

# Church Together

**One Church, One Faith, One Lord – One In Name**

**10th September 2023**



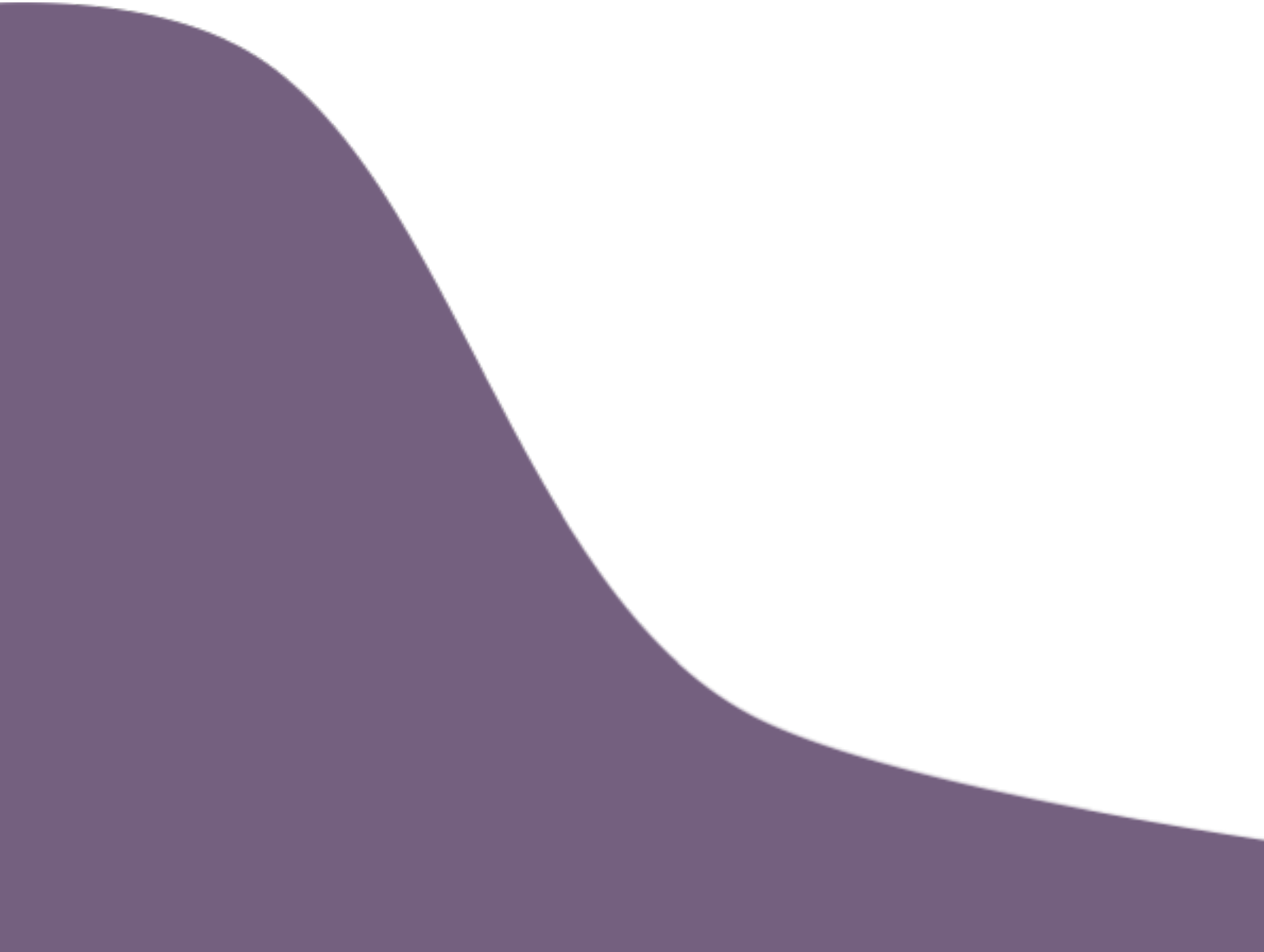
# Welcome


Welcome to Church Together.

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

Today's Service will be looking at: **Acts 11 v. 19 – 26**

The theme for our service today is: **One Church, One  
Faith, One Lord – One In Name**





We hope that you will be able to engage  
with everything that has been produced  
for this service and that you would be able  
to **Know That You Are A Christian And To  
Be Proud To Be Called By That Name**

# Call To Worship

## **Psalms 113 v. 1 – 5 NLT**

Praise the Lord!

Yes, give praise, O servants of the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord!

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Forever and ever.

Everywhere—from east to west—

Praise the name of the Lord.

For the Lord is high above the nations;

His glory is far greater than the heavens. Who can be compared with the Lord our God, Who is enthroned on high?

# Opening Prayer

Thank you Lord for the opportunity of being able to worship you today in this place. Thank you for the freedom to be amongst your family here today, meeting together in the warmth of your love and grace.

Lord God, creator of all things, for your love for humankind: for your love for each person: for the great and mysterious opportunity of life: for the life of your Spirit within us: for the gifts of your Spirit: we praise and worship you today; Lord Jesus.

**Amen**

A person is kneeling in prayer on a grassy hill. To their left is a simple wooden cross. The background is a dramatic sunset with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the scene. The sky is filled with dark, textured clouds. The overall mood is contemplative and spiritual.

ARE YOU REALLY

A TRUE

*CHRISTIAN?*

# Song Suggestion

Morning Has Broken





# Missionary

## Focus For

# September

### **SIX HOURS TO SCHOOL**

#### **WHEN ACCESS TO EDUCATION MEANS EVERYTHING**

Imagine growing up in a village where only three of your neighbours had completed secondary school. That was Krishna Bohora's experience, and for good reason.

The nearest high school to his home in the hilly, remote district of Panchthar, eastern Nepal, was a three hour walk away. And his parents were farmers, working tirelessly to make ends meet.

Walking for six hours a day wasn't a good use of anyone's time. 'Regardless of the condition of the school, receiving an education remains a significant accomplishment for me', Krishna reflects.

However 'modest' his parents' dream might have seemed, and however basic the building Krishna attended – one without desks, benches or even a blackboard, where students sat on a dusty floor – it was radical that Krishna was there at all.

Krishna's story is the story of a young boy achieving an education against the odds. But it's more than that. It's the story of a boy who grew up to become a teacher, one who is supported through BMS generous donations to



change the world he grew up in, one classroom at a time. 'While a few teachers were inspiring, most lacked proper training and a firm foundation in their subjects', Krishna remembers. 'I can hardly recall instances where teachers engaged us in discussions or problem - solving activities. It wasn't until I began teaching myself that I realised the depth of what I had missed during my school years'.

Krishna now works as a teacher - trainer, passing on not only knowledge, but also inspiring, challenging and empowering teachers to create a better world for their students.

He's not alone in his passion for change. The umbrella organisation that KISC EQUIP comes under is headed up by Kapil Sharma, who tells his own story of overcoming immense hardship. 'I have had the experience of eating leaves and roots to fill my stomach', Kapil shares. 'I used to watch my friends going to school...but my uncle never sent me'. It wasn't until a local blacksmith convinced Kapil's uncle of the importance of education that Kapil was enrolled in school. Up until then, his uncle had called him 'Bhalu', meaning 'bear', due to Kapil's long hair. It was there, starting Grade 1 at the age of 11, that his horrified teacher insisted his uncle choose another one, and Kapil first received his name. Up until now, you may have heard of KISC EQUIP's work training teachers primarily through the work of BMS mission worker Joy Ransom. With Joy ending her service and returning to the UK later this summer, you may wonder what's next for this crucial ministry, and whether it still needs your support.

Krishna is unequivocal in his answer. 'I am grateful for the support of BMS and its supporters who have sent mission workers to Nepal. Your unwavering dedication and

commitment have allowed us to reach remote areas, bringing Christ's love and implementing effective educational practices. Through your support, we have influenced the lives of thousands of students and empowered hundreds of teachers'.

He goes on to say, 'Your continued support is vital in shaping the future of education in Nepal. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of students and educators, equipping them with the necessary tools and knowledge for a brighter future'.

# Prayer for Nepal

Could you show your support by praying for vital teacher training projects in Nepal?

- Please pray that more recognition would be given to the voices of teachers in Nepal, giving them the ability to influence and shape the education system for the better.
- A huge problem for Nepal's talented young people is unemployment and a brain drain that makes moving abroad for work a much more attractive option. Ask God to move powerfully in Nepal, engaging young people in politics, and enabling them to start new businesses and encouraging them to take on roles as change - makers.
- Please pray that Krishna and other educators would have the resources they need to carry out life-transforming training that makes life better for both teachers and pupils.

# Song Suggestion

There Is Redeemer



# Bible Reading

**Acts 11 v. 19 – 26 NIV**

## **The Church in Antioch**

19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. 20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. 21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

22 News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. 24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

# Church Together Thought

As a prelude to the passage from **Acts 11 v. 19 – 26** that we will look at, we need to just spend a moment looking at the thoughts that accompany **Acts 11 v. 1 – 3**, which says: 'The apostles and the believers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them"'.

Even before Peter arrived home from his time with Cornelius, the Jewish believers heard that Gentiles had believed in Christ. In their prejudice they did not accept what they had heard, so they immediately confronted Peter. Earlier, when faced with opposition before Jesus' death as we see in **Luke 22 v. 54 – 62**, Peter was afraid to stand up for what he believed. He was afraid to speak the truth. But after Pentecost, Peter found the courage he needed. Peter defended the truth that

had been revealed to him, without concern for what it cost him.

It is human nature to be afraid to speak the truth at times, especially if there is the threat of dire consequences. However, the same Holy Spirit who gave Peter courage is available for us today, and he will help us overcome our fears.

So, let's delve into the passage that we read from **Acts 11 v. 19 – 26**.

Someone once wrote about their brother: 'My youngest brother loved playing with his name! His name was Andrew Timothy, so he called himself '80' (A.T.). Within the family we had a nickname for him that made his initials C.A.T., so he called himself 'Cat'. But it was one of his nicknames that stuck most of all – everyone called him 'Cheeky'! In every class at school the teacher would start off calling him 'Andrew', but soon would follow his friends and use the more familiar 'Cheeky'. Unfortunately, he died when he was eleven, but I often wonder whether the nickname would have survived the teenage years. Now, as a man in his late thirties, would he still have been known as 'Cheeky'? Some nicknames are given as a sign of affection and are used as a symbol of close relationship with a person. Some nicknames are cruel and given to mock and humiliate a person. In this passage from **Acts 11 v. 19 – 26** we see one of each.



Barnabas' real name was Joseph, but the apostles gave him the nickname 'one who encourages' as we see in **Acts 4 v. 36**. Certainly, his role in the church at Antioch seems to have been one of encouragement. He was sent north by the church in Jerusalem to 'check out' what was going on in Antioch. **Acts 11 v. 19, 20** gives us the impression that Antioch seems to be one of the first fully integrated churches with converted Jews and Gentiles meeting together. When Barnabas arrived and saw what was going on, we are told that: 'he was glad and urged them all to be faithful and true to the Lord with all their hearts'.

If the church were to give you a nickname describing one of your qualities, I wonder what would they call you?

Besides encouraging the whole church to grow, Barnabas was concerned to encourage individuals to develop to their full potential. He was doing very well at Antioch and 'many people were brought to the Lord' **Acts 11 v. 24** tells us. But not being content with that, Barnabas went on a journey of several days to Tarsus to find Saul and bring him back to help.

Indirectly, this action eventually led to Paul's rise in prominence within the Christian world and Barnabas' role becoming less visible. Barnabas seemed to have been very generous in leadership and not overly

concerned about his own status.

This is quite a challenge to us – how committed are we to working as a team? Do we try to develop other people's gifts even if that means we have less opportunity to exercise our own? How happy are we for other members of the team (especially people that we have brought in and trained up!) to be praised and honoured while our own efforts go unnoticed?

At the end of **Acts 11 v. 26**, Luke mentions almost as an aside that it was in Antioch that the believers were first called Christians. This seems to have come as a mocking label from those outside the church – the people of the church themselves seemed to prefer the titles: believers, saints or brothers. The term 'Christian' is only used three times in the Bible – here, where it is first applied as a derogatory nickname; in **Acts 26 v. 28** where Agrippa almost sarcastically asks whether Paul really expects him to become a Christian, and then in **1 Peter 4 v. 16**, where there is the implication that the use of the term was part of the antagonism that the believers were facing.

Peter, however, challenges his readers to see the intended insult as a compliment when he says:

'Thank God that you bear Christ's name!'

So, what can we learn as from this passage that we have read in **Acts 11 v. 19 – 26**.

## **FROM BAD TO GOOD (Acts 11 v. 19)**

People accepting Jesus as Messiah were persecuted and forced out of Jerusalem. But something positive can come from such dark moments in history, which is worth noting especially now. Those refugees took the good news of Jesus to fresh places. God can bring good from the dark moments in our personal lives too, as we find in **Romans 8 v. 28** which says: 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose'.

## **FROM OLD TO NEW (Acts 11 v. 20, 21)**

Many believers restricted their witness to Jews. But others shared the faith with Greeks in Antioch. They crossed the boundaries of Judaism to make Christ universal. We too need to push boundaries, because God never wants our discipleship, witness, or church life to get stuck in perpetual ruts.

We need to note that it was believers from Cyprus and Cyrene, not citizens of Jerusalem, who did this: sometimes it's the new converts from another generation or culture who have the greatest vision. We must give them space.

## **FROM PIONEERING TO PASTORING (Acts 11 v. 22 – 24)**

Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to

pastor this rapidly growing church. There was a cross – cultural flow of resources as a fledgling church grew into maturity. Our task today is to plant new churches (or cells or simply win individuals to Christ), and then ‘to disciple’ or nurture them, so that they can in turn become effective witnesses.

### **FROM GROWING TO GIVING (Acts 11 v. 25 – 26)**

So great was the growth, that Barnabas sent for Saul to join the team. Many were taught the faith and the church grew even more. It was not that Barnabas was inadequate, he just needed gifted help. As churches grow, so they need gifted people to help, perhaps using outside agencies with specific gifts and experience. This in turn leads to more growth.

What do we need? Who are the gifted people we need to set aside? And most of all, what does each of us have to give for the good of all?

# 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**

# Song Suggestion

Great Is Thy Faithfulness





# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

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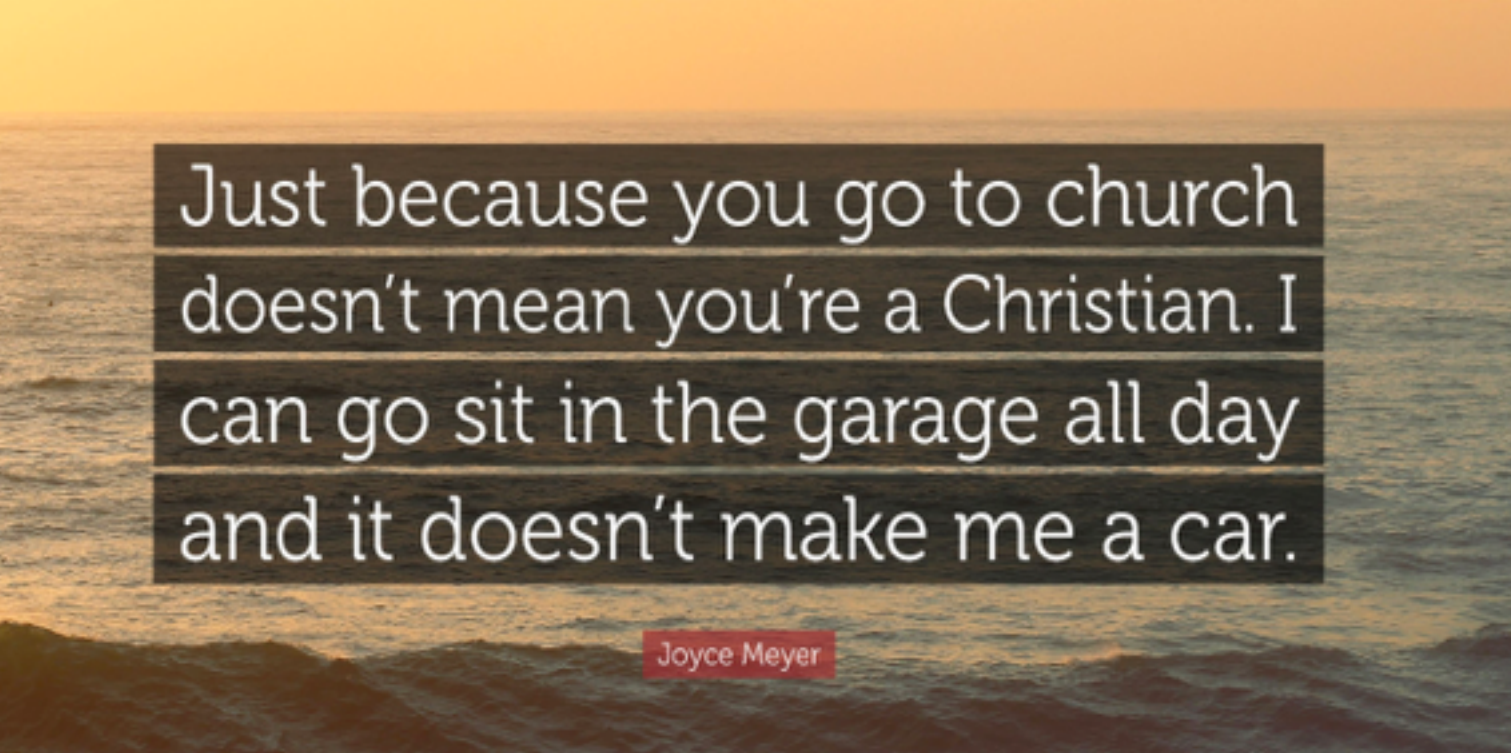
No matter where you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

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 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**

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, transitioning into a dark blue sea. The horizon line is visible in the middle. A dark, semi-transparent rectangular box is centered over the image, containing white text. The text is a quote by Joyce Meyer.

Just because you go to church  
doesn't mean you're a Christian. I  
can go sit in the garage all day  
and it doesn't make me a car.

Joyce Meyer

# Song Suggestion

Thine Be The Glory





# Blessing

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Trust in the Lord with all your heart;  
do not depend on your own  
understanding.

Seek God's will in all you do,  
and he will direct your paths.

**Amen**