

The Ministry of the Word and The Ministry of Tables

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Preacher: Jonathan Gemmell

- [0 : 00] Well, then, please do have a seat. So good to see you this morning. We're starting a new series, and it's called The Serving Seven.
- Now, that picture looks quite odd. We don't often see Stephen or Philip riding around on a horse. But for those in the know, that is the film poster for The Magnificent Seven. And we've just changed the title.
- It's going to be a great series, just a little four-parter. And we're going to see this real dynamic time in the life of the early church. So let's start with this.
- Please could you put your hand up if you've been associated with Bruntsfield Evangelical Church for over 50 years. If you've been associated... Nice and high. Don't be shy. We won't think you're old.
- Nice and high, Archie. Come on. I think that deserves a round of applause. Do you think? Put your hand up if you've been associated with Bruntsfield for over 30 years.
- [1 : 03] That includes the people over 50 years. You can do both, you see. It's good. What about over 15 years? A few more.
- What about over 5 years? Hands nice and high. What about over 2 years? What about over 6 months?
- What about over 1 month? What about this is your first time or you've been before? Hands up.
- Nice and high. There should be no one with their hands down now. That's pretty clear. If this is your first time or you've been here before, put your hand up.
- Wow. Learning obedience. Well, isn't it encouraging to see a place growing? It's encouraging that we don't sit here alone, but we see that God is being so gracious in answering the prayers of so many people over so many years that he would grow his work in this place through his gospel, by his spirit, to the glory of his son.
- [2 : 20] That's encouraging, right? I'm encouraged anyway. I tell my face sometimes. However, church growth isn't always a pain-free, easy thing.
- When things start to grow, it's not always just unicorns and rainbows. There is actually a thing called growing pains. That when things grow, they become more complex, they become more difficult.
- Where everybody used to wear matching tracksuits and ride around on a tandem bicycle. People start to not know each other. The whole thing gets a bit more difficult and complicated. So I want to read Acts 6, 1, 2, 7.
- And I think we'll see this exact thing happening. But before we do that, Alec, I've got a job for you. What I want you to do is give these sweets out. But only to people on this side.
- Okay? So you can eat as many as you like. Stuff yourselves. But these sweets don't go past this aisle, okay? You need to open it, but it's a good job you're an engineer in disguise.

[3 : 31] So let's read. Get a Bible. Open to Acts 6, verses 1-7. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.

It's like the guy in the cinema, isn't it? Who decides that Werther's originals are good. Chapter 6, verse 1. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained.

Among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables.

Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. Also Philip, Proculus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenus, and Nicholas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

[4 : 53] They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the Word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Well, let's pray and then we'll look at this together. Father God, thank you so much that you're gracious. Thank you so much that you're good. Thank you that your plan for reaching this world is your church. And so, Lord, we pray that you would grow us as members of your church, as citizens of your kingdom, through this word to us this morning.

Send your Spirit to make it alive. And Father, may it have been good for us to have been here. And may we leave looking more like your Son, Jesus, than when we came in. Father, bless us and help us, we pray.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Luke, in his prequel to the book of Acts, the eponymous Gospel of Luke, has laid out an orderly, carefully investigated account, a trustworthy report of the birth, life, ministry and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He's given us it from the beginning. He gives us this huge genealogy linking it to the Old Testament. He then gives us a detail of Christmas. He talks about miracles, disciples.

[6 : 11] He talks about his teaching. He gives us the stories Jesus told. And he devotes a lot of time to Jesus' betrayal, his death, his crucifixion, him being buried in a tomb and then being raised to life.

He's done that. That was part one. And now in part two, his second, his sequel to the Gospel of Luke, Dr. Luke is concerned with all that the now risen Jesus continues to do through his church by the power of the now poured out Holy Spirit for the expansion of his kingdom and the glory of the Father.

This everlasting kingdom that started in Jerusalem will expand to Judea, will get to Samaria and to the ends of the earth, even making its way to heathen Scotland.

It works well. And so chapter two sees the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. And Peter preaches powerfully.

And 3,000 people are added to the church that day. The baptismal service to end all baptismal services. It must have been like a sheep dip.

[7 : 30] They just walked in, dunk on. Walk in, mm, mm. 3,000. Just imagine if they all gave a testimony. They'd still be at it. Still be going on even now.

Then chapter three. Peter and John are on their way to the temple. And by the temple called Beautiful, there is not a beautiful sight. There's a lame beggar who's there all the time begging for money.

And he asks them, do you have any silver or gold? Silver and gold we have none. But in the name of Jesus Christ we say, get up and walk. And he gets up and he jumps around. And then Peter gives a second sermon and more people are added to the church.

So far, so good. Three chapters. Church is expanding. Everything seems to be going great until chapter four. When the ruling Jewish authorities, the Sanhedrin, get worked, they capture Peter and John.

They get them to stand and they try to cut the church off at the knees and say, you are not allowed to teach in the name of Jesus anymore. And Peter comes out with the best defense ever.

[8 : 40] I don't care what you say. It's better to obey God than man. And therefore, we're going to keep on going. And we'll invite you to church next Sunday if you're free. Pretty good.

But it's external persecution, isn't it? Church has just been birthed and external persecution is coming on. It's a clear and present threat. And yet through the boldness of the apostles, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, the crisis is averted.

First major threat to the church, external persecution. But that only follows in chapter five with moral corruption. Ananias and Sapphira who want all the kudos for being all in for Jesus.

They sell a field. They say, oh, here you go, apostles. Here's all the money we made. But secretly, they've stockpiled quite a lot for themselves. And Peter says, why have you lied to the Holy Spirit?

Your duplicity is exposed. And within a few hours, both of them are dead. But it does stamp out moral corruption in the church.

[9 : 50] No one's going to make that mistake again. And so the second great threat that comes against the church is moral corruption. Internal, external persecution, chapter four. Moral corruption, chapter five.

Both could easily derail the early church. Yet, God is so gracious and protects his church. Well, as we turn to chapter six, we're going to see the third.

The third major threat that comes against the church. And the big message of this morning is this. I don't know. I was really into alliteration this week in a big way.

Dysfunction without delegation will lead to derailment, division, and eventually death. Dysfunction without delegation will lead to derailment, division, and eventually death.

And so let's get started. And so we see verse one. There's pain. There's pain in verse one. The church has grown from, in essence, a small group to a church plant core team to a mega church in a few months.

[11 : 00] That is exponential growth. The church has grown. They were none. When Jesus was crucified, they were scattered.

The twelve get back together. By the beginning of Acts chapter one, it's about 120 in an upper room. After Pentecost, there's 3,120. By this point, there's about 7,000.

In a few months, well, we want to say hallelujah. But we're Scottish, so we don't. But that amount of growth in such a short period of time manifests itself as real pain.

With such exponential growth, there is real growing pains in the church. And this pain manifests itself along a potentially nuclear fault line.

A potentially nuclear fault line. And this is the fault line. That the Hellenistic Jews are complaining against the Hebraic Jews.

- [12 : 04] Because the Hellenistic Jewish widows are being missed out of the near eastern first century version of Basics Bank. That's what's being done.
- They turn up for food. And one group is getting. That's you guys. And the rest are looking on envious. This is huge.
- Because this fault line is on a potential derailment of the church. A ethnic, linguistic, cultural, prejudicial and emotional line.
- That ties in everyone. It seems that there was a Hebraic Jewish group. And this Hebraic Jewish group were the indigenous Jews who lived in and around Judea.
- But there's this enormous diaspora. And these Jews who live all over the known world speak Greek. Because Alexander's empire was pretty good. So they start to speak Greek.
- [13 : 07] But if you're a Jew and you're going to die, the place to die is back in Jerusalem. Back in the homeland. And so a lot of men, because women live longer than men. A lot of old couples would move back to Jerusalem.
- So that when the old boy pops his clogs, he can get buried in Jerusalem. Well, you can see that there's an enormous number of widows around the place. And so this division is enormous.
- And so what do they do? They start to complain. They start to grumble. Now I'm going to teach you some Greek. It may not be right, but you don't know and I don't know. So we'll all be alright.
- The Greek word for complain is the word gongousmos. Can everyone say gongousmos? See, doesn't that even sound like complaining when you all say it together?
- It's like an onomatopoeic word. And so they're grumbling. They're gongousmosing. And this word gongousmos is a good Bible word.
- [14 : 12] In fact, in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, it's used in one very prolific place. That Moses leads Israel out of slavery in Egypt into glorious freedom as the redeemed people of God.
- Exodus chapter 14 and 15. And then Exodus chapter 16 verse 2. Just on the other side of the river. Just on the other side of the Red Sea.
- Chapter 16 verse 2. In the desert, the whole community starts grumbling. Starts gongousmosing against Moses and Aaron saying, Have you brought us out here to starve?
- A great redemption. And the very next thing the people do is complain. Grumble. Gongousmos. Now, in Acts, Jesus has led the true Israel out of slavery to sin and Satan and death through the cross.
- And what's the very first thing that the people start doing? Gongousmosing. This is a clear and present danger. They're grumbling again. It's a very serious situation.
- [15 : 22] And it's very close to Luke's heart. And it's very close to God's heart. Luke mentions widows twice as often as all the other gospel writers put together. They manage four between them.
- Luke's up to nine. Luke is all about the outsiders becoming insiders. Luke loves widows. And it very much reflects God's own heart for the weak and vulnerable and overlooked.
- And so you look at the strength of a church. And many people look at numbers or the education level. But I think this invites us to say that the strength of the church is how well those on the outside are looked after.
- How well the weak and the vulnerable and the elderly and the ill. And those that are living struggling lives. The real strength of a church is how the church serves and looks after them and cares for them.

And so in Deuteronomy chapter 10 verse 18. Talking about God. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow. And loves the foreigner residing among you. Giving them food and clothing.

[16 : 26] Giving them. So what we've got here in Acts chapter 6 verse 1. Is a very serious situation. It is a scandalous situation. In verse 1 there is real pain.

These are growing pains. But it is an enormous threat. It's interesting. We all pray for the church to grow. And yet I wonder how many of us are to go through the pain threshold.

The pain threshold. Threshold as it grows. Because as we see here it's not all rainbows and unicorns. There's actually real pain. Real friction.

Real tension. In the people of God. As things get bigger. Things get more complicated. Let me show you this graphic. In a church of 50. There's 2,450 lines of communication.

In a church of 100. There's 9,900 lines of communication. In a church of 200. There's 39,300 lines of communication.

[17 : 26] In a church of 300. There's 89,700 lines of communication. And in a church of 400. There's 159,600 lines of communication.

Why is that important? Well because a church from 50 to 400. Is 8 times bigger. But 60 times more complex. That's why growing pains come. Because things start to break down a bit.

If we think that the average person can cope with about 4,900 lines of communication. Is it any wonder that a church of 400 is a little bit more difficult to organize? The Jerusalem church has gone from 120 to 7,000.

This is really painful. I dare say our brilliant food and fellowship team. Could you organize a lunch for 120? We can do that.

If we start doing it in January. Could you organize a church for 7,000? It's a slightly bigger deal right? That's exactly what's going on here. Church has grown massively.

[18 : 33] And these are growing pains that they're seeing. And so verse 2. We look at the priorities. I wonder if you were one of the apostles in the Jerusalem church.

How would you respond to this complaining? This is how I think I would respond. Don't you know how hard I'm working?

You should see the length of my inbox. I haven't seen my wife in four days. That's how I'd respond. Because we so readily take complaining as personal criticism.

But the answer here isn't discipline. It's not church discipline. These people aren't sinning by complaining. This is a real issue. They're not declaring their authority.

Oh, we're apostles. We're not bothered about Sainsbury's and Waitrose and Aldi. And they don't treat it as personal criticism. It doesn't say, verse 2.

[19 : 34] And Peter, Andrew, James and John went into the vestry and sulked together. They don't take it like that. This doesn't need a firm hand and a sharp word.

This is an organisational problem. A systemic error. This needs an arm around the shoulder and joined up thinking and real teamwork. This issue is going to get sorted.

They realise that the church is gaining ground. And the reason it's gaining ground is because it's fighting on two levels. It's fighting in word and deed. What we see in the apostles is that they're preaching and teaching and praying faithfully.

And then we see on the ground that everybody is sharing everything in common. If anyone was in need, people sold stuff and made sure that everyone had something.

That the church community looked compelling to the outsiders because they've never seen a community like this. Where everyone cares for each other so much. And they've never seen a community where the message was good news.

[20 : 41] And the good news bursts the community and the community adds to the weight of the message. Two are going really well. But the problem is it's got a bit complex.

Both words and deeds are absolutely vital. We see that in Jesus. He doesn't just preach. He preaches and he helps people. He preaches and he helps people.

His preaching tells people why he's helping. And his helping adds weight to why he's preaching. And so they need both.

You need preaching first to inform the way you serve. But they're absolutely vital. If you just preach, it's like you're just shouting at people over a wall. And if you just help, yeah, they might be clothed and fed.

But they're eternally ruined. And so you need both. Both together. Both of equal value. Word leading to deed. And so the apostles say at the end of verse 2.

[21 : 41] It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. I think we can so easily read this wrongly. The apostles aren't there going, oh, waiting on tables.

That's beneath us. We'd much prefer saying, please open your Bibles to Ezekiel chapter 3 than walking around with a tea towel over our arm answering to the call, Garçon.

Which is my best French. They're not saying it's beneath us. They're not saying we're above this. They're not denigrating the need for service in and importance of practical gospel service fueled by love.

They think it's absolutely vital. If we need help, think back to 1 John in the summer. This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in the truth.

[22 : 56] This is not either or. This is both and. But they need to get a system where they can both work together really well. Helping widows was not an optional extra.

It was an intrinsic gospel service. A vital expression of love, faith and grace. The fulfilled works that the grace of the gospel brings.

The word makes the gospel audible and the deeds make the gospel tangible. They go together. And when they go together, beautiful things happen. Not to care for all the widows would be a denial of the very gospel they were proclaiming.

The apostles are not elevating their ministry above practical ministry. They're simply stating, this is our ministry but we need to make sure that this other ministry is getting done.

We're doing this. We can't do both. Isn't there that phrase, better to do one thing well than two things badly? And they're trying to preach and teach and disciple 7,000 people. I say we can't run Basics Bank as well.

[24 : 01] It's too much. So we need some help. We need some reinforcements. We need the cavalry coming over the hill. Doesn't Jesus say, man shall not live on bread alone but on every word that proceeded from the mouth of God.

Man does not live on bread alone. He still needs bread. But he also needs the word. That's what they're trying to organize. The bread is needed. So the apostles say, we're going to focus on the word.

But we're involved and we're invested in this. So we're going to make a structure so that the deed stuff can get done as well. They give structure. They don't wash their hands saying, well, you sort it out.

They say, let's have a church meeting. It seems to go quite well compared to some church meetings. They're going to do it. They're going to do it. And they initiate a plan. And they delegate.

Why? Because dysfunction without delegation will lead to derailment, division, and eventually death. So they prioritize. And they see the need to hand this on.

[25 : 05] And so they make a plan, verses 3 to 6. They need to be better organized. They need the lines of responsibility to fall in pleasant places.

They know if the needs of 7,000 are to be looked after by 12, the thing will not get off the ground. So they say, we need everyone to be involved. We need some more leaders, some more champions.

We need more people to rally around these people in order that this work will get done. They need to move from being generalists to specialists.

What used to be done by any and many now needs to be done by some and a few. The whole congregation are involved. Everyone takes ownership.

This is a great day. They set out the criteria. What do they say? Choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit.

[26 : 04] And wisdom. Choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. That's the criteria.

Now I hope that if we had this situation in our church, we wouldn't look down the list and see someone who used to do stock control for little and go, they'll be perfect. Because when it comes to leadership in the church, spiritual is the most important.

What kind of leaders do we want to be growing at Brunsfield? Well, dynamic leaders and vibrant leaders. But most of all, godly leaders. Who are full of the Spirit and wisdom from God.

That's what we need. Terry Virgo says, the more leaders you're prepared to train, the more people God will be prepared to trust you with. And I think it's true. Now all these men that are chosen, they have Greek background names.

That seems very shrewd to me. Because you've got 12 apostles. You've got Matthias drafted in because Judas, it didn't go so well. You've got 12 Hebraic Jews.

[27 : 20] And they need some help. And what's the issue? Well, the Hellenistic Jews are not getting fed. So they say, here's seven Hellenistic Jewish men.

You organize this all. There won't be favoritism or partisanism. It won't go the other way that the Hellenistic Jews will get fed and the Hebraic Jews won't.

You take control. Men full of the Spirit and wisdom, fully in tune with God. This is not leadership at a pseudo-spiritual level. This is real leadership on a practical level.

They laid hands. They set them apart. Word and deed go perfectly out together like rhubarb and custard, gin and tonic, love and marriage. Terrible by themselves, but beautiful and harmonious and dynamic and powerful together.

And the church is prevented from division, derailment and death. It's a good job because that's why we're here today, that this church didn't die.

[28 : 28] Look what happens when the church organizes itself, when it's all involved, when it rallies around. When at verse 5 it says, the whole group was pleased.

You can please all of the people some of the time. Pleased everyone. Look what happens. Verse 1. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, it's growing.

It's growing. And then we hit this bump in the road. And it stands a chance of dying if they don't get this right. But look what happens in verse 7. So the word of God spread.

The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly. This is kicked on a gear. And a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Even the priests are getting it. Even the religious neat-nicks who teach in the synagogue, who were predominantly responsible for Jesus' death and the rabble-rousing that they managed.

[29 : 33] Even they're becoming Christians. Which seems to suggest what's going to happen next week. This is amazing. Growth brings pain.

But setting priorities, making plans leads to great blessing and gospel progress. This isn't just about church organization. This is about the gospel going out and winning.

This is about the gospel going out and winning.

If you're going to serve us, help us, be all about us, make much of us, then it will die. If we come with a consumer mentality that makes it all about what I get, this will never work.

It will never work. It works when everyone's involved. It works when everyone's trying to sink to the bottom to serve everyone else. And when that happens, this kind of thing happens.

[30 : 58] Because you have a compelling gospel and a compelling community. And they go together. Number two. Christ. Always good in a sermon.

This is where we get the word deacon from. This word service is the word. I'm so sorry. It's the word deacon. It's the word to serve.

Deacon. The Greek word for serve. And therefore, we read in Mark chapter 10, verse 45, that the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, didn't come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

That could equally say, the Son of Man didn't come to be deacon. But to deac and to give his life as a ransom for many. So when we serve, we most embody Jesus Christ himself.

Because he is the ultimate deacon. He is the one who serves us so we can serve others. And so if we're not being served by him, we will not serve others. But if he is the center soul and circumference of our lives, we'll do anything for anyone in his name for his glory.

[32 : 05] Because the gospel enables me to think less of myself and more of him. I wish I only had three pointers, but I've got five. Number three, categories.

Just think what this looks like in your service. You've got to get very creative about this. How does my practical service mimic Jesus' service of me?

Here's some examples. You're putting out chairs before a meeting. Now that seems like a very mundane task. But what if you thought like this?

What is Jesus doing right now? He's preparing a place for us to go and be with him forever. So when you're putting out chairs, preparing a place for your brothers and sisters to come and sit.

And be together in Jesus' presence. Isn't that like a very Christ-like job? Doesn't that change everything? Doesn't it change it from just being, let's get it out as quickly as possible.

[33 : 13] I'm so fed up of doing this. But we went, this is actually quite like what Jesus does. What about washing up? Again, incredibly mundane. And yet, washing up is incredible.

I love, I don't. Aileen will tell you I don't. But there's so much going on in washing up. Washing up, you take stains and you wash them out.

Well, that seems very like what Jesus does with us. If you look at the kitchen after I've been cooking particularly, it's chaos. And what do you do in washing up? Will you bring order to chaos?

It's quite like what Jesus does. Suddenly washing up isn't just this thing I need to do. It's a brilliant thing. You run an international night. And it's not just for entertainment.

But you think it's a celebration of the different tribes and tongue and nations that God is gathering at Brunsfield. And you think, well, that's kind of like the end of the story.

[34 : 17] It's like a little warm-up act before we get there. You're unwelcome. You're not just doing it. What does Jesus do? Well, he's endlessly welcoming strangers to himself and drawing them into his church.

And you get to do that. In the foyers, people come in. Do you see how when we get the fact that Jesus didn't come to be deacced, but to deacced and to give his life as a ransom of any, suddenly it changes everything.

It changes everything about what we do and why we do it. Here's number four. Anti-capitalism. This isn't a political statement at all.

What is the key to capitalism? Well, the key is the minimum investment for the maximum output. I want to put in as little as possible to get as much as I can.

That's completely the opposite economics to Jesus' kingdom. Because Jesus says these words, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

[35 : 22] It is more blessed to give than to receive. Therefore, what I want in Jesus' kingdom is the maximum investment for the minimum output. Wouldn't that be great?

How much can I throw at this in order to get little in return? Little in return in a temporal sense because it pays huge dividends in eternity. What if that was the economics of Brunsfield Evangelical Church?

Number five. And then I'm finished. Crossroads. I think at Brunsfield Evangelical Church we're at a crossroads. I think God has been so kind and gracious and good to us.

I think when we did the hands up at the beginning we can say, God, thank you. Thank you for being so good and faithful and kind to us. Bringing loads of new people to our family.

But here's the thing. We can either just now settle. Go, this is really nice. Or we can keep pressing on and saying, actually I need to be involved in this.

[36 : 34] I don't want to just consume this. I don't want to just turn up on a Sunday like a spectator. I want to be part of the family. I want to be an invested, involved part of the family.

And let's be clear that Jesus says that his church is like a body. And every body part is essential. And when every part does its work, the place continues to grow and is healthy.

That's what we want. I want to just sit in here and get fat and lazy as we consume spiritual calories on a Sunday. Got to be filled up and then poured out and filled up and then poured out.

It wouldn't be exciting to see just where God might lead us. I want to just leave a few minutes of quiet where we think about these things, where we think about what God is challenging us about, what God is asking of us, what God is encouraging us with.

Then I'm going to lead us in some prayers and then we'll sing and then we're finished. So let's just have a couple of minutes of just quiet as we think about these things. Perhaps I might ask the elders to stand.

[37 : 55] Peter's not here. Fraser's disappeared. He is magical, that man. He is. Let's pray. Let's pray for our elders.

Dear Lord, thank you for our brothers whom you have appointed to take on this noble task. Father, give them grace, clarity, wisdom, energy, joy, and boldness.

Father, help them lead this church in unity. And may it never be for our comfort. May it all be for your glory. We ask this in the name of that great shepherd of the sheep, our saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Perhaps I could invite the ministry leaders to stand as well, if you're here. Quite a few missing, but we pray.

Dear Lord, thank you so much for your grace in giving us these people in our family. Pray you might fill them with your spirit and wisdom. May their service be done for you.

[39 : 01] And may it be full of joy as they serve faithfully and sacrificially. May it all be done in unity, with humility. And again, may it never be for our comfort, but for your glory alone.

We ask this in the name of the one who didn't come to be served, but to serve, even giving his life for us, your only son, our king, Jesus Christ. Amen. Perhaps I could invite everyone to stand.

Father, give us faith to know that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Unite us together. Replace our readiness to grumble with a willingness to serve. Father, thank you for all that you're doing in this place. We ask in faith that this would only be the very first things of all that you're prepared to do.

We pray you'd raise up many more servants in this place that when the growing pains come, you might pour out grace, grant wisdom, and bring maximum glory to your son. Thank you.

[40 : 08] We're a family. Help us serve one another. Help us be close-knit, grace-saturated, Jesus-centered, service-hearted, servant-hearted people. We pray this in the name of that once-rejected stone who has become the cornerstone of our lives and the cornerstone of this church.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Please stay standing, and we're going to sing together the servant king. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. From heaven you came helpless babe Entered our world and glory failed Not to be served but to serve And give our lives that we might live Since our God, the servant King He holds us now to follow Him To live our lives as a daily offer Of worship to the servant King

[42 : 12] There in the garden of tears The dearly loved he chose to bear His heart with sorrow was torn Yet not my will but yours He said This is our God, the servant King He calls us now to follow Him To bring our lives as a daily offering Of worship to the servant King

Come see His hands and His feet The scars that speak of sacrifice Hands that flung stars into space To cruel nails surrendered This is our God, the servant King He calls us now to follow Him To bring our lives as a daily offering Of worship to the servant King

So let us learn how to serve And in our lives serve on Him Each other's needs to pray for For it is Christ we're serving He says our God, the servant King He calls us now to follow Him To bring our lives as a daily offering To bring our lives as a daily offering Of worship to the servant King To bring our lives as a daily offering Of worship to the servant King Paul writes these words

Therefore if you have any encouragement From being united with Christ If any comfort from His love If any common sharing in the Spirit If any tenderness and compassion Then make my joy complete By being like-minded Having the same love Being one in spirit and of one mind Do nothing out of selfish ambition Or vain conceit Rather in humility Value others above yourselves Not looking to your own interests But each of you to the interests of others Lord would you make it so in this place Amen