

Local Arrangement Service

Built Together in Christ: Joining in with What God Is Already Doing

Theme

This service explores what it means to be built together as God's Church and to join in with God's Kingdom in the world today.

The focus is not on the Church building God's Kingdom from scratch, nor on keeping an institution going for its own sake. Instead, we ask:

Where is God already at work?

How do we discern the movement of the Spirit?

What gifts are we being invited to bring?

The interactive prayer focus offers two possible options:

- **Lego Prayer Focus:** Different gifts, one building
- **Stones Prayer Focus:** Living stones, one cornerstone

Churches can choose whichever option best fits their context, congregation, and available resources.

Preparation

For the service generally:

- Bible
- Candle, cross, or other simple focal point
- Hymn books / song words
- Space for discussion in pairs, groups, or whole congregation

For the interactive prayer focus, choose **one** of the following:

Option A: Lego Prayer Focus

You will need:

- A bowl or tray of Lego bricks
- Optional: Lego base plate
- Table at the front or centre of the worship space
- Cross, Bible or candle nearby
- Optional sign:
"Different gifts. One foundation. Built together in Christ."

Option B: Stones Prayer Focus

You will need:

- A bowl or tray of stones
- Table at the front or centre of the worship space
- Cross, Bible or candle nearby
- Optional cloth on which stones can be placed
- Optional sign:
“Living stones. One cornerstone. Built together in Christ.”

Hymn and Song Options

Some hymns and songs can work in more than one place. Churches may therefore choose alternatives in earlier slots and use a suggested main hymn later in the service if that fits better.

Hymn / Song 1: Opening

Theme: Christ the foundation; God gathers and builds the Church

Suggested main choice:

[Cornerstone \(All to us\)](#)

Other options:

- The Church's One Foundation (StF 690)
- Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation (StF 677)
- All People That on Earth Do Dwell (StF 1)
- Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation (StF 88)
- Jesus Calls Us Here to Meet Him (StF 28)

Notes:

Cornerstone, **The Church's One Foundation**, and **Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation** are especially strong if the service begins with Christ as the foundation of the Church.

All to Us can also work here if the church wants a more contemporary opening centred on Christ.

Hymn / Song 2: After Confession

Theme: the Church renewed and called into the world

Suggested main choice:

The Church of Christ in Every Age (StF 415)

Other options:

- **Beauty for Brokenness / God of the Poor (StF 693)**
- **The Church's One Foundation (StF 690)**
- **Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation (StF 677)**
- **Let Us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell / All Are Welcome (StF 409)**

Notes:

[The Church of Christ in Every Age](#) works well here because it turns the service outward after confession, towards the needs of the world. (Lyric video and sheet music for my version are available on my [Resources page](#))

Let Us Build a House may be used here instead, but if it is wanted for the interactive prayer focus it may be better kept until later.

Hymn / Song 3: After the Readings and Discussion

Theme: gifts, service, discipleship, and shared life

Suggested main choice:

Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You (StF 611)

Other options:

- **Will You Come and Follow Me? (StF 673)**
- **Jesus Calls Us Here to Meet Him (StF 28)**
- **Community of Christ, Who Make the Cross Your Own (StF 681)**
- **Take My Life and Let It Be (StF 566)**
- [Cornerstone \(All to Us\)](#)
- **Let Love Be Real (StF 615)**

Notes:

Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You connects naturally with 1 Corinthians 12 and the theme of different gifts in one body.

Will You Come and Follow Me? can work here as a response to the readings, though it also works well as a closing hymn.

All to Us can work here if the church wants a contemporary response to Christ's centrality before moving into prayer.

Hymn / Song 4: During the Interactive Prayer Focus

Theme: being built together; offering gifts; joining in with God's work

Suggested main choice:

Let Us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell / All Are Welcome (StF 409) Omitting verse 3

Other options:

- **Come, Build the Church, Not Heaps of Stone (679)**
- **Let Love Be Real (StF 615)**
- **A New Commandment I Give Unto You**
- **Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You (611)**
- **Take My Life and Let It Be (StF 566)**
- [Cornerstone \(All to us\)](#)

Additional options especially suited to the stones focus:

- **Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation (StF 677)**
- **The Church's One Foundation (StF 690)**
- [Cornerstone \(All to us\)](#)

Notes:

Let Us Build a House is especially suited here because the action itself is about prayerfully recognising what God is building among the gathered people and beyond them.

If **Let Us Build a House** has already been used earlier, **Let Love Be Real**, or **Come, Build the Church, Not Heaps of Stone** would be good alternatives.

For the stones focus, **Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation**, **The Church's One Foundation**, or **Cornerstone** can connect strongly with Christ as cornerstone.

Hymn / Song 5: Closing / Sending

Theme: being sent to discern and join in with God's work

Suggested main choice:

Will You Come and Follow Me? (StF 673)

Other options:

- **Sent by the Lord Am I** (StF 239)
- **Christ Triumphant, Ever Reigning** (StF 319)
- **The Church of Christ in Every Age** (StF 415)
- **I, the Lord of Sea and Sky / Here I Am, Lord** (StF 663)

Notes:

Will You Come and Follow Me? is a strong closing hymn because it sends people out in discipleship rather than ending with the Church as the main subject.

Sent by the Lord Am I works well if the service needs a clearer sending-out feel.

The Church of Christ in Every Age could also close the service if it has not already been used, especially if the church wants to end with the Church's calling in the world. If being used as a closing hymn it is probably better to use the more familiar tune.

Order of Service

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to worship.

In this service we'll be thinking about what it means to be built together as God's Church. We'll be asking how we recognise what God is already doing and how we might join in.

Christ is our foundation, and the Spirit gives gifts to the whole Church. We see signs of God's Kingdom wherever people share love, seek justice and offer welcome.

Later in the service, there will be an opportunity to take part in an interactive prayer activity.

If using the Lego prayer focus

We will use Lego bricks to help us pray about the different gifts each person brings, and how God builds those gifts together into something more than we could be alone.

If using the stones prayer focus

We will use stones to help us pray with the image from Scripture of being "living stones", built together in Christ, the cornerstone.

Call to Worship

Come, people of God,
not as those who begin God's work,
but as those invited to notice it.

Come, followers of Christ,
not as isolated stones,
but as people being built together.

Come, Holy Spirit,
open our eyes to where you are already moving.

Shape us into a community of grace,
where love is lived,
justice is practised,
and Christ is made known.

Let us worship God.

Hymn / Song 1: Opening

Prayers of Approach and Confession

Prayer of Approach

Living God,
you call us together as your people.

You do not build your Church with bricks alone,
but with lives offered in love,
with gifts shared in service,
with kindness shown in ordinary places,
and with hope kept alive when the world feels weary.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the cornerstone.
In you we find the shape of God's Kingdom:
mercy for the broken,
welcome for the stranger,
truth spoken to power,
and love that does not turn away.

Holy Spirit,
you are at work before we notice,
before we organise,
before we know what to do.

Open our eyes to your presence.
Open our ears to your call.
Open our hands to offer what you have given.

Build us together in Christ,
and make us signs of your love in the world.

Amen.

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy,
we confess that we do not always build with care.

Sometimes we build walls
where you call us to open doors.

Sometimes we protect what is familiar
rather than making space for what is faithful.

Sometimes we confuse our own plans
with the work of your Kingdom.

We confess that we can undervalue the gifts of others,
especially when they are quieter, different, or unexpected.

We confess that we sometimes speak of serving your world
while still clinging to our own comfort.

Forgive us, Lord.

Take what is cracked, unfinished, and uncertain in us,
and by your grace build something holy.

Teach us to discern what you are already doing.
Give us humility to join in without taking over.
Give us courage to offer our gifts where love is needed.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

Hear the good news:

Christ is our foundation.
God's mercy is deeper than our failure.
The Spirit is still at work among us.

We are forgiven, renewed, and called again
to share in the life of God's Kingdom.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn / Song 2: The Church in the World

Bible Readings

Reading 1: Ephesians 2:19-22

Before the reading:

In this reading, Paul describes the Church as a household built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone. Together, the Church becomes a dwelling place for God through the Spirit.

Reading: **Ephesians 2:19-22**

Reading 2: 1 Corinthians 12:4–27

Before the reading:

In this reading, Paul reminds the Church that the Spirit gives different gifts to different people. Each person has something to contribute, and the Church needs the gifts of the whole body.

Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:4–27

Introduction to Discussion

Together, these readings invite us to think about how God builds the Church through Christ and through the gifts of the whole body.

When churches face uncertainty, it can be easy to focus on keeping existing activities going. These readings ask us to pay attention to where God is already at work, within the Church and in the wider community.

They also invite us to notice the gifts people bring, including those that are less visible or easily overlooked. Building God's Church involves recognising those gifts, offering our own, and being willing to respond to what the Spirit is doing.

We are going to spend some time reflecting together on what this might mean for us.

Discussion

Invite people to discuss in small groups, pairs, or as a whole congregation.

Use some or all of the following questions.

1. When you hear the phrase “building God’s Church,” what do you think of first?
2. Where do we already see signs of God at work in our church, community, or wider world?
3. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul says that every part of the body matters. Which gifts are easy for churches to notice, and which gifts are sometimes overlooked?
4. What gifts, experiences, or passions might God be asking us to bring at this point in our lives and in the life of the church?
5. Where might God be at work outside the Church, and how might we join in rather than take over?
6. What might we need to let go of so that we can better recognise and respond to God’s work?

Allow time for feedback if appropriate.

Hymn / Song 3: Response to the Readings and Discussion

Interactive Prayer Focus

Choose:

Option A: Lego Prayer Focus

or

Option B: Stones Prayer Focus.

Both options connect with the same theme:

God is already at work.

Christ is our foundation.

The Spirit gives gifts to all.

We are called to discern, respond, and join in.



Option A: Lego Prayer Focus

Introduction

We are going to use Lego bricks as a focus for prayer.

Each brick is different, and each can contribute to what is being built. This gives us a simple picture of the Church, where people bring different gifts and experiences. Some of those gifts are easily recognised, while others may need time and space to be seen.

Christ is the foundation of the Church, and the Spirit is already at work among us and in the wider community. As we pray, we will ask God to help us recognise that work and consider how we might take part.

You are invited to come forward, choose a brick and add it to the shared structure. As you do, you might pray:

Where is God already at work?

What might I bring?

There is no right or wrong way to take part. You may also remain seated and pray quietly.

Hymn / Song during Prayer Focus

This hymn or song may be sung before people come forward, sung quietly while people come forward, or used as reflective music if a recording is available and permitted.

Prayer

God our builder,
you take what is small, ordinary and easily
overlooked,
and make it part of your holy work.

We thank you for the gifts you have placed among
us:
gifts of care, listening, welcome, wisdom, patience,
courage, creativity and service.

We thank you for gifts that are public,
and gifts that are hidden.
For gifts that are already being used,
and gifts still waiting to be recognised.

Open our eyes to what you are already doing.
Help us to notice where your Spirit is moving

in this church, in this community, and in the wider
world.

Show us how to join in with humility.
Save us from trying to take over what belongs to
you.

Teach us to build with love, not pride;
with patience, not fear;
with hope, not anxiety.

Take the gifts we offer today.
Join them with the gifts of others.
Build us together in Christ,
so that our life may point beyond ourselves
to your Kingdom of grace.

Amen.

Option B: Stones Prayer Focus



Introduction

We are going to use stones as a focus for prayer.

In 1 Peter, God's people are described as "living stones" being built into a spiritual house. Each stone is different, and each becomes part of what is being built. This gives us a picture of the Church, shaped by Christ and formed through the lives and gifts of its people.

Christ is the cornerstone, and the Spirit is already at work among us and in the wider community. As we pray, we will ask God to help us recognise that work and consider how we might take part.

You are invited to come forward, choose a stone, hold it for a moment, and place it near the cross, candle or Bible. As you do, you might pray:

Where is God already at work?

How might I become part of what God is building?

There is no right or wrong way to take part. You may also remain seated and pray quietly.

Short Scripture Sentence

This may be read before people come forward:

"Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house."

1 Peter 2:5

Hymn / Song

This hymn or song may be sung before people come forward, sung quietly while people come forward, or used as reflective music if a recording is available and permitted.

Prayer for the Stones Focus

Christ our cornerstone,
you are the foundation of all that is holy, loving and true.

We come as living stones:
imperfect, unfinished, and still being shaped.

Some of us feel strong today.
Some of us feel worn down.
Some of us feel useful.
Some of us wonder where we fit.

Yet you call us together.
You do not discard what seems ordinary.
You do not overlook what the world ignores.

Shape us by your grace.
Place us where we may serve.
Build us into a people of welcome, justice, mercy and peace.

Open our eyes to your work already taking root around us.
Help us to recognise your Kingdom
in quiet faithfulness,
in costly love,
in acts of neighbourliness,
and in the struggle for justice.

Teach us not to build for our own name,
but to join in with what your Spirit is doing.

Make this church a living sign of your love,
not only in worship gathered,
but in lives offered for the sake of the world.

Amen.

Offering

The offering is taken after the interactive prayer focus as part of the congregation's response to God's work and call.

Offering Prayer

Generous God,
all that we have comes from you.

Receive these gifts,
and receive the lives they represent.

Use them for the building of your Kingdom:
in this church,
in this community,
and in the wider world you love.

Teach us to give not only money,
but time, attention, courage, compassion, and hope.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

God of the Church,
we pray for your people throughout the world.

Where the Church is tired, renew its hope.
Where the Church is divided, deepen its love.
Where the Church is fearful, give it courage.
Where the Church has caused harm, lead it into repentance and healing.

Build your Church, Lord,
not as a monument to itself,
but as a sign of your Kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for this church and for the community around us.

Help us to notice the gifts you have already placed among us.
Help us to see where your Spirit is already moving beyond our walls.
Help us not to assume that your work only happens when the Church is in charge.

Teach us to join in humbly with what is good,
to stand alongside those working for justice and healing,
and to recognise your Kingdom wherever love becomes action.

Build us together, Lord,
so that our life points beyond ourselves
to your love for the world.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for those who feel they have little to offer.

For those who are tired.
For those who feel overlooked.
For those whose gifts have not been recognised.
For those who carry wounds from church communities.
For those who long to belong but are not sure where they fit.

May they know that they are precious in your sight.
May we become a people who recognise Christ in one another.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the world you love.

For places broken by war, poverty, injustice and fear.

For leaders and decision-makers.

For those working for peace.

For those rebuilding after disaster.

For those whose labour is hidden but essential.

May your Kingdom come

where lives are fragile,

where hope is thin,

and where love is needed most.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for those known to us who are ill, grieving, anxious or in need.

Silence.

Hold them in your love.

Give strength for today,

companionship in loneliness,

comfort in sorrow,

and hope that does not depend on easy answers.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of grace,

take our prayers, our gifts, our service and our lives.

Build us together in Christ,

and send us out in the power of your Spirit.

Amen.

Hymn / Song 5: Closing / Sending



Closing Prayer and Blessing

Living God,
send us out to notice where your Spirit is already at work,
to offer the gifts you have given,
and to join in with your love for the world.

May Christ be our cornerstone.
May the Spirit guide our steps.
May the love of God build us together
and send us out in grace.

Amen.