

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 13B

A complete Sunday service ready to use
for worship and inspire ideas in your church

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Ordinary 13 - Year B
27th June 2021



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

67 STF – This, this is the God we adore OR

565 STF – Only by grace can we enter

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

610 STF – Best of all is God is with us OR

459 STF – Captain of Israel's host, and Guide

Readings: 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27; Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

Hymn:

470 STF – Lord for the years your love has kept and guided OR

433 STF – Out of the depths I cry to thee

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

344 STF – He became poor that we may be rich OR

713 STF – Show me how to stand for justice

Intercessions

Offering / Collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

653 STF – O Christ, the Healer, we have come OR

615 STF – Let love be real, in giving and receiving

Blessing

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Call to Worship

As we have gathered, Jesus is here.

As we have brought ourselves, the Spirit is amongst us.

As we have come to worship, God is in our midst.

Let us praise the Lord.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

67 STF – This, this is the God we adore OR

565 STF – Only by grace can we enter

Opening Prayers

Loving God, we come to worship, desperate to receive from you through this act of worship.

With our burdens and pains we come to present ourselves,
to simply touch your clothing and be changed.

Your Son made a way for those in pain and suffering,
may this way be made clear for all.

So God, let this be a transformational day like it was for the women who clung onto
your son's clothing!

In this time of worship,
open our eyes to beauty,
tune our ears to harmony.

The fragrance of your love
permeating every moment.

The touch of your hand,
the assurance of your presence
guiding all we do.

Together, we want to experience you with elation
the joy of your presence be here today.

So, come, worship the Lord
in the beauty of holiness.

We come with desperate hearts to receive and worship the living and inclusive God.

Amen.²

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Matthew Forsyth

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

In the middle of the Bible, lies this remarkable set of poems, which we call The Psalms. They are thousands of years old and explore a whole range of human emotions and experiences. The Psalms are a special part of our tradition – people have turned to them in times of difficulty, in times of happiness, to sing as songs of praise or to share as poems about grief.

If you don't know the Psalms, or haven't read them before – I can recommend it!

Today, one of the Psalms we focusing on is Psalm 130, which explores what our relationship with God looks like when we are going through a hard time. It describes how we 'wait for the Lord'. Perhaps you know something about this, perhaps you've had a difficult time this year or in recent weeks and days? Does it sometimes feel like you have been cut-off from God?

It's worth reading the whole Psalm, but here are two of the verses:

"I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.
I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

Today, or this week, if you are having a hard time, it can be helpful to take comfort from the fact that – for thousands of years – people have read this Psalm to each other and relied on the courage it gives them. You can join in with that 'great cloud of witnesses' and 'wait for the Lord' too.

Let us put our whole hope in God.³

Hymn:

610 STF – Best of all is God is with us OR
459 STF – Captain of Israel's host, and Guide

Readings: 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27; Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

Hymn:

470 STF – Lord for the years your love has kept and guided OR
433 STF – Out of the depths I cry to thee

³ All Age talk written by Tim Baker

Reflections on the Reading

In the topsy-turvy values of the Kingdom of God, it is in giving away that we become rich, it is the poorest who go first, and it is those with the most material wealth who struggle to find their place.

Today's two New Testament readings remind us of that so starkly and in different yet interlocking ways. In the reading from Mark's Gospel we meet several important characters who interact with Jesus and seek healing from him. The first person to rush into the scene, desperate and putting their hope in Jesus – who was the talk of the town – is Jairus. Jairus is male, Jewish, and one of the synagogue leaders. He's a man of status. So the order of this story matters: it is on the way to Jairus's daughter that Jesus' attention is redirected to someone else desperate for healing.

Enter our second character. This player in our story couldn't be more different from Jairus. Firstly, she is a woman. Secondly, she is a woman who is bleeding and is therefore unclean in Jewish law. This has been the case for 12 years.

If many of us struggled with the lockdowns of the last 18 months - the isolation, the health concerns and the anxiety - how much more must this woman have suffered? Unlike Jairus, she doesn't have the status that might be required to have the confidence to fall at the feet of someone as renowned as Jesus and beg him for help. Instead, her hope in Jesus is furtive and secret – or at least that's what she intends.

Perhaps it is worth pausing here to ask ourselves what within us is like Jairus and what is like this unnamed woman? What are we confident enough to boldly approach Jesus for? And what is it that we do not name in our prayers, that perhaps we haven't even admitted to ourselves that we desire? This passage seems to tell us that God is interested in giving both attention.

But back to Mark's narrative. We know that Jairus is desperate. His daughter is on death's door. I know that even when I think I'm going to be late for the bus I get incredibly antsy if the people I'm with are dawdling. Imagine what this is like for Jairus, then, desperate for Jesus to race to his daughter's side, when Jesus pauses to ask who's touched his cloak? Who's touched his cloak!? I love the disbelief (could there possibly even be a hint of ridicule?) from his disciples:

"You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

The Message translation really amplifies the disciples' reaction at this juncture: "What are you talking about? With this crowd pushing and jostling you, you're asking, 'Who touched me?' Dozens have touched you!"

If the disciples are a bit flummoxed by Jesus then we can only imagine the reaction of Jairus, full of fear and grief and anxiety. It must have felt like insult to injury, therefore, when it transpired that the person taking Jesus' attention - and delaying his journey to Jairus's house - was someone of so little status. Someone who should

not have been afforded time by anyone according to the rules of the time. But here we encounter these topsy-turvy values of the Kingdom of God.

What I love about this part of the encounter is that it begins with Jesus listening to her story; this woman gets to explain herself to the Son of God, who has time to listen to her. She is trembling as she tells her story - what a delightful little detail from Mark. In the urgency of this passage in which we are travelling towards a dying girl, we are privy to the frailty and fear of this unnamed woman.

Would Mark, or whoever first recounted this story, ever have paid any attention to this woman if Jesus hadn't listened to her so intently? I think probably not. But Jesus listens and confirms that this woman is healed. We don't get this detail, of course, but I can't imagine Jairus felt particularly pleased about this.

And yet, we know that, because this is God's time, both healings take place. Even though Jairus's daughter has already died by the time Jesus arrives, she is still healed. God's time is never like our own. Often we feel like Jairus, desperate and anxious and probably even furious with God for the ways that prayer so often seems to go unanswered.

It seems to me that there are many things we can learn from this narrative, but today I'd like to highlight two.

Firstly, we can't expect the workings of God to be in our time... but that doesn't mean that God isn't working. Jairus' daughter's death wasn't the last word, and we know that death isn't the last word for any of us; God's time reaches into death and offers eternal life. God is always at work: today, tomorrow and stretching on into eternity. Once we know that we can fall out of step with Jairus, frustrated and rushing ahead, and into step with Jesus, with time to pause, to pray, to pay attention.

This brings us nicely to our next piece of learning from this passage of scripture: we're all invited to tune into the topsy-turvy values of the Kingdom of God.

Who are we told isn't worth our time and attention and love? Who do we need to pay our attention to as they tremble? Who isn't boldly approaching us and asking for help, but is secretly nursing need and hope? Let's follow Jesus' example and give them our time and attention.

2 Corinthians gives us another way that these values might play out in our lives. This letter was to the early church - disciples figuring out their way, much like we are today. The challenge is to give, so that everything is held equally, so that there are no poor and no rich.

What does that look like for us today? How can we actually model that topsy-turvy value that means that in giving away we are made whole, that in becoming poor we become rich?

Sometimes we like to water down the messages to the early Church for ourselves, and it's hard to live as instructed in this passage without choosing to live outside normal twenty-first century Western society – although perhaps that's what you're being called to do today.

I would argue that simply paying taxes and giving away a 10th of your income is *not* what's being described here. How can we become more radically giving?

Only you know what your wealth looks like, only you know what God might be calling you to do with it. Whatever this is, perhaps we need to commit to re-examining our alignment with the topsy-turvy values of the Kingdom of God today.

Let's pray:

God we pray that you stir us up to live by your values:
Where the first are last;
Where we listen to the voiceless.
Help us to give time to those at the margins,
Remind us that it is in giving up that we are made whole.
Soften our hearts and our minds so that we might seek first your Kingdom.
Amen.⁴

Hymn:

344 STF – He became poor that we may be rich OR

713 STF – Show me how to stand for justice

Prayers of Intercession

Oh Lord, we know that you hear us when we cry out to you.

We know that each of your children is precious to you, and loved beyond measure.

Oh Lord, hear the prayers of your people

Hear us and set us free

Lord, we know that you hear the cries that must be made in silence,

Those who live in fear of an abuser,

Those who are persecuted for their faith,

Those who are lonely or isolated.

Oh Lord, hear the prayers of your people

Hear us and set us free.

Lord, we know that you hear the cries of those living in the midst of conflict

Those trying to protect their children in war-torn nations

Those whose domestic situation is marred by constant tension and fear

Those who work or live in hostile environments.

⁴ Reflection written by Lucy Zwolinska

Oh Lord, hear the prayers of your people
Hear us and set us free.

Lord, we know that you hear the cries of the hungry and thirsty,
Those families who have to make the choice between heating the house and
cooking a hot meal.
Those experiencing the worst effects of the climate crisis, and facing drought or crop
failure.

Oh Lord, hear the prayers of your people
Hear us and set us free.

Lord, we know that you hear the cries of those who spend their days putting on a
brave face,
Those who hide their pain from others,
Those who feel the need to be strong for someone else.

Help us to stand alongside all who cry out for you
Not to speak for them, or to assume we understand, but to remind them they are not
alone
Help us to share a little of your love at the times when it's hard to feel your presence
In Jesus name, we pray,

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the Offering

Even as we realise that we have received so much, we are challenged to meet
generosity with generosity. Stamp out the selfish streak in us, O God, that we might
freely give of all that we have received in order that justice may be done, and the
world may see your love.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

653 STF – O Christ, the Healer, we have come OR
615 STF – Let love be real, in giving and receiving

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Emma Dobson

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Blessing

Jesus the Christ is restoring the whole of creation,
Holding all things together.

Today, as we go from this place, we choose to play our part in that restoration.
And may the peace of God go with you, every single step of the way.

Amen.⁷

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker