

A BIBLE WORD PRAISE CELEBRATION
THE GREATEST SONG EVER SUNG...

This service is used on a Sunday leading up to or on Good Friday. The minister/pastor/priest/worship leader does the narration of each reading as set out, the readings are best done by representatives of the congregation. Songs/Hymns should be chosen appropriately so as not to clash with other Easter linked services, and also to fit with the reading they follow after. The service can be used with contemporary music/band group or traditional choir-based format: Contemporary and Traditional Service Orders are provided at the end. God's people need to hear our relationship with the Bible leading up to and in Good Friday worship to keep faith balance. Items for soloists, music/band group/choirs should be inserted or replace congregational songs/ hymns appropriately. Any non-expanded proper translation Bible version can be used for the readings. It is recommended that readers from Children's Church be included for all ages ministry.

The service begins with the Bible being processed into the Church, the welcome and congregational notices given, and the call to worship from Psalm 92.1-3 (or like psalm) being given.

Introduction: The worship leader states the purpose of the service as follows:

A man called Jesus came preaching, teaching and doing the works of the kingdom of heaven among all peoples, Jews and Gentiles, male and female, rich and poor, oppressed and free. Spiritually, He sang the greatest song we can sing. Generations have passed. After so many centuries, is Jesus' song still the song of God's love at work for us all, the song of God's forgiveness and purpose with us? YES! We do still gain God's total grace in him, this one who came to suffer and die for us.

Opening Hymn/Songs:

Opening Prayer: Let us pray: Heavenly Father, our Almighty God,
in the fullness of time Jesus Christ came to us in great humility.
Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,
He was anointed by the Holy Spirit and ministered
the works of God to as many as approached him.
He called disciples, trained them and sent them out
on this same mission of God's kingdom.
He preached that each person should repent
and accept part in God's kingdom,
and taught that he would die for the forgiveness of the world.
For this he suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried,
and descended to the dead, according to the scriptures.
On the third day he rose again from the dead,
to ascend and sit at God's right hand,
and pour out the baptism of the Holy Spirit on his people.

Now we call him your one and only Son, and on the last day,
this Jesus shall come again in glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead.
And we shall rise to life everlasting,
through him who was dead, is alive, and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

Heavenly Father, we are in your holy presence.
We acknowledge our sins and the sins of the world
from which your Son came to redeem us.
We pray in his name for your gracious forgiveness.
Please fulfil anew in every faithful heart the promise of grace.
Give us the peace of your salvation in this world
and in the world to come, and grant us eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Let us hear Genesis 22.10-14 - the expectation that God would provide the true lamb of God, as he restrained Abraham from sacrificing Isaac, his only son: Abraham reached out his ... knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!" "Here I am" he replied. "Do not lay a hand on the boy. ... Now I know that you fear God because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw an ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son." So Abraham called that place The Lord will provide.

(Adapted from Genesis 22.10-14)

God also blessed the Hebrews richly through David of Jerusalem, his beloved king. Yet David's line failed to live up to the hope of the Hebrews, who soon understood that the promised offspring to succeed David would be the Messiah. 2 Samuel 7.11-16: "The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over, ... I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, ... and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ... Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me..." *(From 2 Samuel 7.11b-16)*

Anticipation of the glorious messiah could not get past Abraham's idea that God would provide the lamb to take away the sins of the world. The prophet Isaiah heard the word about God's suffering servant on whom God would lay the sin of all: "See my servant will act wisely, he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ... He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. ... he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, ...he was assigned a grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death,

though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, ...after the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied, by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many and he will bear their iniquities." (From Isaiah 52.13-53.12)

Hymn/Song/s:

In the fullness of time, John the Baptist spoke his message about the one to come: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit." At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (From Mark 1.6-11)

Hymn/Song/s:

Jesus taught like no other person ever did. His Sermon on the Mount, with its call to love even enemies, was spoken from the heart of the God of love. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth." (From Matthew 5.3-13)

Hymn/Song/s:

Jesus expressed his own self-consciousness of his work by calling himself the Son of Man, the title of God's heavenly one, and speaking of the suffering and rejection he would face before being raised to life. This would be the focus of the work God that had sent him to carry out. Jesus said "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it." (Adapted from Luke 9.22-27)

Hymn/Song/s:

Let us hear from Mark's gospel how Jesus fulfilled his awareness of being God's suffering servant, the lamb that God had provided to take away the sin of the world: At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice ... "My God, My God why have

you forsaken me?” Some standing near said he was calling Elijah. One man wet a sponge with wine vinegar and offered it to Jesus for relief saying “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down.” With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said “Surely this man was the Son of God?” *(From Mark 15.33-39)*

Hymn/Song/s:

Offering:

As part of our celebration the offering (a special offering for the) is taken. Let us worship God with our offerings as part of this praise and thanksgiving. *The offerings are brought forward by the office-bearers, who remain standing before the table/altar for the prayers following:*

Let us pray: O God our heavenly Father,
 Jesus lived and taught, giving healing and opening new opportunity,
 and motivating like no other ever did. In the great life of love that he lived,
 and on Good Friday you gave your Son for us, raising him on Easter Sunday.
 He is your greatest offering. Accept and use our offerings, we pray.

Offering Song:

John the apostle had seen the doubt which so many had about Jesus, but would only answer one way: “Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with the disciples when the risen Jesus came. When the others said they had seen the Lord, he said “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger there, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.” Later, with the doors locked, Jesus came and stood among them, and said “Peace be with you.” He said to Thomas “Put your finger here; see my hands. Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas answered “My Lord and my God.” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” *(From John 20:24-29)*

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which John did not record in his gospel. But John wrote those he did so that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His name.

Ministry Prayer:

A general prayer as given below, or prayer with altar call, call to quiet repentance, call for Holy Spirit ministry is given

It is right, it is our duty and our joy at all times and in all places,
to give you thanks and praise - our Holy Father, our Almighty and everlasting God.
You created us in your own image as stewards of the earth, but we strayed.
You provided the life enterprise of the Lamb of God to work our forgiveness.
You opened the tomb of Jesus, and gave the new life of his resurrection
and of our salvation which has come - the good news of the everlasting gospel.

[OPTIONAL: Traditional Response if needed]

Minister: So with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven
we worship you and declare the greatness of your glory;
we praise you now and forever saying:

Congregation: **Holy, holy, holy Lord; God of power and might;
Heaven and earth are full of your glory;
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Almighty God, every year you bring us face to face with the great work of love
and the suffering for our sin that you sent Jesus to perform.
Give us belief beyond doubt to joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
and to behold him when he comes to be our judge.
He is alive, reigning with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. Amen

If an altar call or ministry call has been used, this is ended and the service is closed.

Closing message: After Jesus was resurrected, He gave his apostles and disciples
the Great Commission. Then He ascended to heaven and poured out the baptism in
the Holy Spirit. God's purpose to show the greatest love to us, to offer Jesus
for us, and to empower new life in us was complete. Jesus' death paid the price for
sin, his resurrection defeated death with everlasting life, his Spirit indwelling us is the
foretaste of His coming reign. Now we can tell the greatest story ever told, and sing
the greatest song that can ever be sung.

Final Hymn/Song/s:

Blessing: The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and
minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and
the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you
and remain with you always. Amen.

A BIBLE WORD PRAISE CELEBRATION
THE GREATEST SONG EVER SUNG...
Contemporary Order

Entrance of the Word
Welcome and Notices
Call to Worship

Service Introduction

Opening Song/s **Blessing and honour**
 I know he rescued my soul
 These are the days of Elijah

Opening Prayer

Reading 1: Genesis 22.10 -14 - Hope of the coming Lamb
Reading 2: 2 Samuel 7.11b-16 - Hope of the coming Royal Son
Reading 3: Isaiah 52.13-53.12 - Hope of the Suffering Servant

Songs: **El Shaddai**

Reading 4: Mark 1.6-11 - The Spirit-Anointed Son
Song: **God's Spirit is in my heart**

Reading 5: Matthew 5.3-13 - Blessed are the poor in Spirit
Song: **Blessed be your name**

Reading 6: Luke 9.22-27 - Taking up His Cross Daily
Song: **We are the soldiers of the army**

Reading 7: Mark 15.33-39 - The Son of God Crucified
Song/s: **Above all powers**

Offering, Prayer and Offering Song

Reading 8: John 20.24-29 - Stop Doubting and Believe

Ministry Prayer

Closing Message

Closing Song **Put your hand in the hand**

Blessing

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THE GREATEST SONG EVER SUNG...
Traditional Order

Entrance of the Word
Welcome and Notices
Call to Worship

Service Introduction

Opening Hymn: **And can it be**
Opening Prayer

Reading 1: Genesis 22.10 -14 - Hope of the coming Lamb
Reading 2: 2 Samuel 7.11b-16 - Hope of the coming Royal Son
Reading 3: Isaiah 52.13-53.12 - Hope of the Suffering Servant
Hymn: **O sacred head sore wounded**

Reading 4: Mark 1.6-11 - The Spirit-Anointed Son
Song: **Love Divine, all loves excelling**

Reading 5: Matthew 5.3-13 - Blessed are the poor in Spirit
Song: **Be Thou my vision**

Reading 6: Luke 9.22-27 - Taking up His Cross Daily
Song: **The old rugged cross**

Reading 7: Mark 15.33-39 - The Son of God Crucified
Song: **When I survey the wondrous cross**

Offering, Prayer and Offering Song

Reading 8: John 20.24-29 - Stop Doubting and Believe

Ministry Prayer

Closing Message

Closing Song **In the cross of Christ I glory**
Blessing