

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 19B

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

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Ordinary 19 - Year B
8th August 2021



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

683 STF – Great is our redeeming Lord OR

409 STF – Let us build a house where love can dwell

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

504 STF – May the mind of Christ my Saviour OR

62 STF – Our God is an awesome God

Readings: 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Ephesians 4:25-5:2; John 6:35, 41-51

Hymn:

354 STF – Jesus is the name we honour OR

82 STF – O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

370 STF – Breathe on me, Breath of God OR

579 STF – Come, Holy Ghost, your influence shed

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

320 STF – Father, whose everlasting love OR

277 STF – My song is love unknown

Blessing

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Call to worship

Jesus calls us, here to meet him,
And we come – from afar or near, connecting together in this act of worship.

We have been richly blessed, and we come to worship the living God, and to filled again with your Holy Spirit.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

683 STF – Great is our redeeming Lord OR

409 STF – Let us build a house where love can dwell

Opening Prayers

Loving God, we thank you for the way you have used the prophets from times past to deliver your message.

We thank you for the modern-day prophets who continue to bring to us the truth of your word.

Forgive us for when we fail to listen and pay attention, choosing instead to follow our own way. Give us the humility to recognise when we are in the wrong and deliver us from prideful thinking and behaviour.

[Pause]

Help us to not be too quick to act, but to continually look to you as the source of all that we need.

We are thankful that you are a God of love and forgiveness, and we receive that right now, here in this place.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Can you remember the last time you were angry? The last time you had an argument? How did you react? Did it last a long time? Did it lead to a grudge?

Do you ever watch soaps on TV? They can make you think that people are always angry with each other - arguing and fighting all the time. That's not reality.

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Ramona Samuel

However, we do sometimes fall out with other people. Or someone upsets us and we might get angry. The letter written to the Ephesians doesn't say not to be angry. It actually says 'Be angry but...' It doesn't try to deny our feelings of anger when things are not right. But it does place a limit on how our anger should affect us.

Even Jesus got angry at times. Remember the story of when he frantically turned over tables because people were selling in the temple? There is a time and a place for anger, but there is also a recognition that this shouldn't cause us to do bad things.

The letter to the Ephesians says, 'Do not let the sun go down on your anger.' That's important. Deal with your anger before you go to bed. Don't let a grudge burn up inside you and cause hate. Anger and hatred can eat away at us and cause us to become bitter, which is not a good way to be. The advice is to deal with it.

The letter continues by giving more advice about 'building up' by making sure your words are kind. Its climax is the challenge to us all to 'forgive one another'. We all make mistakes. We all get it wrong. But when we do we should put things right and make a community of people that forgives.

Why should we do that? Well, the letter tells us when it says, 'God in Christ has forgiven you.' Through God's love shown in Jesus's life, death and resurrection, we are forgiven for the things that we do wrong and the ways in which we add to the pain in the world. How can we not forgive others, when God has forgiven us with such love?.³

Hymn:

504 STF – May the mind of Christ my Saviour OR

62 STF – Our God is an awesome God

Readings: 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Ephesians 4:25-5:2;

Reflections on the reading

[Today's reflection comes from Alice Young, the Student President at Cliff College. You can watch, download and use Alice's recording of this sermon as The Vine Video for today – find the link in your email or search for 'The Vine Video Alice Young' on theworshipcloud.com NB: Alice's video includes her reading the gospel for today].

Recently, I was browsing the internet looking for furniture inspiration, and I found these signs in the different sections of homeware sites, which people could put in their kitchens. SO here are some them:

- A messy kitchen is a happy kitchen, and this kitchen is delirious!
- Thou shall not weigh more than thy refrigerator.

³ All Age talk written by Gary Hopkins

- If you are what you eat, then I'm easy, fast and cheap.
- My next house will have no kitchen, just blending machines.
- A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.

These sayings seem to point us to some of society's attitudes about food, where takeaway and junk food are seen as the 'only enjoyable food'. Food is meant to satisfy us and as long as it isn't good for me, 'I am going to eat as much as I want'.

But we could stuff ourselves at each meal, and still be hungry for something much deeper.

Paschal says that there is a 'God-shaped vacuum' at the heart of each person, and it can never be filled with any created thing. It can only be filled by God, who we experience made-known through Jesus Christ. The only thing that can satisfy our deepest hunger.

Reading: John 6:35, 41-51

Reflections (continued)

For Christians, part of the pursuit of our Christian journey is that we begin to get to know God in a real and an intimate way. And part of the beginning of a relationship with anyone is that we get to know their name. Part of getting to know God in a real and intimate way is that we get to know his names.

In Exodus, we see with Moses that God declares: 'I am who I am'. And in John's gospel, there are 7 other 'I am's'. Jesus says that I am:

- The bread of life
- The light of the world
- Door
- Good shepherd
- The resurrection and the life
- The way, the truth and life
- The true vine.

God is a God who was, and is, and is to come. It is in knowing these names that we can get a deeper relationship with God as we travel through life.

John also loves life, and John loves living life to the fullest. And in his gospel, he uses the word 'life' at least 36 times as he tried to reveal to us what living in true life-in-Christ looks like. And through his gospel, we can see that Jesus has a following – people see something attractive in Jesus. As John writes about Jesus, he writes about him in 'action form'.

So we see Nicodemus come up to Jesus seeking 'real life', and Jesus talks about himself as God's only son, come into the world 'not to condemn, but to save the

world through him'. We see this 'saving' going on throughout the gospels, as Jesus is teaching, healing, loving, being and demonstrating 'salvation'.

We've just read that Jesus says he is the 'bread of life', the very thing that we need for living life fully! The story of the feeding of the five thousand puts the story of Jesus being the 'bread of life' into a very real context. At this gathering, with so many people gathered to listen to Jesus, then (in John 6:5-7) Jesus asks 'where shall we buy bread, for people to eat'. He already had an idea what might happen, and brought a solution to the missing packed lunches, using the gift of one simple packed lunch. Jesus knows about the troubles in our lives that we don't even know exist yet, and he already has a plan for each of us – no matter how much we might stray from that plan. Psalm 22: 'My help comes from the Lord' and God shows up, even when we don't know how.

So the disciples were challenged by Jesus to provide a solution. They take this bread from the boy and hand it over to Jesus. And Jesus does something amazing! The food multiplies and there is enough food leftover for twelve baskets full! Jesus doesn't just 'do enough', he does 'more than enough'. He doesn't just 'satisfy', he does more than we can begin to imagine.

And at the end of this story, Jesus knew that these people might force him to be king after seeing that, so he withdrew quietly, retreating across the lake. Jesus wasn't coming for a political take-over, he was coming for a heart-takeover. And later, we see that the people realise Jesus has left him, they follow him across the lake. Jesus challenges them because his ministry wasn't just about that temporary, physical food that filled their belly – that food will spoil, it won't last. So Jesus asks us, and he asks them, can you come to me because of who I am? Who I am is greater than what I have done.

Can you come to me because of who I am? Jesus invites to journey into a real and intimate relationship with him, and that begins by knowing his name. Who is he? The bread of life. But knowing his name is just the starting point: if we begin to know who Jesus is, we can begin to understand that Jesus is so much more than physical bread. I wonder, if we want God's power, but not the person, not the attitude-change that is required. We want the crown, we don't want the cross. We want the glory, we don't want the suffering. But, you and I have a soul-craving. Jesus alone can fill that hole.

We can be into the temporary, quick-fix so easily. Our society is obsessed with the immediate, the instant, but just because it's quick it doesn't mean it is right. Too often, we choose what is 'right now' rather than what is 'right'. And Jesus wants us to trust him, to realise that he is the way, the truth, and the life, the bread of life, the satisfier of souls.

In Exodus we see that God sent the Israelites manna six times a week, providing enough for the day. But some Israelites would try to plan and take too much manna on some days, and it would rot in their tents overnight. Other Israelites wouldn't obey

God's command and not take double-portions on the day before the Sabbath, and they would be left hungry. God was trying to teach them to trust him - and to trust God means daily dependence. Every single day, we have to trust that God will supply into our needs. And so, if we walk with Jesus then we have to depend on Jesus every day.

Jesus says that the work that God requires of us, is this: believe in the one he has sent, to believe in Jesus who was sent as a Saviour to this world – not to condemn, but to give life. The people in the story of the feeding of the five thousand were hungry, but they didn't know what they were hungry for. We are asked to believe that Jesus is who he says he is. He is the same God who showed up in Exodus, with Moses and the Israelites. He is the same God who went with David, Gideon and Samuel. He is the same God who was born as a baby and walked on this earth, the God who went to a cross for us.

Today, we are asked to believe Jesus went into the tomb, that Jesus was raised to life, that Jesus is coming back for his church. Right-believing, will lead to right-living. If you read John 6:61-71, you will notice that one-by-one the crowds left Jesus, until only the twelve remained. Although they have experienced a miracle, they have walked away. Perhaps those twelve baskets of food are left over for those twelve disciples who stayed and believed.

We know where our hope is coming from – his name is Jesus, he is the bread of life who satisfies and fulfils every appetite that we have. So for us, as a church, as God's people, let us realise that people are hungry, but they don't know what they are hungry for. They may try to fill their lives with temporary stuff to fill their appetites, but with the wrong things. They are hungry for what we are hungry for.

And so I'll end on this quote from D. T. Niles: 'I am just one beggar, telling another beggar where to find bread'. The same goes for us. That is us, as a church: we have found something that can satisfy our appetite, the bread of life. Thanks be to God.⁴

Hymn:

354 STF – Jesus is the name we honour OR

82 STF – O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder

To what are you being called?

Two questions for us to discuss and reflect on today, to help us shape our journey of discipleship.

Firstly, how do you respond to Alice's invitation for a 'deep and personal relationship' with Jesus Christ? Do you know something of that relationship? Do you find those words and images helpful?

⁴ Reflection taken from The Vine Video for 8th August 2021 – Alice Young

Secondly, what would it look like for you to take a 'long-term' view? Are you someone who falls into the trap of society's glorification of the instant, or 'right now', and how could you tune into to God's slower, more lasting satisfaction?

[After leaving time for this discussion, in a way that would work for your context, you may wish to bring people together with this prayer].

Holy God,
You are the bread of life.
As we worship and reflect, we draw strength for today from your love for us.
May we seek satisfaction beyond the short-term pleasures of this life, and connect with the spiritual base-note at the heart of all things.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Hymn:

370 STF – Breathe on me, Breath of God OR
579 STF – Come, Holy Ghost, your influence shed

Prayers of intercession

Loving and gracious God

We give you thanks for the gift of our voices.

For those whose voices make beautiful music, and express emotions and thoughts too complex for words.

For the parents and carers whose voices are a source of security, encouragement and guidance.

For the voices that offer us words of comfort and encouragement, that build us up and give us the strength to keep moving forwards.

For the voices that bring us new ideas and insights that help us better understand the world we live in.

For strong voices that speak up for justice, and fight for a world where no one is forgotten or left behind.

Today we pray for the voiceless in our world, for those who feel their voice is not being heard.

We pray for those who have been robbed of their voice by an oppressive government or an abusive relationship. May they feel the warmth of your love, and be reminded of their worth. May our voices join with theirs to call for justice and peace.

We think of those who use their voices to oppress and intimidate. May they be shown a new way to live and govern, and learn to do so with humility and compassion.

We think of all the ways in which we can use our own voices. We pray for the compassion to offer words of comfort to others, the wisdom to offer guidance and encouragement, and the motivation to raise our voices and stand up for what we believe in.

We are sorry for the times when fear has tightened our throats...

Fear of speaking out of turn and saying the wrong thing. Fear of sticking our heads above the parapet.

Fear of speaking out the ideas and thoughts that could change lives.

God, grant us the courage to raise our voices in your name, in the name of love and justice. May we be your voice in this world, seeking to bring your kingdom closer,

In Jesus' name,

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the offering

Take these gifts, O Lord, and use them to create a world where there is justice. Take these gifts, O Lord, and use us to make the most of them, to plant seeds of hope and new potential everywhere we are and with everyone we meet.

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

320 STF – Father, whose everlasting love OR

277 STF – My song is love unknown

Blessing

Go in grace, and know that you are called,
Go in love, to find that calling and pursue it,
Go in the Spirit of the Living God, to grow and learn and be transformed,
Seeking justice in our world, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.⁷

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Emma Dobson

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker