



# Church Together

**The Beatitudes: Blessed Are...**

**5th September 2021**





# Welcome

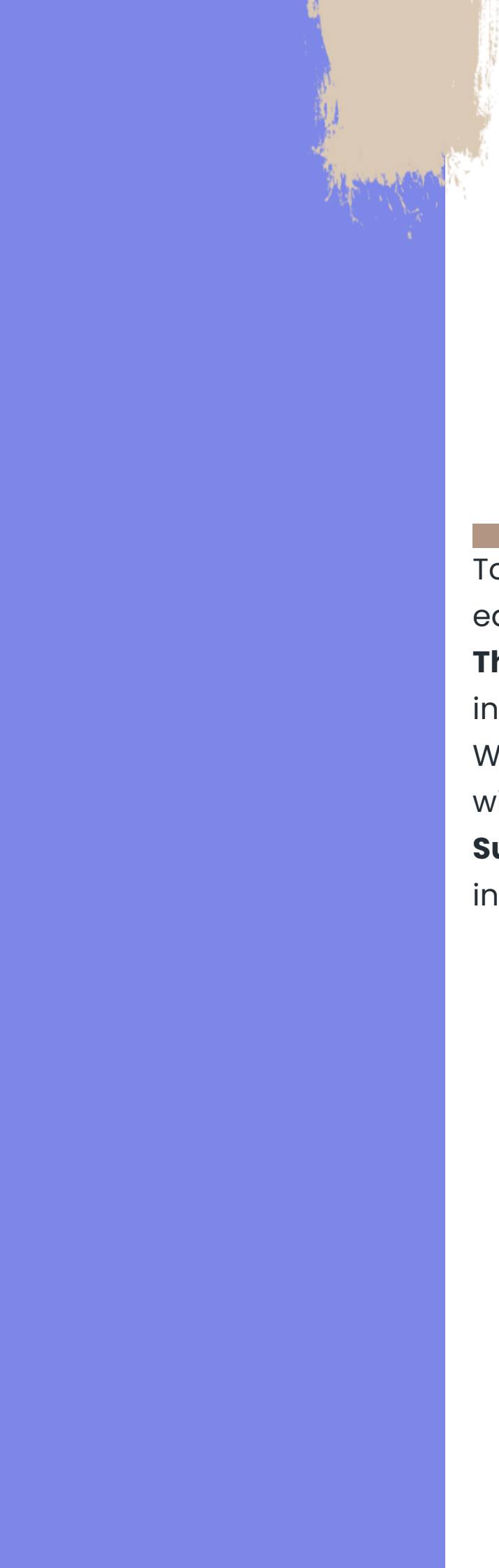
Welcome to **Church Together**.

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together.

Our flexible Sunday worship patterns blend together on – line services, home deliveries and emailed copies of Church Together.

Today's service will be looking at: **Matthew 5 v. 1 – 12**

The theme for today's service is: **The Beatitudes: Blessed Are...**



Today's service that is set out in this edition of **Church Together** is looking at **The Beatitudes: Blessed Are...** and will include a time of **Communion**.

We hope that you will be able to engage with what has been produced for our **Sunday Service** and that you would indeed **Be Blessed By The Lord...**



# THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

THE BEATITUDES

MATTHEW 5:1-12



# Call To Worship

**Psalm 117 v. 1 – 2 NLT**

Praise the Lord, all you nations.  
Praise him, all you people of the earth.  
For he loves us with unfailing love;  
For the faithfulness of the Lord  
endures forever.

Praise the Lord!



# Opening Prayer

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!  
His love is everlasting and extends to all  
creation.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!  
Bringing wholeness, and peace beyond  
understanding.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!  
His arms open wide welcoming home the  
prodigals.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!  
His promises are sure, His kingdom shall last  
forever.

Thank you Lord God for the opportunity of  
being able to worship you today. Thank you  
for the freedom to be amongst your family  
here today, meeting together in the warmth  
of your embrace.

Thank you that in worship we can put aside,  
the uncertainties of this world and rest upon  
the certainties of the Kingdom, for your  
promises are not changeable as those of the  
world might be, but immovable and eternal.

Thank you that we can bring to your feet all

the hurts and fears that trouble us, and leave them there, knowing that your strength and assurance are all that we require.

Thank you that as we draw near in worship, we are transported from a world of concerns and fears, to a place where we can be at peace in your presence, find healing, wholeness and refreshment.

Thank you Lord God for the opportunity of being with you today.

**Amen**

# Song Suggestion

Cornerstone



## The Beatitudes

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 will 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 children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3-12

# Bible

# Reading

## Matthew 5 v. 1 – 12 NIV

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted

because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you,  
persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil  
against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be  
glad, because great is your reward in heaven,  
for in the same way they persecuted the  
prophets who were before you.



spirit  
crowds  
reward  
thirst  
inherit  
peacemakers  
glad  
poor  
filled  
saying  
heart  
kingdom  
way  
sake  
mourn  
taught  
see  
receive  
began  
persecute  
disciples  
falsely  
Jesus  
account  
merciful  
utter  
mercy  
earth  
children  
people  
evil  
hunger  
God  
mountain  
persecuted  
comforted  
saw  
Rejoice  
revile  
sat  
great  
pure  
meek  
went

# Blessed

# Communion

Today is a Sunday when we would normally share communion together. We come together today remembering the love and sacrifice that Jesus made on the Cross for our sins and for our forgiveness. We gather together here in Church or at home as the body of Christ in order to share the bread and the cup together.

We are able to do this by getting a small glass of red juice **(fruit juice, squash etc.)** and a small piece of bread and 'sharing these elements' at a time that is convenient to you.

**(Normally as a church we will do this during the morning service at about 11.30 am)**

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I receive from the Lord what I pass on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night that he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, **(you might like to pray at this point)** he broke it and said 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' **(This is the time to eat the bread)**. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' **(Now is the time to drink the cup)**. For whenever you eat of this bread and drink of this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

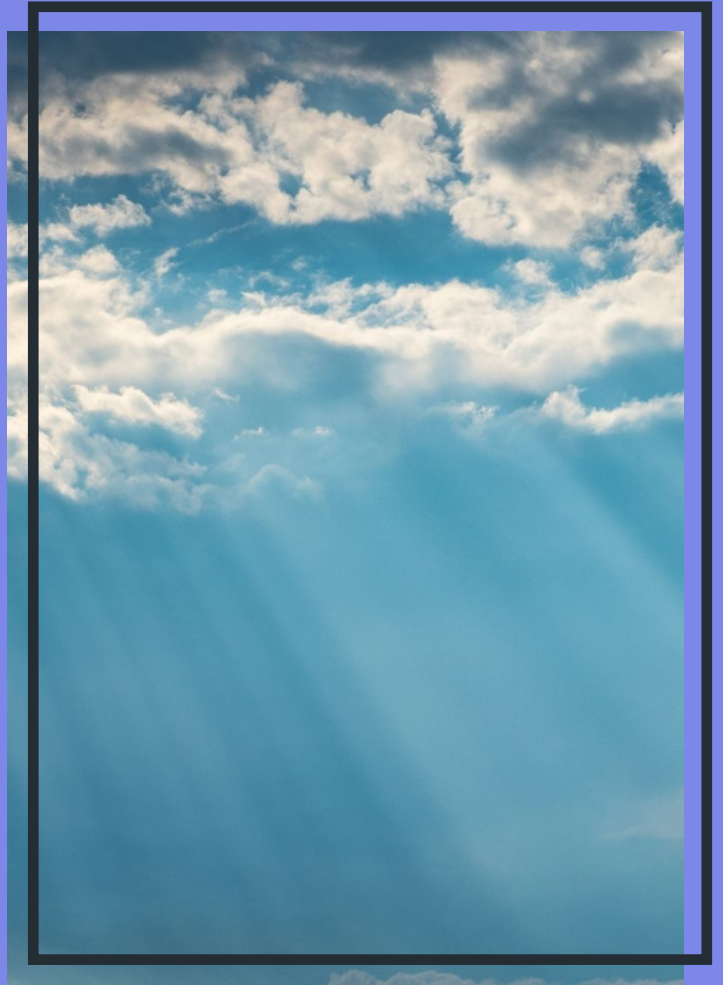
## 1 Corinthians 11 v. 22 – 26

If you would like to do this today with us, if you are at home, then please do so, and may the Lord's richest blessings be with you today.



# Song Suggestion

O Lord My God! When I In  
Awesome Wonder



# Church Together Thought

A story is told about a banner in a church. The writer said: 'In our church a couple of years ago someone made a beautiful banner which hung where everyone could see it. It depicted a thick, sluggish, green caterpillar crawling up a twig, at the top of which hovered a beautiful, iridescent butterfly.'

The caption, based on **Ephesians 4 v. 15**, was simply: '**Growing up into him...**'

It occurred to me that if a caterpillar could see a butterfly and know it were possible to be one, he would yearn for change. How joyful to emerge from a chrysalis, stretch those soggy wings in the warm sun and soar to heights never dreamed of. And yet the metamorphosis cannot take place without the time in the dark and the struggle to be free from all that keeps him earthbound.

## Acceptance

What kind of changes need to take place to turn a man like Matthew into someone like Jesus (**Matthew 9 v.9 - 13**)? That is a daunting prospect, and yet it starts with the simple command '**Follow me.**' What joy for the despised and outcast tax collector not only to have an honoured guest to dinner, but to have that guest defend him in front of the religious leaders of the day.

The Pharisees were spiritually proud and self - righteous, standing on their obedience to the outward form of their religion. This was the opposite of being '**poor in spirit**' (**Matthew 5 v. 3**). Jesus said it is those who recognise how needy they are who will have the kingdom of heaven (**Matthew 5 v. 3**). He accepted Matthew.

'**Follow me.**' Where would he lead? Matthew didn't know, but he knew that it would involve change.

Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick' (**Matthew 9 v. 12**). You don't call a doctor to the sick so that they should stay sick, but so that they should change and become well.

## Following Jesus

As we look at the demands on us to be counted blessed or fortunate (**Matthew 5 v. 1 - 12**), it is easy to be discouraged. How can we become meek, long for righteousness, be merciful, pure in heart and the rest? Our attempts to change are puny and usually fail.

But we need to take our joy from God's promises in the Bible – promises made to all who follow Jesus; us caterpillars who long to be butterflies.

Jesus came for those of us who need changing (**Matthew 9 v. 12**). It is Jesus who brings about the change, with our co-operation. We may feel unable, but we who believe are being gradually transformed into the likeness of Christ (**2 Corinthians 3 v. 18**).

Is that not what Jesus came to do? He will do it for us!

The Beatitudes contain much of what God desires of us as we seek to follow his will for our lives. This lifestyle affirms God's perspective, priorities, and boundaries. As we look over God's plan in this passage, we may wonder how anyone could live up to it. The truth is, no one can do it without God's help. Following God's plan requires wisdom



and grace from him.

We are told in **Matthew 5 v. 3 – 5** that we cannot experience spiritual renewal and transformation from God without true humility. Pride stands in the way of our dealing with painful problems and sins. If we cannot admit our problems and failures, there can be no real cure for us. When we humble ourselves before God, we may need to mourn and grieve over our mistakes and losses. This is key to spiritual growth.

Most of us are pretty sure we know the Sermon on the Mount, or at least the beatitudes, which are the subject of the sermon. But perhaps surface familiarity has bred boredom and inertia. Jesus' revolutionary statements hardly stir the pulse, capture the heart or engage the mind and so we sing, chant, murmur and otherwise verbalise about a quality of life we've always longed for but which escapes us. Is it possible to change? Yes it is, joyfully!

What then does a life that is changed for Jesus look like? Maybe, it looks a little like this:

### **A CHANGE OF PASSION**

Our passions motivate us.

### **ILLUSTRATION**

*Deep, lasting change really is possible. And I don't just mean altered behaviour, but a turnaround at*

*the core of a person's being. A change so dramatic and decisive, we could call it an inner revolution. It happened to Chuck Colson. An arrogant and ambitious pragmatist, he was willing to do almost anything to advance his goal of getting Richard Nixon elected president. But in August, 1973, following a revolution of the sort I am describing, Chuck became a profoundly religious man.*

**John White, Changing on the inside, Eagle, describing the man who spent several years in prison as one of the most senior aides to be implicated in the Watergate affair – a failed attempt by Richard Nixon's circle to spy on and falsely discredit the Democratic party of USA and then cover up their actions.**

There is much cause for passion in the beatitudes. We encounter poverty, sorrow, hunger, thirst, persecution: all there, mingled with gladness and exultant joy!

When we are passionate about Jesus, all that is ugly and soul – destroying can become beautiful. We rejoice in what once would have caused us to despair.

This is because we have:

### **A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE**

Believers do not escape the stress of daily living nor the larger challenges that explode and distort their lives. But because our passions are changed, we

now view things in an entirely different way.

## **ILLUSTRATION**

*In 1966 the Red Guards made a concentrated effort to burn all Bibles, hymnals and other Christian literature. Today it is not uncommon to see a group of several hundred people with only one Bible. One lady had a complete Old and New Testament. She would bring it to the meeting wrapped in linen. When the Pastor read the scriptures, he would gently take the Bible, carefully unwrap it and read the text. After he was finished, he would return the Bible to the lady and she would wrap it in the linen cloth as others had done to the Lord's physical body. In some houses, certain people are told in advance what scripture will be needed for the next meeting. Each of them will copy one verse and bring it. When the leader wants to lead or speak from the scripture, he collects the hand - written copies, puts them all together and he will have the text. In this way, if the police interrupt the meeting, the Bible will not be lost.*

## **Carl Lawrence, writing about China in Against All Odds, Marshall Pickering**

We have God - sight, we see eternal meaning in all that happens. Events may be the same, but our way of looking at them has changed.

This new sight leads us to:

## **A CHANGE OF PURPOSE**

### **ILLUSTRATION**

*We've got to be clay, not potters. We've got to allow God to do the moulding, transforming us from a squidgy lump, into the shape and style of the pot he has invented for us. That way, our growth will happen smoothly, with each part being made strong enough to bear the next bit. You see, this potter already knows what kind of knocks and spills his pot is going to have to cope with, and he will build us perfectly suited to work in these conditions.*

**Susan Sayers, Come and See, Kevin Mayhew**

A purposeful life is always focused. The beatitudes remind us that life's purpose is not self protection. We are able to avoid such self - centredness only when the reason for living is larger than ourselves. If we are persecuted, our purpose in life is not to fear but to bring Christ's rejoicing Spirit into a destructive situation.

We are told in **Matthew 5 v. 10 – 12** that persecution can be a real problem as we try to live by God's principles. Others may try to intimidate us into giving up on spiritual growth. Family members may be threatened by the changes we are making and may do what they can to discourage us. We are told that we need to realize that it is more important to please God than other people. Then, as we do things God's way, we will be set free from our sinful ways of

life. We can then begin to build healthy relationships with others and continue to strengthen our all – important relationship with God.

True sight is to see in the flames of persecution the blazing glory of our companion – Jesus.

With such changed perspective it is not long before we have:

### **A CHANGED PROGRAMME**

The beatitudes are a mosaic of the Christian character. The eight qualities, when blended, show the character of a follower of Jesus whose life goals have been renewed by the Lord.

Circumstances no longer push us around (**Romans 12 v. 2**). The new programme of our changed lives glorifies God. There is serene joy because we are part of God's plan for the future.

# Prayers of Intercession

Loving Heavenly Father, it gives us joy and delight to be in your presence this day. Father, you know all there is to know about us. You share our joy in health and you understand our weakness in illness. You know us through and through, and in Jesus you have shared human joy and sorrow, human companionship and loneliness. You know our thoughts before we think them, and understand what we are trying to say better than we do.

As you know us so well. Be a comfort and a guide, a strength and a challenge, so that we may serve you in wholeness of body and spirit. Heal us, Lord. Transform us. Renew us. Draw us closer to you, empower us with strength and courage and with the assurance that you are with us.

There are many in need of your grace in our world. There are many in need of your love in our world. And there are many in need of salvation in our world. Lord, today we pray that you would enter our lives, our churches, our cities, our countries once again. We give thanks that we can turn to you in prayer and in faith, lifting all those who are on our hearts



to you this day that they may find comfort and strength in you today. We give thanks for all those in the health service, for carers, for the porters in hospital and many others on the front line, for those who minister to the sick and dying, who are giving so much of themselves to help others. Give them strength, we pray, to keep going in difficult and stressful times.

Lord we pray for all those who do not know you, especially in their time of need, and pray that their eyes will be opened to the love of Jesus Christ.

And finally, Lord we pray for ourselves. Help us Lord to follow your example in all that we do and say as we journey with you. We place ourselves, this Church and all your people into your loving care. Please accept these our prayers, in Jesus name.

**Amen**



# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

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No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

Now that we find ourselves once again holding services in Church, we are able to give of our finances to the work of the Lord when we are in church.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.



# THE BEATITUDES

Living right-side-up in an upside-down world

# Song Suggestion

Praise My Soul The King Of Heaven





# Blessing

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And now may the Love of God,  
The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.  
And the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
Remain with us all,  
Now and forever more.

Amen

