



Church Together

Mission That Brings Wholeness And Life

20th March 2022



Welcome

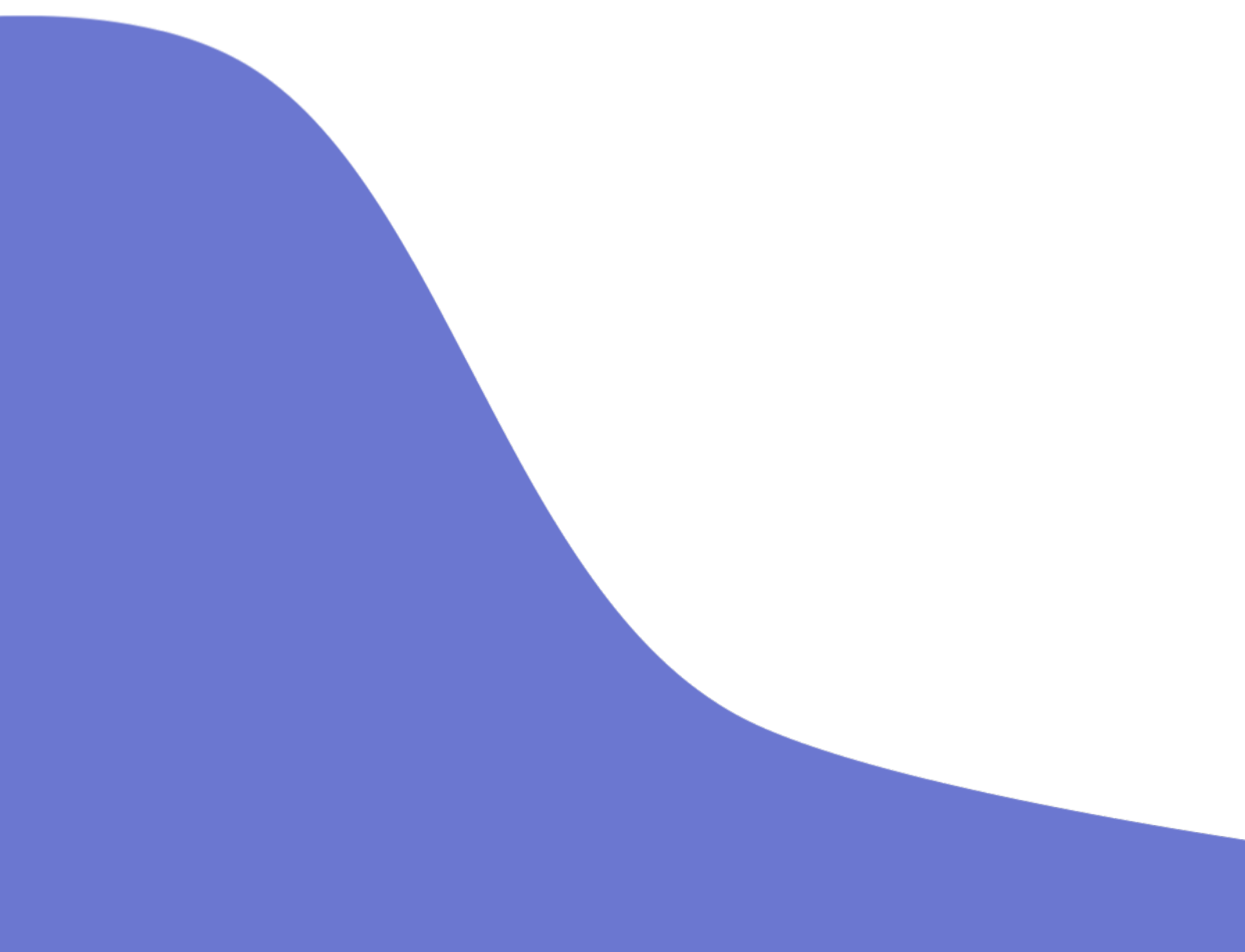
Welcome to Church Together.


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 for this Third Sunday of March 2022 will be looking at: **Acts 9 v. 32 – 43**

The theme for today's service is: **Mission That Brings Wholeness And Life**





Today's service that is set out in this edition of **Church Together** also includes **Communion**. We will be thinking about how **Mission Brings Wholeness And Life**. We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for this Third Sunday Service In March 2022 and that you would indeed **Know The Wholeness And Life That Only Jesus Brings**.

Call To Worship

Psalms 130 v. 1 – 5, 7 NLT

From the depths of despair, O Lord, I call for your help.

Hear my cry, O Lord.

Pay attention to my prayer.

Lord, if you keep a record of our sins, Who, O Lord, could ever survive? But you offer forgiveness,

That we might learn to fear you.

I am counting on the Lord; Yes, I am counting on him.

I have put my hope in his word.

O Israel, hope in the Lord;

For with the Lord there is unfailing love And an overflowing supply of salvation.

Opening Prayer

O God our Father, we thank you this day for all the bright things of life. Help us to see them, and to count them, and to remember them, that our lives may flow in ceaseless praise of you. We thank you this day, for the Good News of Jesus, that he loves each and everyone of us. We thank you for the pleasures of life that we can enjoy, and for all the blessings that you have bestowed to us.

Teach us this day Lord, to serve you as you deserve. To give and not to count the cost, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labour and not to seek just for the reward it brings. Help us to be a shining light to those around us, that your name may be glorified, in order that your presence may be known.

Give us grace, O Lord, not only to hear your word with our ears today; but also help us to receive it into our hearts and lives, so that we be your witnesses wherever you may send us and we ask all of this through the wonderful name of Jesus.

Amen

Song Suggestion

Take My Life And Let It Be,
Consecrated Lord To Thee



Bible

Reading

Acts 9 v. 32 – 43 NIV

Aeneas and Dorcas

32 As Peter travelled about the country, he went to visit the Lord's people who lived in Lydda. 33 There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralysed and had been bedridden for eight years. 34 'Aeneas,' Peter said to him, 'Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat.' Immediately Aeneas got up. 35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. 37 About that time she became ill and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. 38 Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, 'Please come at once!'

39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood round him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning towards the dead woman, he said, 'Tabitha, get up.' She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. 41 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the

believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. 42 This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. 43 Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

Church Together Thought

A number of years ago someone wrote the following article: 'Some years ago I had a serious viral infection that lasted for several weeks. My three children were young and my father, whose own health was poor, also lived with us. I was too weak to care for the house and friends were trans- porting the children to and from school.

One day Maisie, a member of the church, came to see me. I thought of her as a very '**spiritual**' lady, known for her prayers and her prophecies. Since many people had prayed with me already, I really did not want to be '**prayed over**' any more at that point. I rather thought that that was why Maisie had come. However, my visitor surprised me. She made us tea and coffee, talked for a while, and then asked what she could do to be useful. While she was there, she changed all the bed linen and took it away to be laundered. She may have performed other tasks too. She may even have prayed!

Certainly, she was a real and wonderful blessing to me that day.'

Dorcas, like Maisie, was a spiritual woman who gave practical help. We are told that **'she was always doing good things for people and had given much to the poor'** (**Acts 9 v. 36**). Perhaps it didn't seem as though she was sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. However, Jesus said that he came to bring the good news to the poor (**Luke 4 v. 18; 7 v. 22**) and **James 2 v. 14 – 26** which says: **'14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."**

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. 20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? 21 Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that

his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. 24 You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead’.

tells us that faith without action is a waste of time.

We, like Dorcas and Maisie, proclaim the message of hope not just with our words but with our lives as well. The gospel is shared with others not only through actions that seem ‘**spiritual**’, but also through those which seem entirely practical. Dorcas made clothes for the poor; Maisie changed bed linen for someone who was sick. In both cases, the underlying message was ‘**God loves you and cares about your needs**’.

Perhaps for some of us the idea of sharing the message in practical ways seems easier than using words. There is no problem with that so long as our motive is right. Faith without works may, as James tells us, be

dead, but works alone are never enough either.

Dorcas was known to be '**a follower**' (**Acts 9 v. 36**). It was her love for God that motivated her to show love to others, just as it was for Maisie. For us, too, our motive needs to be rooted in our own response to the good news of Jesus Christ.

What part did Peter play in these events? In the first few verses, we are told that Aeneas is healed after eight years of paralysis (**Acts 9 v. 32 - 35**). Then, in **Acts 9 v. 41**, Peter is God's instrument in raising Dorcas from death. These are dramatic examples of God using his people to demonstrate his concern for their physical well - being. It could be said that Peter's role in these verses shows how the spiritual and practical interact.

We can assume that the good news of Jesus, then, can bring wholeness of life to every area of people's lives.

No part of us is left untouched by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. The message of hope is for our bodies, minds and spirits.

The good news of Jesus was beginning to spread beyond Jerusalem, but there was still no organised mission strategy for reaching the Gentiles.

Peter seemed to have a ministry as a preacher and pastor over growing churches (**Acts 9 v. 32**). We are reliably told that he

was certainly well known in Joppa (**Acts 9 v. 38**).

Three interesting features of Peter's mission can be seen in **Acts 9 v. 32 – 43**. So, what as a church can we learn about mission that brings wholeness and life?

IT WAS A MISSION TO BODY AND SOUL

ILLUSTRATION

Does the world still need Christians with skills in medicine and relief to go in Christ's name? Each succeeding month reveals a new '**yes**' to that question. Over 24 years ago, back in 1998 Ingeborg Vea of Norwegian Church Aid has been given exceptional permission to enter North Korea as an observer. At that time she reported the following:

'North Korea is on the brink of economic collapse. Economic decay has worsened, the past three summers have seen devastating floods, and since the collapse of the Soviet Union the country has few economic friends ...

'The World Food Programme says that although the minimum food ration should be 450 grammes a day, it has been 100 – 200 grammes since the beginning of the year. On every available patch of ground people grow vegetables to help them survive. But this is not an option for orphanages and hospitals, which do not

have enough land to grow food in any quantity significant to their needs.

Visits to an orphanage in Sariwon show that 80 per cent of the children were malnourished. Hospitals are operating at half capacity because of the food shortage. Medicines are also in short supply: the chief physician at the hospital in Sun Chon said that whereas formerly they received medicines worth \$20 a month, now they are receiving only a dollar's worth.'

Similarly, around that time, Jack Arthey, head of Christian Aid's South - East Asia team, says:

'We are not talking about malnutrition: we are talking about starvation on a very wide level in- deed, It seems clear to Christian leaders that North Korea is opening up and looking for some kind of support. The poor should not be penalised for what is seen as the inadequacy and tyranny of the past regime.'

Have times changed since then, not really! The world still finds itself in difficult times. Nearly a quarter of a century later, in 2022 we find similar situations throughout the world. Currently there is war in Ukraine, rising energy prices, food and economical increases and much more.

Making God's healing available to people is not an optional extra in mission. The New Testament makes it clear that this is to be

part of the pattern of church life. The Jerusalem church had prayed and prepared for it (**Acts 4 v. 30**).

The healings here have strong echoes of the work of Jesus to which Peter was a witness, in their compassion, their style, and their result (Aeneas and the paralysed man brought to Jesus by friends, **Acts 9 v. 34** and **Luke 5:24**; Tabitha and the daughter of Jairus, **Acts 9 v. 40**, and **Luke 8 v. 54**).

Throughout many years, mission work has continued to echo that. It happens in mission work that seeks to bring Christ's wholeness where others are reluctant to go. And it happens when God's desire to heal miraculously prevails despite or because of our expectations.

IT RESULTS IN NEW BELIEVERS

Because God's salvation addresses every part of a person — body, mind and emotions — faith and healing will always go hand in hand with mission. Here, in the passage that is before us, healing and belief are so strongly linked that the miraculous nature of the events is understated — it's an integral part of Peter's whole ministry. Acts 9 v. 35, 42 shows us this, when we read: '**... Then the whole population of Lydda and Sharon turned to the Lord when they saw Aeneas walking around**'. ' . . . The news raced through the whole town (Joppa) and many

believed in the Lord’.

This is the faith that calls so many medical specialists to leave countries where there is good health provision to serve God and those God loves in places where provision is poor. Some go permanently, some for a year away from their ongoing career, or some just for a summer holiday spent flat out for God instead of flat out on a beach.

IT DID NOT CONFUSE CULTURE WITH GOSPEL

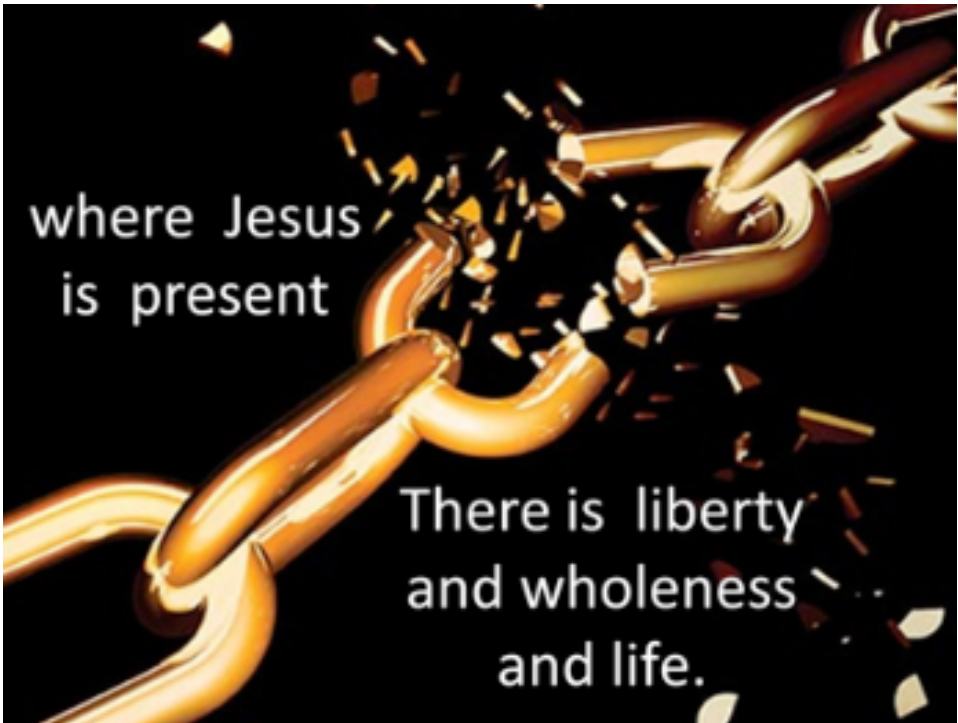
Twice Peter lets the need for the gospel to spread overrule the Jewish culture in which he was most comfortable. We are told in **Acts 9 v. 41** that he touched Tabitha’s hand, showing those present that she was undoubtedly alive, since it would have been abhorrent for a Jew to touch a corpse.

We are also told in **Acts 9 v. 43** that he lodged with a tanner, a trade despised by Jews because it involved pigskin, and later in **Acts 10 v. 23** we see that Peter offered hospitality to people who were not only Gentiles but part of the Roman military.

Mission that truly brings wholeness and life does not require a change of culture, but it offers a new and richer life.

So, we see in this passage that Peter received a call for help from grieving friends who were in nearby Joppa. Dorcas, we are told, was someone who constantly served other widows and the poor, had just died,

and those who loved her had sent for Peter. Imitating Jesus and implementing God's power over death, Peter brought this woman back to life. When God's power is at work within us, nothing is impossible. God's power can revive us and give us new lives in Jesus Christ. Now that is mission that brings wholeness and life.



where Jesus
is present

There is liberty
and wholeness
and life.

Tithes, Gifts & Offerings



No matter where 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.



*Experiencing Wholeness
Happens On A Daily Journey
With Jesus*

Song Suggestion

O Breath Of Life Come Sweeping
Through Us



*Wholeness - in
Christ Jesus*



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 service at about 11.30am.)

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I received from the Lord what I pass on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night 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 this bread and drink 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.



There is peace in Christ
When we walk with him
Through the streets of Galilee to
Jerusalem
Mend the broke hearts
Dry the tear-filled eyes
When we live the way he lived
There is peace in Christ

Song Suggestion

Holy Spirit We Welcome You





Anointing With Oil

Prayers Of Intercession

Loving Heavenly Father, we come to you this day at a time when there is so much need in the world that we live in.

We pray for those who are suffering and going through trials in their faith. We pray for those Christians in Ukraine, who in the midst of war, hold fast to the truth of Jesus and his loving grace. Give them hope in you we pray.

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 alone.

Lord, forgive us we pray when there have been times that we have put ourselves and our needs before others. Help us this day to live lives that have been touched by you as we seek your forgiveness and wholeness in our lives.

We pray for the lonely, for the bereaved, for all who are concerned that they cannot put enough food on the table for their families, for businesses and for those who don't even have a roof over their heads.

We pray for our own Government and Governments around the world, that you will guide them in the difficult decisions they are having to make concerning ongoing concerns within their own countries.

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.

We pray for peace in countries throughout the world where wars are still raging, bringing death, famine and terrible suffering to so many. God in your mercy, bring hope and peace we pray.

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

The Lord's Prayer

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.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power
And the glory, forever and ever.
Amen

Song Suggestion

To God Be The Glory





Blessing

We give you thanks at the end of our time together today for all the ways that you bless our lives: for the beauty and abundance of nature, the love of family and friends, the joy of knowing you as our Lord and Saviour and hearing your word.

Send Your Holy Spirit among us so that we might dream your dreams and see visions of the world as you created it to be. Guide our thoughts and actions.

Bring us closer to you so that we might do your will and dwell in your house forever.

Amen

