

The Order of Service for Home Worship



BIBLE SUNDAY

Hymn 1: Breathe on me breath of God

Breathe on me breath of God
Fill me with life anew
That I may love what Thou dost love
And do what Thou wouldst do

Breathe on me breath of God
Until my heart is pure
Until with Thee I will one will
To do and to endure

Breathe on me breath of God
Till I am wholly Thine
Till all this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine

Breathe on me breath of God
So shall I never die
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you show us the way to the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you have given us knowledge of your truth. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd leading us into life. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

Collect: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Nehemiah

8. 1-4a, [5, 6,] 8-12

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. The

scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.' So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, 'Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.' And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 119. 9-16

Response: Lead me, O Lord in the path of your commands

How can young people keep their way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

With my whole heart I seek you;

do not let me stray from

your commandments.

I treasure your word in my heart,

so that I may not sin against you. (R)

Blessed are you, O Lord;

teach me your statutes.

With my lips I declare all the ordinances

of your mouth,

I delight in the way of your decrees

as much as in all your word. (R)

I will meditate on your precepts,

and fix my eyes on your ways.

I will delight in your statutes;

I will not forget your word. (R)

A reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians

3. 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Matthew.

24. 30-35

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation:

Today being Bible Sunday, we give thanks for the Bible and for all it means to each of us. Karl Barth the theologian, when speaking of the Bible said words on the lines of: "For people of no faith who read the Bible, it is a book of moral tales but if you read it through the eyes of faith it becomes a living book in which we encounter God who speaks to us." The writing of the Bible, with an amazing collection of 66 books of differing styles, took place over sixteen centuries and is the work of over forty authors. Each book contains the message God desired us to have with the Psalms being a collection of the works of several authors, of whom David is the best known but psalms were also written by Moses, Asaph, Ethan and by the sons of Korah. The books of the Bible provide many stories about the lives of both good and bad people, about battles and journeys, about the life of Jesus, and about early church activity and it speaks to us through narratives and dialogues, proverbs and parables, songs and allegories and through history and prophecy. The Bible is also - A guide for living life to the full. It gives us a road map for the perilous journey of life or phrased differently, on our voyage through life's ocean, the Bible is an anchor. It is a storehouse of wonderful stories for children and adults, thinking of Noah and the ark, Joseph's coat of many colours, Daniel in the lion's den, Jonah and the whale and the parables of Jesus. All stories which we may know and love but which also emphasize the triumphs and failures of ordinary people. It can also be considered as a treasury of insight as to who we are. We are not meaningless robots, even though there are occasions when we may feel as if we are rather we are magnificent creatures of a God who loves us and gives us a purpose and a destiny. Finally the Bible could be described as a sourcebook for everyday living. We find standards for our conduct, guidelines for knowing right from wrong, and principles to help us in a confused society where so often "anything goes." The accounts preserved in the Old Testament date from the earliest times and were both written down and communicated orally. In time, they were collected and received by the Hebrews as coming to them by God's mandate. The New Testament stories and teachings were widely circulated among the early Christian churches. The letters of Paul to the Christians in several cities were probably the earliest writings now found in the New Testament but many other letters and epistles were circulated as well. It is truly amazing that all these authors, have such a unified message in spite of their great diversity in language, culture and time. The reason being that they are all secondary authors. There is actually only one primary author, the one who inspired all the human authors, the eternal God. Christians believe that the Bible came to us from God himself, who used all these human authors to give us His message, through the presence and inspiration of His Spirit. He did not simply give dictation to these

authors, because we observe their unique personalities and varying styles of writing shining through. But God's message, God's authorship, is always there, providing exactly what He wanted us to have. In this way the Bible is our own ageless treasure. As we look at the writing styles of the various human authors, we see their personalities are very much in evidence in what they write. The apostle Paul wrote long, complicated sentences, and our English translations generally put them into shorter sentences so they are more clearly understood. Mark, however wrote his Gospel using short, action-packed sentences that race along in a different way. While the Gospel of John also covers the life of Jesus, his description of Jesus' life, words, and deeds comes from a much different point of view than Luke. Yet both transmit the inspired message which God gave them. That is why most Christians conclude that God provided the precise thought to the human author, and he then wrote it down in terms of his own vocabulary, culture, education, and writing style. We can say that the Bible is a very human book, for we see in it both elegance and lack of polish, both finesse and struggle. But it is a divine book as well, for it is the only book in all the world that is truly "God-breathed". It is humanity's precious gift from God. But is the Bible really relevant to the issues of our frenetic, post-modern world of microscopes and satellites? This is a question asked by those who are racing through life with little time for reflection. We often hear how people when either in pain, in suffering, in prison, or in mourning tell how turning to the Bible brought strength in their times of desperation. It is then that the Bible may become a refuge in trouble. Suddenly, there is time to reflect on a new set of questions. Does anyone really love me? Is there any hope for me? How do I get in touch with God right now? For some, there is a terrifying sense of guilt. But the Bible does not just leave us there. God does not look at our failures and let justice slide. We know He stood in our place to take the punishment due to us through his dying on the cross. Then on that first Easter, He rose from the grave as God gave that divine stamp of approval on all that He had done. Christians do find that relevant! Life is not simply an empty journey. Along the miles of concrete we travel every day, we have a guide, a beacon. It's not in the form of a dead book, but it's a living guide for the journey.

Intercessions:

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own ministry area; May the Church be faithful to its calling of bringing the Good News of Christ to all the world, promoting reconciliation where there is division..

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression among them the people of the Ukraine, the Yemen, Gaza and Israel, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May the leaders of the nations be led by the Spirit to bring peace and hope where there is conflict and despair.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; may we bring the sustaining love of God to all in need among whom we live.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; relieve them according to their need, strengthen them with your Holy Spirit and console them with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time; welcome them and all the departed into the eternal joy and peace of your heavenly kingdom.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom,
The power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace:

Jesus said, "Peace, I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love. **And also with you.**

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you were the servant of all, and gave up your life and died for us, but are alive and reign, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The peace of God which is beyond all understanding guard your hearts in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. **Amen**

Hymn 2: Rejoice the Lord is King!

- 1. Rejoice the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
Mortals give thanks and sing,
And triumph evermore.
*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice again I say, rejoice.***
- 2. Jesus the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,
He took his seat above.
*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice again I say, rejoice.***
- 3. His Kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and heav'n;
The Keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus giv'n.
*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice again I say, rejoice.***

4. **He sits at God's right hand
Till all his foes submit,
And bow to his command,
And fall beneath his feet.**
*Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice again I say, rejoice.*

*An Order for the Holy Eucharist 2004, material from which is included in this service is
copyright © Church in Wales publications 2004
The Word of the Lord, copyright © Church in Wales publications 2011. `*