

Sunday Service ~ May 25, 2025

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. ² Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. ³ For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. ⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth & the mountain peaks belong to him. ⁵ The sea is his, for he made it & his hands formed the dry land. ⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; ⁷ for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

Let's Pray. Sovereign Lord, what a great privilege it is to come into your presence this morning. To be able to sing to the rock of our salvation. To be able to come before you in thanksgiving and to praise you with music and song. To be able to humble ourselves in worship, to pray to our maker & to place ourselves under your sovereign care.

We admit that we don't come to you often enough, and we don't thank you enough, nor are we humble enough, dependent enough, passionate enough. Please forgive us. Forgive us because for everything we have done wrong, whether we have done or said or acted in the wrong way or failed to do, say or act in the right way, that wrongdoing meant that your Son Jesus had to die on the cross to forgive us that sin. So we thank you for Jesus. May he become more and more real to us today as we sing, listen, pray, reflect and commit this time to you now. And we ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

Song – King of Kings <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSnGYGr7sPg>

1. In the darkness we were waiting
Without hope, without light
'Til from Heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets
To a virgin came the word
From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt

Chorus:
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings

2. To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake you died

Chorus

3. And the morning that You rose
All of Heaven held its breath
'Til that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored
4. And the church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel, shall not faint
By His blood and in His name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me

Chorus

Bible Reading – Exodus 13:17-14:12 (NIV)

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." 18 So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle. 19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites swear an oath. He had said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place." 20 After leaving Sukkoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. 21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people. 14:1 Then the Lord said to Moses, 2 "Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. 3 Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.' 4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." So the Israelites did this. 5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!" 6 So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. 7 He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. 8 The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. 9 The Egyptians—all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops—pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon. 10 As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. 11 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"

Announcements

Focus for Month: Mission. This month we have been fortunate to have had visits from the Webbs, Josh Montzka and Compassion. Each week we have had our vision widened and shown Gods' heart for the lost in another area. So where is your heart for the lost? And what are you going to do about it. Don't become someone missing from the Lord mission, instead find a way to minister for the Lord both here and elsewhere.

Visit from Compassion. Were you touched by the work of Compassion but only later thought you would like to sponsor a child? Then go to the compassion website and sign up for one today. Many of the people within the Church are sponsoring a child from the Philippines. It might be an idea to connect with country as a way of connecting with the wider work of this church.

Vision for 2025. Don't forget that our vision for the year was for the gospel to help us to grow in our knowledge of God and that it would fuel a desire within us to grow in godliness. As we go through the book of Exodus, we are seeing afresh God's wonderful grace in the way he saves his people (the gospel). It is showing us how powerful and forgiving our great God truly is. And the best response to this should be for you and I to want to live for him (godliness) and for us to want to worship him more.

Charlestown Church help needed. Please have a look around for the extra jobs that need to be done (set up, car park attendant, clean toilets afterwards, sweep floors, first aid office etc) and see if you can help out with something.

New City Catechism: Question 22. Why must the Redeemer be truly human? That in human nature he might on our behalf perfectly obey the whole law and suffer punishment for human sin; and also that he might sympathise with our weaknesses. Scripture Proof – Hebrews 2:7 *"Therefore he had to be made like*

his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

Men's Breakfast @ Swansea. We will be having a men's breakfast on Saturday 7th June from 8-9:30am at Swansea Hall. Speaker – Councillor Matt Schultz MBA. Gold coin donation to cover food. All welcome.

Sermon Series for Term 2 (all 3 services) ~ EXODUS – Saved for Worship

1.6	Exodus 16-18	Wandering for the saved
8.6	Exodus 19-20	Terms of worship
15.6	Exodus 21-24	Saved into a covenant
22.6	Exodus 32-34	Saved from failure
29.6	Exodus 25-31, 35-40	Saved for worship.

Church Redevelopment. Please keep praying for the work that is being done by our builders OMNI.

With the concrete slab being laid a week ago, now some of the superstructure can be put up, if the rain doesn't continue! At the moment we are running behind on the time line but haven't encountered much major difficulties. This is important to keep costs at a minimum.

RENEW Women's Conference. Saturday 31st May 9:15am – 12:30pm. Has now been fully sold out. Which is great news. Please pray for the speaker Greta Gaut as she prepares her talks on 2 Timothy. For transport options please speak to Linda Small.

Pastoral Prayer

Pray for Laos (Population 8 million, Christians, 224,000). A troubling level of violence in Laos continues to impact believers. In areas where the church is growing, especially in rural regions, **pressure** and **violence** are almost certain to follow. Please pray that God will help believers in tribal areas find a safe place to live and worship Him. Pray for the families of pastors and other church leaders who have been killed. Pray for the Lord's protection over Christians monitored by Communist authorities.

Parsons (CMS in Japan). Praise for Student ministry - Yvonne, is arriving in the next couple of months from Singapore, to be equipped & orientated to reach out to the many international students in Japan. Pray for Sandra and Sandra's mum – Sandra's mum is in hospital, as cancer has been found in various parts of her body. Pray for peace as Lola and the family process this. Also, pray for Sandra as she prepares for a short visit home soon during a very busy season here in Japan.

Pray for those who live below the poverty line in Australia. We pray for strength and resilience for those struggling to make ends meet and for wisdom for those who make the decisions that affect their lives. May justice prevail, and may the gap between rich and poor be narrowed. We ask for compassion and understanding for all those who suffer and that Christians may be instruments of your love and care. Pray that Anthony Albanese and his cabinet will realise that they have been given a task to run this country under the leadership of the Lord God Himself. Pray that they will govern wisely and do what is best for our nation not for his political party.

Pray for our home group leaders. We pray that you will help our leaders of small groups to teach the bible faithfully, to help care for the people in their group pastorally and that they can encourage each person to grow in faith, in hope and in love

Bible Reading – Exodus 14:13-15:8 (NIV)

13 Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. 14 The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." 15 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. 16 Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. 17 I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. 18 The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots

and his horsemen.” 19 Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel’s army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, 20 coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long. 21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, 22 and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. 23 The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. 24 During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. 25 He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, “Let’s get away from the Israelites! The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.” 26 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.” 27 Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the Lord swept them into the sea. 28 The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived. 29 But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. 30 That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. 31 And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

15 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord: “I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. 2 “The Lord is my strength and my defence; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him. 3 The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name. 4 Pharaoh’s chariots and his army he has hurled into the sea. The best of Pharaoh’s officers are drowned in the Red Sea. 5 The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone. 6 Your right hand, Lord, was majestic in power. Your right hand, Lord, shattered the enemy. 7 “In the greatness of your majesty you threw down those who opposed you. You unleashed your burning anger; it consumed them like stubble. 8 By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood up like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.

Song – On that Day <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owzl2czzzdc>

I believe in Christ, risen from the dead
 He now reigns victorious,
 His kingdom knows no end
 Through His resurrection, death has lost its hold
 I know on that final day, I'll rise as Jesus rose
 On that day, we will see You
 Shining brighter than the sun

Chorus

On that day, we will know You
 As we lift our voice as one
 'Til that day, we will praise You
 For Your never-ending grace
 And we will keep on singing on that glorious day

What a blessed hope, though now tired and worn
 We will spend eternity
 around our Saviour's throne
 Though we grieve our losses,

we grieve not in vain
 For we know our crown of glory
 waits beyond the grave

Bridge

Hallelujah, what a day it will be!
 For at home with You, my joy is complete
 As I run into Your arms open wide, I will see
 My Father who is waiting for me

Hallelujah what a day it will be!
 For at home with You, my joy is complete
 As I run into Your arms open wide, I will see
 My Father who is waiting for me
 My Father who is waiting for me

Chorus x2

And we will keep on singing on that glorious day

Sermon – Praising the Lord who saves! (Stephen T)

Sermon link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKJYZ14wImo>

In May 1940, Britain was in a tight corner, over 400,000 troops belonging to the British Expeditionary Force and the French Army were trapped with their backs to the English Channel, surrounded on three sides by German panzer divisions and ground troops. Churchill, speaking to the House of Commons, called the situation “a colossal military disaster.” So, on the 26th of May, a National Day of Prayer was declared for the deliverance of the British and French troops throughout the United Kingdom.

The next day, Churchill ordered several warships to make the crossing multiple times under enemy fire, delivering troops from Dunkirk Harbor to safety in England. But it was not enough, so the call was for every ship to go over and rescue the troops. One thousand boats with civilian crews answered the call - tugs, ferries, yachts, minesweepers, fishing boats, pleasure craft, even rowboats. They ended up rescuing 331,226 Allied soldiers all while German planes attacked them from above. It is probably the greatest military rescue in history. But this was more than just a deliverance from disaster, it was a miracle of victory.

Slide 2

But there was no more of a tight corner in all of history than that which occurred to the Israelite people. The whole nation of Israel, around 2 million people were in the desert fleeing Egypt, when Pharaoh's troops closed in and hemmed them in against the Red Sea. There was no escape, no possibility of victory. But that is what happened. God, our God turns a certain defeat into an amazing victory. Let's remind ourselves of what happened.

Slide 3

1. The Lord leads (Exodus 13:17-14:18)

*“When Pharaoh let the people go, **God did not lead** them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” 18 **So God led** the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.”*

We start this great passage reading twice that the Lord leads his people. But notice he doesn't lead his people by the shorter route. That would have meant a two-week journey from Egypt to the promised land but it would mean going past a number of heavily fortified Egyptian forts. So instead, God leads his people down a long and winding road that will actually take close on a year before they get to the promised land.

It would be like travelling from Newcastle to Wollongong and your GPS is telling you not to go through Sydney but Broken Hill. It doesn't make any sense. They seem like they are going in completely the wrong direction. But it looks like the Israelites need to learn that the quickest route, the familiar route, seems like the best route, but the paths that God leads us on, although sometimes circuitous and hard, are always safer and better for us in the end.

Slide 4

But it looks like God is not just leading his people now but he had prepared their ancestor Joseph many years ago for this exact journey. 19 *“Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites swear an oath. He had said, “God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place.”*

This was part of God's larger plan, which he had prepared some 400 years ago. To rescue his people from Egypt once they had become a great nation and to give them the land that he had promised their great ancestor Abraham. And to make sure that he will get all the glory he is leading them by a pillar of cloud and fire.

Slide 5

20 "After leaving Sukkoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. 21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people."

Slide 6

Moses doesn't have Google maps on his phone, for it is the very presence of God doing all the leading & he is not leaving them for a second. Like a willy-willy in the Australian desert, this cloud represents the mystery of God and the light acts like a lighthouse guiding the way. The people of Israel can be under no illusion, God is with them, leading them out of Egypt.

Slide 7

But notice where he is leading them to! "Then the Lord said to Moses, 2 "Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. 3 Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.' 4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." So, the Israelites did this."

You see at the very same time the Lord is leading his people, he is also hardening Pharaoh's heart and leading him to the very same patch of sand! And very soon the Israelites will be caught in a trap. That they can't walk out of, for it's a dead end. It seems like a day of disaster is ahead of them. They are between the devil (or at least the Pharaoh) and the deep blue sea. There is nowhere for them to go. So why has the Lord lead us down this road?

Slide 8

"As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. 11 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; ... It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!'"

Slide 9

It's a very human response, isn't it? God, what on earth are you doing? I'm your child. I've relied on your promises and your guidance and this is what I get in return? Now I am sure both you and I have said something similar to the Lord, even in recent times. And it seems even Moses gets cold feet. So, the Lord rebukes him. 15 "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. 16 Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground."

Moses! Stop praying! I have given you, my promises. So, what are you waiting for? Get moving!" Clearly God isn't pleased with prayer when prayer becomes an excuse for inactivity. But that's what's happening here, isn't it? Moses had the promises, God had told them what to do; but he delays, giving voice instead to the fearful cries of the people. How easy it is to let ourselves off the hook from following our duty as Christians so long as we tell ourselves we're still praying about it. God is not pleased with our prayers if used as an excuse for inactivity and disobedience.

Slide 10

"Stop praying. Get moving!" 17 "I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. 18 The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen."

God wants to gain the glory he deserves through this situation and his followers are too busy whinging and complaining! So why was God leading them? Why had God led them between this rock and this hard place? For his glory and their good. To show his people and the world who was in control. And how great

our God really is. Their job was to stand firm. To be still and witness the power and might of their God. For the Lord leads and

Slide 11

2. The Lord fights (Exodus 14:19-20)

19 "Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew & went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front & stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so, neither went near the other all night long."

Slide 12

The angel of the Lord places himself between his people and his enemies. And notice the symbolism of what is going on here. God's people get the light of the fire and God's enemies get the darkness of the cloud. The cloud of God's presence keeps the Egyptians on one side in dreadful darkness while on the other side, the pillar of fire gives the Israelites the security of light, supernatural flood lights, now brightening the darkness.

Now how symbolic is that? You are either in the light or the darkness. In this battle, you either belong to the people of God or you are with the Egyptians. For you cannot serve two masters. You either walking in the light, following the leading of the Lord and allowing him to fight for you or you are rejecting his rule and that means you are still walking in darkness.

3. The Lord leads, the Lord fights and thirdly the Lord saves (Exodus 14:21-30)

I like the story of nine-year-old boy, Joey, who was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday School one day. 'Well, Mum, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind the enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he had his engineers built a pontoon bridge, and all the people walked across safely. He used his walkie-talkie to radio headquarters and called in an air strike. They sent in bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved.'

'Now, Joey, is that REALLY what your teacher taught you?' his mother asked. 'Well, no, Mum, but if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!'" So, what did happen next?

Slide 13

"Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, 22 and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right & on their left. 23 The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea."

Slide 14

24 During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire & cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. 25 He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites!"

In the one act we see an act of salvation and an act of judgement. At the same time that the Lord is saving his people by causing the Red Sea to open up before them, he is also bringing down his judgement on those who have opposed him by causing the Red Sea to close up over them! The Lord has transformed this day of disaster into an amazing victory! And no one will ever be under any illusions. Because *"The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."*

You see it is the Lord and the Lord alone who saves. Israel was in an impossible situation. They had no hope of defeating the world's best army, while totally unarmed themselves. Left to themselves they would either be dead or back in slavery. But instead, God sends this mighty miracle. God show how powerful he really is. God stunning changes the laws of nature, to bring about the salvation of his people.

Slide 15

You might have heard the old story concerning a Christian man reading his Bible in the train on his way to work. He's reading away when the man next to him, asks him "Why are you reading the Bible? Don't know it's just made-up stories, its full of errors, it's not really true." The Christian looks disappointed but he continues to read on. "Wow" he suddenly says to his neighbour. "You should read this, the Israelites just walked through the Red Sea, and didn't get wet. God caused the waters to go back after Moses put his stick out.

"There you go" said the sceptic, "that's a great example of what I was talking about, it's not the Red Sea, it's the Reed Sea and that was just a tidal swamp. They waited for the tide to go out & then they walked across. Besides the water was only a couple of inches deep anyway." That's not much of a miracle!

The Christian was really disappointed, but he went back to reading his Bible. A minute or so though he shouted, "Wow" and turned to the sceptic. "You know that Reed Sea, that marshy swamp. Well God just made the entire Egyptian army drown in a couple of inches of water!"

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You see what happened here at the Red Sea was truly miraculous. The Lord checkmated his opposition. He defeats the most powerful king in the world. He humbles the Ancient Near East's superpower of the day. He brought about salvation & judgement during the very same act. Which is why this monumental event also points forward to the cross of Christ.

Slide 17

You see on that hill on Calvary, Jesus found himself between a rock and a hard place. He was nailed to a Roman cross, had the sins of the world heaped upon Him. He was denied, hated, mocked, rejected, even by His Father God. There was no way out.

And you and I are standing there watching this scene before our very eyes. He is taking our sins onto his shoulders. He is dying in our place. But do you see what is happening? There is both judgement & salvation going on in the one event. Jesus is taking God's judgement on our behalf & he is offering us a salvation that we don't deserve. His body is plunging into the waters of God's judgement, allowing us to walk through to the promised land on dry ground. It's extraordinary. The divine initiative is using improbable means to accomplish a mighty deliverance. God has made a way and He has made a way by the wounds of His Son.

30 *"That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore."* And that Easter Friday the Lord saved your and I as we saw his one and only Son dead on that cross. So how do you respond to something like that?

Slide 18

4. Well, the People Trust (Exodus 14:31)

31 *"And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant."*

They feared the Lord. They remember again what they have been saved from, from slavery and death. And they know that they did nothing to deserve this. It was a gift of grace. Just earlier in the day they were sacred and whinging and still God saves them. Still, he leads them. Still, he fights for them. Surely now, surely, the Lord then is worthy of our trust.

Slide 19

The response to God's gracious salvation, the only response, is a step of faith. Leaving Egypt is a step of faith. Walking in the desert following the fiery cloud is a step of faith, even walking through the waters piled up on either side is a step of faith. And faith is both objective & subjective. Its objective because it's based on a real event. Here it is crossing of the Red Sea but for us it is the death of Christ. These things happened & can be relied upon.

But faith also has a subjective side, we must put our trust in those events. And sometimes our faith is strong and sometimes it is weak. But it is not the nature of our faith that is important, it is the object of that faith. And we can have a weak faith in a strong God and that is all we need. And here the Israelites are being tested in their faith. By the plagues that come to Egypt, by the killing of the Passover lamb & by the wanderings in the desert. Tough time, difficult choices, all helping to strengthen and grow their faith.

And it is no different for us. Our faith in God might be strong or weak. Our trust in his word can wax and wane. But if it is in Him and what he has done for us, then that is enough. Because it is not the strength of our faith that is important it is in object of our faith. A crucified Christ dying for us. And as we walk in faith, the aim is to grow in our own faith. To see how great he is and put our trust more & more in Him. And to be like the Israelites & be

Slide 20

5. People who sing to Him (Exodus 15:1-21)

15 *"Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord: 'I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. 2 'The Lord is my strength and my defence; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.'"*

Slide 21

All of the people of God have been a part of this incredible victory and so now all of the people of God praise God in song because of that victory. And yes, it starts with words about myself, I will sing, I will praise, I will exalt. But its not about me, its about the Lord God who is the real hero of this song. And it shows us, in the words of my favourite preacher, David Strain, that God's salvation demands our praise, God's character deserves our praise and God's faithfulness drives our praise.

We don't have much time but let's notice that this great act of salvation described to us in Exodus 14 is put to music and now sung to us in Exodus 15. And it gives the Lord the glory he deserves and is shows us his glorious character.

Slide 22

Verse 2, *"**The Lord is my strength and my defence; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him.**"* This is a personal God. This is my God.

Verse 3 *"The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name... 6 Your right hand, Lord, was majestic in power. Your right hand, Lord, **shattered** the enemy."* The Lord is the one who has fought for them. The Lord has proved Himself mighty in power.

Verse 11. *"Who among the gods is like you, Lord? Who is like you: majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?"* Our God is unique, there is no one else like him. And so, he needs to have the pre-eminence in our lives.

Verse 13, *"In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling."* God's love is amazing. His strength is awesome. His grace spectacular.

And these things are worth singing about. And singing about again and again and again because you notice that once Moses and the Israelites stop singing, Miriam and the women start singing. In the words of Philip Ryken. *"The history of salvation is sometimes described as a drama – the drama of redemption. However, this drama is actually a musical. It is impossible even to conceive of Biblical Christianity without songs of praise."*

Slide 23

Christianity is a singing religion. Not a performance religion where the professionals up the front present you with praise on a platter. We sing. We sing songs of salvation. We lift up our Lord and praise our God. We remind ourselves that God is not just the author of our lives but the author of our new life in Christ. So, sing in Church, sing in the car, sing in the shower, but what ever you do sing. Sing to the glory of God as well as to the lamb of God.

Slide 24

For when you get to the book of Revelation, which by the way is full of songs, you find in chapter 15, the song of Moses has become the song of Moses and of the lamb. *"Great and marvellous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations. ⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."* We sing not just because of God's great salvation but because he is ruler over everything.

Slide 25

Let me end with the story of Gladys Aylward, missionary to China. During WW2 she was forced to flee when the Japanese invaded Yangcheng. But she could not leave her work behind. With only one assistant, she led more than a hundred orphans over the mountains toward Free China. But while she was trekking, she grappled with despair as never before.

After another sleepless night, she faced the morning with no hope of reaching safety. A 13-year-old girl in the group reminded her of their much-loved story of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. "But I am not Moses," Gladys cried in desperation. "Of course you aren't," the girl said, "but Jehovah is still God."

Slide 26

That's the point. We are not in control, but God is. We are not to call on God to save us, he has already led us to this point, fought off our enemies and saved us. Our job then is to trust him, to praise Him, to sing to Him. The situation is never hopeless, God always has a plan, we just don't know what it is, as yet! But one day we will and it will all make perfect sense. In the meantime, let's sing. Lift up our voice to our great, great God.

Song – Is He Worthy? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-c6pl6CaiD0>

Do you feel the world is broken?	(We do)	Does the Father truly love us?	(He does)
Do you feel the shadows deepen?	(We do)	Does the Spirit move among us?	(He does)
But do you know that all the dark won't		And does Jesus, our Messiah hold forever those He loves?	
Stop the light from getting through?	(We do)	(He does)	
Do you wish that you could see it all made new?	(We do)	Does our God intend to dwell again with us?	(He does)
Is all creation groaning?	(It is)	Chorus	
Is a new creation coming?	(It is)		
Is the glory of the Lord to be the light within our midst?	(It is)	Bridge	
Is it good that we remind ourselves of this?	(It is)	From every people and tribe	
		Every nation and tongue	
		He has made us a kingdom and priests to God	
		To reign with the Son	
Chorus			
Is anyone worthy? Is anyone whole?		Is He worthy? Is He worthy?	
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll?		Of all blessing and honour and glory	
The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave		Is He worthy? Is He worthy?	
He was David's root and the Lamb who died to ransom the		Is He worthy of this?	
slave		He is!	
Is He worthy? Is He worthy?		Is He worthy? Is He worthy?	
Of all blessing and honour and glory		He is!	
Is He worthy of this?	He is	He is!	

Benediction

"I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. ² "The Lord is my strength and my defence ; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him." (Exodus 15:1-2)