have lost your salvation because Jesus won't let that happen as we prepare our hearts for communion tomorrow do you understand the cross?

do you see what it means for your life? do you see what it's telling you about God's love for you? because the reason Paul tells us this is to move us towards him to move us in love towards Jesus and so friends in a moment we are going to pray and what we are going to ask God is that having stirred our hearts tonight he would bring us back together again tomorrow ready to rejoice in what communion the death of our Lord to pay for our sin God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him the righteousness of God let me pray Father in heaven revive our love for you forgive us for our coldness forgive us for our weakness forgive us for we are in so many ways not the people we ought to be and Lord we let you down our love for you is impure and Lord it is not what you deserve and so we pray Father that as we come to you tonight aware of our weakness aware of our deficiencies that we would not come saying that I am able to do anything but that Lord we would come in the name of Jesus and we be able to say tonight because of what Jesus has done we are praying to you

Lord would you stir our hearts tonight towards you draw us to yourself as we gather again tomorrow morning remind us Lord that you are calling us to come and celebrate what it means to say Jesus died for me Father thank you that you are willing to send your son and thank you that your son was willing to Lord be cast out to take our sin the totality of it all we confess all that sin to you and recognize we need you the tonight we need your forgiveness so Father we come to you in his name Lord forgive us and revive us refresh us and renew us as we prayed at the start we pray at the end that Lord you would encourage us by drawing us to yourself hear us our God and bless us for we ask this all in Jesus name

Amen well friends let's respond to God's word mission praise 988 how deep the Father's love how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure please do stand if you're able and then after the singing please remain standing for the benediction let's sing to God's praise let's sing to God's praise how deep the Father's love for us how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son that he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure how big the pain of stealing was the Father turns his face away as wounds which mar the chosen one bring many sons to glory he bore the man upon a cross my sin upon his shoulders ashamed I hear my mocking voice all out among the scholars it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished his dying breath that's brought me life

[53 : 46] I know that it is finished I will not boast in anything no gifts, no power, no wisdom but I will boast in Jesus Christ his death and resurrection why should I gain from his reward I cannot give an answer but this I know with all my heart his wounds have paid my ransom and now may the grace of God go before us may the Holy Spirit continually equip us and the mercy of God forever cover us we ask it all in Jesus name

Amen