

**Welcome and announcements,
concerns & celebrations**

Warm-up song: Times like these

By the Foo Fighters

(Chords: D, Am, C, Em)

1

I, I'm a one way motorway
I'm the one that drives away
Then follows you back home
I, I'm a street light shining
I'm a wild light blinding bright
Burning off alone

Refrain

It's times like these you learn to live again
It's times like these you give and give again
It's times like these you learn to love again
It's times like these time and time again

2

I, I'm a new day rising
I'm a brand new sky
To hang the stars upon tonight
I'm a little divided
Do I stay or run away
And leave it all behind?

Refrain

It's times like these you learn to live again
It's times like these you give and give again
It's times like these you learn to love again
It's times like these time and time again

It's times like these you learn to live again
It's times like these you give and give again
It's times like these you learn to love again
It's times like these time and time again

Call to worship: Psalm 29 (NKJV)

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived
by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again
to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of the saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer and confession

Assurance of pardon

The Lord's Prayer Song

Invitation to the Offering

Dedication of the Offering

Hymn: The Apostles' Creed

(Arfon Major; Key of D)

1

I believe in God almighty
Author of all things that be
Maker of the earth and heavens
Keeper of the sky and sea
I believe in God's Son, Jesus
Now for us both Lord and Christ
Of the Spirit and of Mary
Born to bring abundant life

2

I believe that Jesus suffered
Scourged and scorned and crucified
Taken from the cross, was buried
True Life there had truly died
I believe that on the third day
Christ was raised up from the grave
Then ascended to God's right hand
He will come to judge and save

3

I believe in God's own Spirit
Bonding all the saints within
One church, catholic and holy
Where forgiveness frees from sin
In the body's resurrection
For the breaking of death's chain
Gives the life that's everlasting
This the faith that I have claimed

A time for all God's children

Children's Hymn: The farmer's song (If I were a butterfly) (Key of D)

1

If I were a white Charolais,
I'd thank you Lord for giving me hay.
And if I were a Holstein cow,
I'd thank you Lord, for showing me how.
If I were a curly haired sheep, I'd jiggle my tail
And I'd give you a bleat, but...
I just thank you God for making me "me"

Refrain

'Cause you gave me a heart and you gave me a smile
You gave me Jesus, and made me his child
And I just thank you, God, for making me "me"

2

If I were a Case-I.H.,
I'd thank you Lord, for giving me fuel.
If I were a green John Deere,
I'd be thankful for my power-shift gears.
And if I were an old, blue Ford, I'd finish my work
And I'd take on more, but...
I just thank you God for making me "me" R

3

If I were a flower bed,
I'd thank you Lord, for my blooming stems,
And if I were a garden plot,
it's tough to be thankful for the bugs and whatnot.
And as I mow my lawn I'll say,
"It's a lot like farming in my own special way," but ...
I just thank you God for making me "me." R

Scripture: John 3: 1-17 (*The Message*)

There was a man of the Pharisee sect, Nicodemus, a prominent leader among the Jews. Late one night he visited Jesus and said, “Rabbi, we all know you’re a teacher straight from God. No one could do all the God-pointing, God-revealing acts you do if God weren’t in on it.”

Jesus said, “You’re absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it’s not possible to see what I’m pointing to—to God’s kingdom.”

“How can anyone,” said Nicodemus, “be born who has already been born and grown up? You can’t re-enter your mother’s womb and be born again. What are you saying with this ‘born-from-above’ talk?”

Jesus said, “You’re not listening. Let me say it again. Unless a person submits to this original creation—the ‘wind-hovering-over-the-water’ creation, the invisible moving the visible, a baptism into a new life—it’s not possible to enter God’s kingdom. When you look at a baby, it’s just that: a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is formed by something you can’t see and touch—the Spirit—and becomes a living spirit.

“So don’t be so surprised when I tell you that you have to be ‘born from above’—out of this world, so to speak. You know well enough how the wind blows this way and that. You hear it rustling through the trees, but you have no idea where it comes from or where it’s headed next. That’s the way it is with everyone ‘born from above’ by the wind of God, the Spirit of God.”

Nicodemus asked, “What do you mean by this? How does this happen?”

Jesus said, “You’re a respected teacher of Israel and you don’t know these basics? Listen carefully. I’m speaking sober truth to you. I speak only of what I know by experience; I give witness only to what I have seen with my own eyes. There is nothing secondhand here, no hearsay. Yet instead of facing the evidence and accepting it, you procrastinate with questions. If I tell you things that are plain as the hand before your face and you don’t believe me, what use is there in telling you of things you can’t see, the things of God?”

“No one has ever gone up into the presence of God except the One who came down from that Presence, the Son of Man. In the same way that Moses lifted the serpent in the desert so people could have something to see and then believe, it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up—and everyone who looks up to him, trusting and expectant, will gain a real life, eternal life.

“This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a

whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again.

Gospel Hymn: Higher ground

(Key of D [G 5th Fret])

1

I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining ev'ry day;
Still praying as I'm onward bound,
"Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Refrain

Lord, lift me up, and let me stand
By faith, on heaven's tableland;
A higher plane than I have found,
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

2

My heart has no desire to stay
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Though some may dwell where these abound,
My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

3

I want to live above the world,
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught a joyful sound,
The song of saints on higher ground.

4

I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till heav'n I've found,
Lord, lead me on to higher ground."

Sermon

Pastoral prayer

(Based on ancient liturgies of the church that mark celebrations of the Trinity)

Benediction

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen

Closing Hymn: God of grace

(VU 686; Key of G)

1

God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
now fulfil your church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour.
for the facing of this hour.

2

Lo, the hosts of evil round us
scorn your Christ, assail your ways;
fears and doubts too long have bound us;
free our hearts to work and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the living of these days.
for the living of these days.

3

Cure your children's warring madness,
bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton selfish gladness,
rich in goods and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.

4

Set our feet on lofty places,
gird our lives that they may be
armoured with all Christlike graces,
pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
that we fail not them nor thee.
that we fail not them nor thee.