

## Service Overview

**Speaker:** Jody

**Sermon Series:** One From the Heart

**Message:** Moving Out of Spiritual Paralysis

**Scripture Reference:** Psalm 13

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## **Service Welcome** *Speaker: Worship Team*

Good morning, everybody. It's good to be together, worshipping the Lord together. And a big welcome to everyone today, whether you've been coming for 30 years or just the last 30 seconds. It's great that you're here, and we pray that God will bless you today.

Of course, let's be reminded, is that we bless him as well. And we're here today, so we have a privilege together to take truths about God and truths that God has shown us and to celebrate them and declare them in praise. Remember Jesus said, 'worship. The father is looking for people to worship. Worship in spirit and in truth.'

And part of the way we do that is that we speak forth. We have declaration songs sometimes, and this first song we're singing is just that. It's the great declaration of John 3: 16. And I just think in this morning, you know, in a thousand years' time, what are we going to be talking about? Well, we've got no idea, of course, with the Lord and what he's got for us in the next life.

But one thing I think we can be sure of, we're going to be talking about this truth here. That is, *'that for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him will have it eternal life.'* Yeah.

So let's just stand and declare that out, because this is a spiritual truth that needs declaring and celebrating. Let's not forget about this. Would you like to stand? And we're going to sing.

## **Worship Singing**

**Song:** God So Loved by Andrew Bergthold, Ed Cash, Franni Cash, Martin Cash, Scott Cash

**Song:** O Praise The Name by Hillsong Worship

**Song:** Holy Forever by Chris Tomlin

## **Post-Worship Prayer** *Speaker: Worship Team*

We bless you, Jesus, for what you've done. We thank you that you break the power of darkness over our lives. We thank you, God, that the deepest depths to which we go, you can go there with us because of everything Jesus has done. And it will never change that. He has achieved that for us, and we bless you.

God, we bless you that there is no greater one than Him. We pray today, Lord, that you would speak to us and lead us, and we lift to you all those things that may be on our hearts that pull us back and worry us. Lord, we lift them to you and pray that you would bring your shift, pray that you would do your thing, Lord God, and lead us as we meet together here we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

## **Communion** *Speaker: Lisa\**

Hi, everyone. Welcome to PBC for this morning My name is Lisa, and normally by this point, I'd be out with the kids. So, you'd be sitting here and I'd be running around on the grass or frantically trying to remember that one kid's name and how many kids are there. And it's a lot. I love your kids, I do. You're lots of fun.

But I think something that kids learn from a very young age is the way that life seems to continue moving at a very quick pace. Their brains don't often dwell on things, but continue pressing forward with whatever is in their present line of sight. Although I definitely don't do nearly as much running or shouting as most of the kids in this room, my brain definitely doesn't follow their conversations.

I think our lives continue much the same way. We move from one thing to the next. Our bodies and schedules are desperately trying to keep up with our minds and everything we think we need to get done. So as I was preparing for communion, I just felt God leading me to stop, to take a deep breath and to remember the gift of his love.

Ultimately, nothing we do is going to change or compare to the love that Christ has already shown us. Nothing is going to take away from the grace that we have been given. Ephesians 2: 4-5 says, *'but because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ, even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.'* God is rich in mercy. So, stop. Remember that this mercy is revealed in Christ. Rest in the grace that has made us alive.

During the Last Supper at the table with his disciples, Jesus isn't one to rush. Luke 22: 19 says, *'he took the bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."* But then in verse 20, it starts off in the same way after the supper. *'He took the cup, saying, "this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."* He did this after the supper. Remembrance is not a short ritual thing that we do, but it is a lengthened, deep contemplation of the life that Jesus has given us by grace alone.

And it's also a time to remember the blessing that life is. And remembering takes time, but this time is afforded by the rest that the grace of God and the sacrifice of Jesus promises. As we share in communion this morning, remember the great love and the rich mercy that makes us alive. It makes us alive in every season.

I don't know whether you're exhausted by the end of term or anticipating a school holiday season that's full of just as much busyness. Maybe you are faithfully continuing to strive in the midst of a hectic routine. But if you trust in Jesus, God invites you to come in a world that calls us to constantly go, "we can stop." Remember the gift of life that is provided by the grace of Jesus' sacrifice alone. Let's pray together in light of that.

Lord God, we come before you knowing that you are the Sovereign Creator. Your hand orchestrates our being and our every breath. And you know the triumphs and the struggles of each heart. Lord, in a world of haste and relentless movement forward, would you enable us to rest in the grace you have shown us?

Jesus, it is through your work on the cross alone that we can stop and recognise the privilege that it is to know you and to love you. We thank you for your sacrifice, for your blood poured out, that we might know the rich mercy and constant grace of your father. May we spend this time now reflecting and resting in you, knowing that all we need and could desire was accomplished on that cross. Lord, your deeds are triumphant and sovereign, yet you are so intimately gracious to each one of us. We praise you for who you are, for your love and for your gracious sacrifice. Amen.

So the way this works at PBC is that there are three tables, two at either side and one just at the back, so come forward in your own time when you feel ready. Take the bread and the cup back to where you're sitting, and as you eat and drink, remember the sacrifice that Christ has made for us. Any and all who follow Jesus are welcome to come forward and participate, whether you're a regular at PBC or not. Kids, if you want to come and remember what Jesus did for us on the cross, this is a really good opportunity to do that, and you are most welcome as well.

So in your own time, come forward. Stop and reflect on God's abundant graciousness revealed in the sacrifice of Christ.

*--- Break as the congregation participates in communion ---*

Jesus, we thank you that in a world that calls us to go and go and go and go, that you invite us to stop and to remember and to rest in you. And we thank you, Lord God. Amen.

## **Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Well, I want to say, welcome everybody. Welcome aboard the spaceship (in reference to the visual decorations around the church stage). Welcome to those who are worshiping with us online as well. If you are new to PBC, or 'newish', or you're exploring what it might be to make PBC your spiritual home, we want to invite you to the newcomers' afternoon tea on Sunday the 28th of July at 2:30. We would love to have any who are thinking of making PBC home to come and join us at that that time.

If you are visiting our church, our church is not normally a spaceship. And as we walked in, there was a cosmic catastrophe on the way through, and someone went, 'oh dear, is that how the worship is going to be this morning?' Oh, thank God it wasn't at all. It was beautiful time of worship. So thank you so much, worship team.

We're not normally a spaceship, but we are gearing up for a kid's holiday program that is going to be running every day this week from Tuesday to Friday. Every day we will have, God willing, 135 kids and 40ish leaders who will be doing all kinds of shenanigans. Fun and games and dancing and songs and crafts and really importantly, a drama, and talks and chats in their small groups that unpack the gospel.

Parents will be meeting in our pop-up cafe that will be down in the hub as well. The reason that we run a kids' holiday program is that it's an opportunity for them to respond to the gospel for the first time, and also for those who have already responded to be strengthened in their faith, and that they will have opportunities to invite their friends.

So the planning has been amazing, right? Like this is just incredible. Yeah. So I just want to say thank you to everyone who has been involved in making a spaceship happen, and also to who will be involved throughout this week in so much work that goes on in this space. As much as we can do has been planned, but now the crucial thing for us to do as a church family is to pray.

And so we are going to pause right now, and we're going to take some time to pray. So I'd love you to break into groups. And we're going to pray for kids to hear and respond to the gospel, and for an ongoing connection beyond this kids' holiday program to those who don't normally come to these programs, that they might be enthusiastic to keep joining in faith communities.

Also, we want to pray for our group leaders, because, you know, so much processing of what the kids hear from the front, actually gets unpacked in the group. So pray for those group leaders, that they will be able to facilitate those conversations, and help the kids unpack what they've shared and respond to what they've heard. Also, for health and protection. Like, this is a crazy time of year to be running a kids' holiday program. There are so many things that come up and bite us, so pray for health and protection for the leaders, for all who are involved, especially our key leaders, who have some crucial roles in this as well, and for all of our children as well.

Pray for no rain. Have you seen the weather forecast? We're going to pray that Tuesday rain right away. Also pray for our cafe and the conversations that go on in that place between those mums and dads who are regularly part of our church and those who aren't, that they would be conversations that are filled with life and grace and the love of Jesus and filled with the invitation as well.

So I'd love you to jump into groups 3 or 4, however many you can hear with, and just pray into those things or whatever else as the spirit leads. If you don't feel comfortable praying out loud, that's okay. You can allow others in your group to pray. But we just want to lift this to God because we want to see a move of his spirit across this week, planting the gospel in our children.

*--- Break as the congregation prays in groups ---*

## **Prayer** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Oh, Lord God, what a privilege it is that we get to share all that you have done, Jesus, with generations under us. And, Lord God, we just want to lift every aspect of this coming week to you. And we want to pray, Lord God, that we would be available for you throughout this week.

Lord, as you tap us on the shoulder and draw us to pray at various times, that you know, Lord, that we would continue to engage and to lift up this holiday program to you. Lord, we thank you for the potential of this week ahead, and we just want to pray, Lord God, that your Holy Spirit would be moving and bringing truth and revelation to every life who's there.

And Lord, would you raise up our young leaders who are leading in this place as well? We thank you for them. We bless you in Jesus' name, Amen.

## **Worship Singing**

**Song:** No Other Name by Hillsong Worship, Joel Houston

## **Bible Reading: Psalm 13 (NIV UK)**

*How long, LORD? Will you forget me for ever?*

*How long will you hide your face from me?*

<sup>2</sup>*How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?*

*How long will my enemy triumph over me?*

<sup>3</sup>*Look on me and answer, LORD my God.*

*Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,*

<sup>4</sup>*and my enemy will say, 'I have overcome him,'  
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.*

<sup>5</sup>*But I trust in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.*

<sup>6</sup>*I will sing the LORD's praise,  
for he has been good to me.*

## **Sermon: Moving Out of Spiritual Paralysis** *Speaker: Jody*

Good morning, church people today. Turn to someone and say good morning, church people. Isn't it great that grown adults can be silly sometimes? After all, we are just children in God's eyes. Well, my name is Jody, and welcome to PBC. So today starts a three week series called One From the Heart.

And just want to let you know, for those who don't know me and those online, I am not a pastor here, but I'm thankful that sometimes I get the chance to speak. Thank you for the pastoral team that trust me. Our church does have a lot of trust, and, I think that's part of why we're growing, and growth has been a big topic.

There are kids popping up everywhere, right? We're even talking about maybe a new building to handle projected growth. I've heard there's a lot of pastors and former pastors, a lot of people who have been involved in the ministry, and this is kind of gives me a little bit of imposter syndrome.

But, yeah, our church is growing and there is a normal way that people are coming through. But I'm also hearing stories of people when they arrive. They talk about our church being a place of healing and rest in peace. Are you hearing that, too? Are you hearing that? Yeah. I'm also hearing people that have come after being away from church for a long time, even years, many years.

And unfortunately, hearing people who have feeling like they want to come back, even though they have been wounded and unfortunately wounded from fellow believers, this is kind of one of those 'elephant in the room' topics. But it's a topic that's actually on my heart. And this is one of the reasons why I want to speak today.

Two weeks ago, if you are here or you saw it online, Kathy spoke a little bit about being an authentic Christian, authentic believers. I want to give you some authenticity this morning, and that is growth in numbers also means growth in wounded people. So sorry to break it to you, but our church is not perfect, okay? We are just a whole bunch of people scarred and wounded.

And that's what the church is. In reality, church is a spiritual hospital where Doctor Jesus comes in, right? And he does his work to heal and restore us. Not just that, though. He wants us healed, restored, and so that we can move with His Holy Spirit and that we can be the gospel to this world that is dark and needs healing.

But growth is messy. By the way, have you ever seen a baby? All right, okay, they're cute, but they're messy. Even our grandbaby, even little Ava\*, she doesn't smell great all the time. But they grow up and they start crawling. And I can always tell first time parents, they're the ones trying to get their baby to walk, like, 'come on, you can do it.' Meanwhile, veteran parents are like, 'don't do that.' They keep them on the ground as long as possible. Put weights on them actually, haha.

And need I talk about the teen years? Messy, but it's totally worth it. Totally worth it. And the good news is that, this is what God does. He restores us. And it kind of reminds me of the story of the demon possessed man. You know that guy? The real scary story. Let's take a look. Mark 5:5 says, *'night and day among the tombs and in the hills, he would cry out and cut himself with stones.'*

This is when Jesus met this man that no one wanted to be near. Nobody. I think if this guy showed up in church, what would we do? Right? If it was me, I'd stick him in the cry room. You know, lock the doors. I might be hiding in the bathroom, actually. As the story goes, Jesus made him cast out all the evil spirits. And then, the man naturally asked, *'I want to follow you. Jesus. Thank you, thank you. I want to follow you. Can I be one of your followers?'*

But Jesus says no. I think if this happened today, the headline would look like this: "So-called saviour of the world bans homeless man from following him. Click to learn more."

Alright, let's click. Mark 5: 18-20 says, *'as Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you."* So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.'

Jesus was looking at the big picture. And the big picture was sending him home, and that would create total amazement in the whole region. Can you imagine someone like that in there? Like, first they'd be so scared, and then, 'is that really you?' And in today's language, Jesus went viral. Totally viral. When Jesus heals and releases us, we can bring healing to others.

And this is natural growth. And like the demonised man, wounded people, wounded believers, we get paralysed. We can't move. But people can move forward as restored healers. Isn't that great? Are you a restored healer? I think there are many in this room. And this makes me wonder. Is this part of the growth of our church?

Is this what God is doing as he's drawing people who are needing healing emotionally, spiritually? I don't know. I don't know, but you know. This morning, this message started talking about new people coming in. But as we all know, difficulties can happen to any of us at any time. Last December, I had to fly home quickly to my family in California. My dad passed away. He was 96, and in relatively good health for 96. But it was sudden and I had to go for the memorial, which was on the 4th of January.

I got back to Sydney on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, and then I got a phone call from a friend of mine who had that tone in his voice that made you think bad news is coming. And then he said, "Jody, I have bad news." And he told me about someone that was close to me that died. This was a student when I was doing student ministry at Sydney University. He was so faithful. He became a student leader. He was so gracious in giving, and he passed away. He was 29 years old. Even though we had a big age gap, obviously we remained friends well after his graduation.

And it made me wonder, "why, why? Why is this happening, God?" Three weeks later, I heard about a friend in Melbourne. He went out on just a routine jog, he just went running, and he collapsed and died. "Why? What's going on? Why, God? Why? Why do these things happen this way?" I attended three funerals within three months. It was really tough.

You know, even atheists will acknowledge God in times like these, but they do it in a mocking way, right towards Christians. "Where is your God now?" They might say, "where is he to save you now?" Even Jesus heard that when he was on the cross. And as believers, you know we can hate on the atheists if we want to. It's the easy way to go, but I think it's because we're asking those same



questions in those times, and that it's paralysing, right? "God, where are you? Why didn't you do something to stop this? Why didn't you show up?" This is the same question, or a similar question, that Martha and Mary asked Jesus. "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." In other words, where were you? Why weren't you here?

The most famous person who suffered in the Bible is Job. He suffered severe calamity, lost all of his possessions, all his wealth, all his kids. Everything gone, gone, gone. Job's friends took turns trying to answer God or in God's place. Because God wasn't answering. God was silent. So his friends took over and they were giving answers that they thought was the reason for Job's calamity.

Job's wife just cut to the chase, right? "Just curse God and he's not there. He's not there." Now we can try to argue with God, but the fact is, God does have his reasons for being silent. We don't like it, but pressing God for answers in times like that, times of trauma, it just results in frustration, and it could even lead to cursing God and just giving up entirely.

And I think that's where a lot of people end up. Things don't go their way. "Where is God?" They give up. But we need to realise in God's silence, God's love is also in his silence. And we need to remember God's character. So, if God isn't in the habit of giving specific answers in times of crisis, and if I don't want to go the way of Job's wife, what can we do? What's plan B?

Well, how about we don't even go the way of our emotions? Let's just kick out the emotions and go total Bible. All right, let's go. Theology. How about, *'consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind,'* right? *"Rejoice always. Pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances."* It's all good, you know, God is with me, my friends who died suddenly, you know they're in a better place there with God. Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

You know, obviously Scripture is true, and I'm not mocking scripture, but it's about timing and context, right? But if you go that route, what happens? And I'm sure there's people in the room who've received that from well-meaning believers. But it's just like, the timing is bad. The result is we can feel uncared for. And if even though the person is thinking that for themselves, suppressing emotions actually doesn't heal. That's just denial, and that part of your life is just stuck.

A church that adopts this kind of culture actually will not attract wounded people. It will actually repel those who are hurting. And it will create more wounded believers to go out and do the same. So if pressing God for answers doesn't work because he's going to be silent, and if replacing emotions with stoic theology, if that's not a good idea either, what do we do? What do we do?

You know, there may be people here in this room right now who are hurting. Everyone's got stories right? So what do we do? Let's go back to Martha and Mary, because I think they're really good answers. And if you don't remember the story, I'll just give you a little recap. Jesus had real strong friendship with these siblings—Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

They hung out all the time. It would've been great to be with them, I'm sure. Anyway, Jesus is away doing some ministry, and he got word that Lazarus was really, really sick on his deathbed. Jesus decided not to go. He didn't drop everything like you would. But he waited on purpose. Unfortunately, four days later, Lazarus died. And it was at that time that Jesus showed up at Martha and Mary's place. This is where we pick up the story.

*John 11 says, 'When Mary reached the place where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept.'*

Both Mary and Martha had the same complaint. "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Which is an easy translation to, "where were you? Why, why, why did this happen? Why did you let this happen? Where were you, Jesus?" Martha, being the more action oriented-sister, she says it this way, "But I know that even now that God will give you whatever you ask." Meaning, "do something now you're here. Come on. Jesus."

I think this is very educational, because notice, what does Jesus do? He just listens. He doesn't defend himself, like, 'well, you know what? I could have, but I had other reasons.' And, you know, if he would have explained everything, do you think that would have been satisfying? I don't think so. And oftentimes we just thank God for answers and God knows it's not going to satisfy you. It's going to sound like excuses. Plus, how are we supposed to receive, you know, some of his plans anyway? We just don't know.

Jesus sits there and he takes it. They're venting at him. "Where were you?" They're accusing him of not being who he said he was. And he didn't explain. He just stayed there. When God is silent, it's an important to remember God's character. It doesn't mean he's not there, because Jesus was there. He was present. He let them vent. He didn't answer the why question because he needed to just sit there with them. He felt their grief and he wept. He was fully, fully present in the end.

If you read the story further, Jesus restores their family. Lazarus comes back to life, and then it's revealed what had happened. But even so, they had to suffer. They had to suffer a time, a little bit of time, a few days. Jesus didn't release them from that. They had to go through it. Remembering God's loving character is really the starting point of healing. We need to remember he loves us. God is present with us. God does care. God cares for everyone in this room. Everyone who is watching on the video online.

When we look back, we'll be able to connect the dots, right? You've done that, right? It's like, 'I don't know what happened. All hell was breaking loose. I felt God abandoned me. But then as time goes by,' it's like, 'oh, okay, I can see what happened. I can understand now. I can see God's wisdom.'

I want to finish with some scripture wisdom for how to move forward. We'll find this in 1 Peter 5: 6-7. *'Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.'*

Spiritual paralysis is seasonal, but it can last a long time. Trust me, I've been there. I have been there, where I've been in a difficult kind of a paralysis for a couple of years. It's not fun. It's not easy. But it will end. It will end sooner when we humble ourselves and remember God's character. Continuing in 1 Peter, *'cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.'*

Casting anxiety includes venting disappointment. Sometimes people think, you know, I can't tell God those things. You know I can't be that honest. Hey, he knows everything anyway, right? Yes, you can be that honest. Look at David. David, a man after God's own heart. What did he say? He was not afraid to vent, let me tell you. In Psalm 13, he says, "how long, Lord? How will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long? This I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give me an answer now or I'm going to die."

That's how troubled David was. Was that honest? You better believe it. Was God still silent? It doesn't say in the text, but maybe he was. Probably it was because David's asking for answers. He wasn't getting them. David didn't hold back. It's okay to vent. God can take it.

1 Peter 5: 8-11 continues, *"Be alert and sober of mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."* Why does it say that? A roaring lion creates paralysis from fear. See, that's the deception of the enemy. He's not. He can't just take us out. He uses fear. We need to remember that. Be aware and don't fall into that trap to continue.

*"Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings."* Sometimes we think, man, I'm the only one. I'm the only one. Nobody knows, right? Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. Nobody. But I know that's not true. We're all scarred. Wounds heal. We get scarred. We get wounded again.

And so, we need to also rely on each other. That's what church is for. Churches relying on each other, relying on the community of faith. And remember, there's someone who really understands wounding and scars. And that's Jesus himself. So, he will be with us always.

1 Peter 5: 8-11 continues, *"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen."* It says He Himself will restore us and make a strong. He wants to free us from everything that binds us and paralyses us, and doesn't want to just stop there.

He wants to release us to be healers to the world. And that's what the gospel is. The gospel is healing. The gospel is spiritual healing. And it may be physical healing as well, and it may be emotional healing, but it's not just for us to keep it. He wants us to go out.

After David's rant, isn't it nice to know he didn't end there? But he said, after all his venting, "God, where are you? I'm suffering. I feel like I'm gonna die." But he concluded this way. *"But I trust in your unfailing love. My heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me."* David remembered God's character, and then he stood up and he moved forward.

Moving out of spiritual paralysis starts with one small step, and I'm not sure where you are today, but I do want to invite you if you're feeling like this message is resonated with you. Number one, you're not alone. God is with you. Jesus is with you. He's present even though he's been silent. He's there. And the people around you, they're his people, the people that will come forward to receive prayer.

Therefore, if you feel uncomfortable, they're trained not to probe. They're trained not to be nosy. They will listen and pray for you. If you want to talk, it's fine too. I'll be upfront as well, but I would like to call anyone who would like to take just one tiny step forward. That prayer might be that step forward because nobody wants to suffer alone.

### **Post-Sermon Prayer** *Speaker: Jody*

Let's pray as the worship team come forward.

Father God, thank you so much for sending your son to suffer and die for us. And thank you for his great love for us. Lord, we are a messed-up people. We injure each other and we injure others. So Lord, we just pray, Lord, for those who are needing prayer, needing healing, that you would come, just come Holy Spirit and bring healing to your church. Bring healing to your people. And we just thank you that you love us. You care for us. You're always there and you're here now. And we ask that you would just move in our hearts. In Christ's name, Amen.

### **Worship Singing**

**Song:** Here's My Heart Lord by Chris Tomlin, Jason Ingram, Louis Giglio

### **Post-Worship Prayer** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Oh, Lord. I just want to say thank you that hurt and pain and disappointment is not a full stop in our lives. It's not the end of our story. Jesus, I want to thank you that you sit with us in those times of brokenness and need, that you are with us, and Lord, that you pick us up and you are able to write a whole new page, a whole new chapter to our story, beyond hurt and pain and disappointment.

And Lord God, I want to thank you. Even beyond that, it's not just our own story that you continue to write, but Lord God, you take our brokenness and you are able to then use that in the lives of those around us. We become your hands and feet and ears and eyes to restore others who are around us as well.

So, God, I just want to say thank you. And I want to thank you, Lord, for this church. So many of us have that testimony, Lord God, that you have taken us, and you have brought healing and restoration in our lives. And Lord God, I want to thank you that this place is a place of grace and acceptance and gentleness, where we're able to come alongside one another and see healing and restoration for others as well. Lord, continue to use us. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **Conclusion** *Speaker:*

I want to say thank you so much to our worship team. It's been fantastic. Thank you to our tech team as well. Thank you to Jody. We do have a prayer team this morning, and we would love to pray for you if there's anything that you would like prayer into.

As I have prayed already, we are a team who understand what it is to be broken and wounded at times, we are a team who stand in grace in that place and are able to do that journey as well. You're welcome to join us for morning team and to stay and chat. Do pray for our kids' holiday program through the week as well. Bless you and have a good day.

### **Online Outro** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Hey, thank you for joining us online today. We pray that you have been blessed and encouraged. And if there is something from today that you would like us to pray into with you, don't hesitate to let us know.

If we haven't met you, we'd love to hear from you. And you also welcome to come and join us in person as well. To know more about our church, please go to our church website and you can also find more details about who we are through our newsletter. And you can subscribe to that through our website as well.

God bless you and may you have a great week.

*\*Names have been changed to protect privacy.*