

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 17B

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

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Ordinary 17 - Year B
25th July 2021



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

372 STF – Come down, O Love divine OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

502 STF – I know that my redeemer lives, and ever prays for me OR

159 STF – Not far beyond the sea nor high above the heavens, but very nigh

Readings: 2 Samuel 11:1-15; John 6:1-21

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

61 STF – Our God is a great big God OR

471 STF – Lord, I come to you

What are you being called to?

Hymn:

613 STF – God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn? OR

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

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

103 STF – God is love: let heaven adore him OR

503 STF – Love divine, all loves excelling

Blessing

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Call to Worship

Grace is here to welcome us,
Christ is here amongst us,
The Spirit moves by ways we do not know,
And God comes close, closer than we can imagine.

Come close, Lord Jesus.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

372 STF – Come down, O Love divine OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

Opening Prayers

This morning, Lord of light, we come to encounter you.

We invite you to come and shine in our hearts, to transform us by your love and your grace, that our faces might shine with your glory, that your love might be seen in our eye-contact, our gentle smile, our encouraging nod, our warm embrace.

This morning, Lord of light, come amongst us by your grace.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

For our prayers of thanksgiving, we are inviting us all to share something we are thankful for. Each of us have received so much and, no matter how we feel right now, there is something we can be thankful for. Let's just take a few moments now to share those - what are you thankful for this morning?

[Give people time to share and encourage other responses].

Living God, for all we have heard, for all the thanks offered out loud; and those we have thought of but perhaps not had chance to share, we are truly thankful. You, O Lord, are the provider of blessings and giver of gifts. We are your thankful people.

And despite all you have done for us, despite all we have received, we have failed you and fallen short of your desires for our lives. We have stood with the apostle Paul when we have done and said the things we wish we hadn't, and regret the missed opportunities to do and say the things we wish we had.

We'll hold a moment of quiet now, in which you are invited to reflect on your mistakes and regrets from this past week, offering them to God in prayer.

[Hold quiet for a minute or two]

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

Living God, you accept us just as we are, you welcome us into your presence, no matter what we have done or how we have let you down. Thank you for your forgiveness for us and for continuing to use us for your glory.

We bring all our prayers in the name of the Creator God, the risen Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

[Resources you need in advance: a ball of wool, a toy car or driving L plate, a pair of trainers (or pictures of all these things).]

[Holding up the ball of wool]: Who among us knows how to knit or crochet? How long have you been able to do that?

Gather responses. Work out who has been doing this the longest and invite them up to the front to hold the ball of wool (or hold it aloft from their seat).

Holding the toy car/L plate: Who among us can drive? Who took more than one test? Who had the most lessons to learn?

Whoever took the longest to get their licence can be invited up to the front to hold their object (e.g. L plates)

Holding a pair of trainers: Who is able to (and enjoys) running? Have any of you ever run any longer distances? 5km? 10km? Has anyone ever run a marathon?

Whoever has run the longest distance can be invited up to the front to hold the trainers.

What do these activities have in common? Knitting, driving, long-distance running?
Gather responses from the congregation.

All of these skills took time to learn and develop. You cannot pick up a crochet hook and suddenly be able to make a blanket. You need to begin by learning the basic stitches and then progressing to putting them together before you can advance to following a pattern. You cannot change this ball of wool into something beautiful without effort and time.

It would be brilliant if we could wake up with the knowledge and skills to drive a car but sadly we cannot. We have to take lessons and learn the different functions and practice (a lot). It is a weekly or daily commitment to learn those skills. We cannot change these L plates for a proper licence without committing time and effort.

² Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

You hear about people who turn up to run a half marathon or marathon without any practice or training, and those stories rarely end well. Our bodies need training to be able to compete and endure. When you sign up to run a long distance race, you will need to make a running plan: a schedule of how you will begin and get to the finish line. You start with small distances and build up until the big day. To change and develop our bodies until they can survive running for long distances takes committing the time and effort.

All of these activities require the same things. What are they? Time and effort.

What is God calling you to change in your own life? What will require time and effort for you? Each of these people standing here have done something extraordinary. They committed to learning new skills and putting them into practice.

What are you being called to commit to?³

Hymn:

502 STF – I know that my redeemer lives, and ever prays for me OR

159 STF – Not far beyond the sea nor high above the heavens, but very nigh

Readings: 2 Samuel 11:1-15; John 6:1-21

Reflections on the Reading

Have you ever had unexpected guests at a meal time? Imagine having five thousand people turn up for Sunday lunch. If you were suddenly asked to provide for thousands of people would you react like Philip or Jesus? Would your practical mind work out that this would be an expensive meal and one that you certainly couldn't afford? Or would you calmly trust that all you needed was already there?

If we are honest, we would all admit to being more like Philip than Jesus. How accurate he is when he exclaims: "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" A very costly bite!

Perhaps if Philip had been given enough warning he might have put a financial plan in place; been saving a little bit each month and carefully preparing for this expenditure. But he didn't have any warning. Jesus knew that this large crowd was hungry and he wanted to meet their needs. For Philip, it was a monumental ask. How could you feed all these people without enough money?

In this story, Jesus shows us how extraordinary things can happen. A young boy is brought to Jesus who has five small loaves and two small fish: plenty for the boy but surely not nearly enough for the crowds too. You can imagine the young boy's nervousness at being brought to Jesus, the one they were all there to see and listen

³ All Age talk written by All We Can

to. To be brought to him and given the chance to help. Perhaps he glanced around when he was beckoned over, sure that they had made a mistake.

He was just a boy. But Jesus uses this ordinary boy and ordinary lunch to do something extraordinary. Not only does he provide enough food for all the people gathered there but there is an abundance left over. A miraculous turn of events.

Jesus takes an ordinary amount of food and changes it into something remarkable.

Sometimes we can think of generosity in the style of Philip. It is a big act. It requires much from us. It will be costly. But the essence of this story is that all Jesus requires of us is our willingness to bring to him our ordinary offerings. It is in Jesus Christ that the ordinary will be made extraordinary. This model of generosity is woven throughout the Bible. God takes ordinary people and uses them for extraordinary things. We, as ordinary as we are, are beckoned into relationship with the creator of the world. The one whose hands flung stars into space takes our hands and wants to walk with us.

So, when we look at something as every day and ordinary as a bike, we can look at it through the lens of Jesus. How much more is this bike capable of? What can it do for the one who it belongs to?

For Nawalat, the young girl in Uganda, this ordinary bike will allow her to pursue her dream of becoming a nurse. The monumental change in her life begins with an ordinary bike and the potential to do something extraordinary in the future. It will allow her family to gain some financial security by having a means of transport for income generating activities. It will have an extraordinary impact on her life.

Change begins with a bicycle for Nawalat. Change begins for us when we bring our offerings to God and our willingness to give him ourselves. What ordinary gift are you bringing today which will be made extraordinary?

Hymn:

61 STF – Our God is a great big God OR

471 STF – Lord, I come to you

What are you being called to?

Let's meet the community of Butagaya in Uganda and find out about the ways that life is changing for them.

Watch this week's Vine Video from All We Can.

Indicate that people can support this vital work at allwecan.org.uk/bike

As we have seen in this film, Nawalat and the community of Butagaya face challenges which we can only imagine. They experience the cycle of poverty in their

daily lives and it has an impact on the choices they have. The bicycle represents so much more than a mode of transport. It provides Nawalat and the other families with the freedom to pursue a future with possibility. Change begins with a bicycle because suddenly there is opportunity where there was once disappointment. Change begins with a bicycle because where there was once danger there is now safe passage. Change begins with a bicycle because the ordinary is being turned into something extraordinary.

Let us pray.

O God of all,
You bring life and transformation
And offer us the gift of joining in partnership with you.
All over the world, we see change beginning,
we see ordinary things and ordinary people having an extraordinary impact.
Show us how to demonstrate your generous love in all we do,
Give us hearts that overflow from you,
Living God, we pray that change will begin here, in this place,
We pray that change may begin with us.
Amen.⁴

Hymn:

613 STF – God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn? OR
615 STF – Let love be real, in giving and receiving

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: Heavenly Father,

We pray for the students and teachers in our communities.
We bring before you the children who will be able to access education because of the extraordinary gift of a bike.

Leader: Lord of transformation,

All: Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary

We pray for those who are living in poverty in our midst. We pray that the work of All We Can and their partners would break the cycle of poverty in Uganda and bring change.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary

Help us all to fulfil our God-given potential. May these bikes be a starting point for children to live life to the maximum and see their hopes and dreams become a reality.

⁴ Reflection written by All We Can

Lord of transformation,
Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary

We pray for our heads of government and those in positions of power. We ask for them to be motivated to eradicate injustice and inequality.

Lord of transformation,
Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary

We thank you for the NHS and the amazing staff that keep it running. We pray for communities like Butagaya where access to healthcare is difficult and limited.

Lord of transformation,
Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary

We thank you for the opportunity to keep learning and growing. We pray for the young people in Butagaya learning to be bike mechanics and pray that these skills will help sustain them and give them security.

Lord of transformation,
Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary
Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the offering

Accept these, our gifts Lord God.

May change begin with us, and may we take the ordinary, every-day things you have given to us, and turn them into something extraordinary, in your hands.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

103 STF – God is love: let heaven adore him OR

503 STF – Love divine, all loves excelling

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by All We Can

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Blessing

May God help us to steer our lives towards him,
May he use us to break the cycle of poverty
And keep the wheels of transformation turning.
May Almighty God bless you and guide you on your way,
Amen.⁷

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker