

## Welcome and Notices

Church Secretary

## Call to Worship

Minister

1 Chronicles 16: selection (GNB): -

God's people were few in number, strangers in the land of Canaan.  
They wandered from country to country, from one kingdom to another.  
But God let no one oppress them...

Sing to the LORD, all the world! Proclaim every day the good news that he has saved us.  
Proclaim his glory to the nations, his mighty deeds to all peoples.  
The LORD is great and is to be highly praised; he is to be honoured more than all the gods.

Be glad, earth and sky! Tell the nations that the LORD is king.  
Roar, sea, and every creature in you; be glad, fields, and everything in you!  
The trees in the woods will shout for joy when the LORD comes to rule the earth.  
Give thanks to the LORD, because he is good; his love is eternal.

Praise the LORD, the God of Israel! Praise him now and forever!

And all God's people said "Amen"

**Hymn/Song(s)** (we used Our God, our help in ages past)

**Prayer** (first part from *Patterns & Prayers for Christian Worship* BUGB, remainder mine)

Living God, in this building, used to the sound of singing;  
this building, which has seen baptism and funerals;  
this building where people have come to be married, or to celebrate the birth of a child;  
this building where people have wept, and been filled with joy;  
this building where people have wrestled with the deep things of life, have prayed urgently,  
been stirred and changed;  
in this building where you have so often been with your people, be with us now.

Holy and faithful God, whose love knows no limits and upon whose grace and mercy we depend, as we gather today to give thanks for what is past, to hear your words for today and to commend to you our future: fill us afresh with hope and vision so that having shared in worship we may live to your glory. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**Hymn/Song(s)** (we used 'Faithful one' and 'Let there be love shared among us')

**Reading** chosen by preacher, read by a member

**Sermon** we invited our Regional Minister to preach

**Hymn/Song** (we used the congregation's 'signature tune' – most churches have one!)

### **Recording our memories**

People write a memory on a piece of good quality paper that will later be pasted into a book to form a lasting record of the day. (After time allowed for this, they were collected up by members)

**Song/Hymn** (we used 'I am the church, you are the church' which has a fantastic theology of church)

### **Prayers**

(Original, mine)

Faithful God, who inspired the formation/planting of a congregation here in [town/village/etc], we bring our thanks for what is past...  
for the vision and courage of those pioneers who met in [place],  
for the faithful witness of those who laboured to establish a meeting house in [street name], able to serve the village nearby;  
for the sacrificial giving of those who built this/these buildings to continue the mission to which they believed you had called them.  
We thank you for those whose names are recorded on plaques, in minute books or tombstones – and for those names we will never know – each playing his or her part in the story of your church here...  
We thank you too for the many organisations within the church that have provided fellowship and opportunities for service: [name present and past organisations carefully so none get missed!!]...  
In a moment of quiet, we bring you thanks for our personal memories...

Holy God, who has remained faithful throughout the story of this church, we bring our regrets and sorrow...  
For the opportunities allowed to slip by,  
For the times when we have allowed differences of opinion to grow into enmity  
For the decisions that, with hindsight, were neither wise nor helpful...  
Forgiving God, we admit that we have not always acted in accordance with our own your will and on occasion have failed even to reach our own standards. As we each silently confess to our failings, grant us assurance of your pardon...

Loving God, as our time of meeting in this building nears its close, we bring to you our emotions – some keenly aware of a sense of loss, others strangely calm, some bemused or confused, others with a sense of liberation... As you surround each of us with your love, we ask your help in seeing beyond our own reactions to those of others so that we might support one another not only at this time but also in the weeks and months ahead...

Living God, at this new beginning, as our journey moves from the known into the unknowable, we command ourselves once more to your service. By your Spirit's indwelling, may we be granted wisdom and discernment in the decisions we make about our future life. May we be willing to die in order to rise anew, just as Christ died and rose for us. Give us courage to take risks and live sacrificially in your service. Open our eyes, hearts and minds to see and understand the work you have for us to do as we play our part in your mission in this place. May our lives individually and together be totally centred on Christ and committed to the incoming of his Kingdom...

Eternal God, as we have prayed for ourselves, we remember that we are but a small part of your creation. We cannot know or name every situation where your help or healing is needed. In our troubled and disordered world, we simply pray for your peace and justice, so that all people might begin to grasp the amazing truth of your love. We gather our feelings, thoughts and prayers together as we join in the familiar words of Jesus... our Father...

**Symbolic act of moving on**

A Bible, a cross, chalice and communion plates are placed in a box in readiness to be carried out of the building at the close of the service.

(This was done by some of our longest standing members, male and female)

**Hymn/Song**

(we used Lord for the Year your love has kept and guided)

**Prayer**

(original, mine)

Lord of the years, as we leave this building to go into the future, we once more thank you for all that is past and commend to you all that is to come. May we who have encountered your love here share it with the world; we whose lives have been changed by Jesus share the Good News in word and deed; we who are refreshed by your Spirit grasp the vision you set before us. Walk with us, we pray, turn our sorrow to joy and above all grant us your peace, today and always. Amen.

**Blessing**

The box is carried from the building

(Children, young people or newest attenders or members – a sign of hope)

The people follow and leave the building via the front door, which is symbolically closed and locked after the last person has left.

The people then go to for refreshments OFF SITE. To re-enter the building at this point destroys the symbolism!