

twelvebaskets



LENT 1C

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

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Lent 1 - Year C
6th March 2022



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

494 STF – Come, thou fount of every blessing OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly father, lead us

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

357 STF – Jesus – the name high over all OR

237 STF – Jesus, tempted in the desert

Readings: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Hymn:

463 STF – Deep in the shadows of the past OR

317 STF – At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

415 STF – The church of Christ, in every age OR

696 STF – For the healing of the nations

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

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

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

Blessing

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Call to worship

Here we come to worship, to meet with you, O God, in the midst of all the uncertainty of the world we live in.

We come to be forgiven and accepted, to love and be loved, to hope for a better world and to take inspiration to play our part in building that world.

We have come. Come, O come Immanuel.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

494 STF – Come, thou fount of every blessing OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly father, lead us

Opening Prayers

Holy God,

In the hands of basket weavers, bamboo fibres and leaves become the tools for creativity and possibility.

In your hands, similarly, our lives become the tools to build your kingdom here on earth.

Today, we pray for the work of All We Can's partner in Zimbabwe, the Zubo Trust, working with groups of women to train them in basket weaving.

We call to mind the image of a basket, the empty vessel, the storage place, the offering plate, the fruit bowl, the bread holder, the coin collector. A basket has many uses, and each design is suited to a particular need.

As we look out on your world, help us to listen, with an attentive ear, to the role you have called us to play, to meet the needs we are called to, to make use of our skills in the building of your kingdom.

Gracious God, weave our lives as the basket weaver weaves,
Weave our lives by your love.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Have you ever felt *hangry*? What's *hangry* I hear you asking? *Hangry* means you are angry because you are hungry...

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by All We Can – allwecan.org.uk

In our Bible reading today in Luke 4:1-13, we find Jesus the Son of God in the wilderness which is another word for a desert like space. It's most likely hot, during the day but cold at night. Dusty and very lonely because no one else is there with Jesus.

So we find Jesus hangry because he is being talked to not by his Father in Heaven but by a voice that is identified as the devil. The devil is trying to tempt a hangry Jesus to imagine what it would be like if He was given all the authority. Jesus rejects the offer. However the devil doesn't stop there he carries on and takes Jesus to a high place in the wilderness and dares Jesus to throw himself off!

Jesus, despite his hunger and fatigue rejects the devil's temptations again! When stress happens, it's easy to forget who we really are – we forget that we are God's gift, and instead, we snap.

But we don't have to snap.

Today's story reminds us that we can do the same thing Jesus did when he felt stress – that we can use scripture stories as a way to remember to pay attention to God and receive God's patience, wisdom, and forgiveness which can often reduce the stress we're feeling.

We also have each other and our parents, Sunday school teachers, and members of this congregation who remind us to pay attention to God and receive God's gifts. So the encouragement is there for us all. Next time you are stressed or indeed *hangry* why not call out to God?³

Hymn:

357 STF – Jesus – the name high over all OR

237 STF – Jesus, tempted in the desert

Readings: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Hymn:

463 STF – Deep in the shadows of the past OR

317 STF – At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow

Reflections on the reading

The instructions in today's reading from the book of Deuteronomy are part of the wider requirements and commandments providing a framework for how the people of Israel are to live with each other and with God. It is part of the wider story of God's faithfulness that has led the people from slavery to a new life in a place they can call home. They are to give the first fruits of what they have as:

- A way of saying thanks to God;

³ All Age Talk written by Matt Forsyth

- A reminder that all they have comes from God; and
- A way of remembering that ultimately it is God who cares for them.

I wonder what you give to God as part of your thanks and praise –

- Time listening and talking with God;
- Time and your talents to help others; and/or
- Money to support a charity or campaign that touches you?

Let us take a few minutes to discuss this with the people sitting near us – in groups of three or four, I invite you to have a conversation about the ways that you give to God as part of your thanks and praise.

[Allow time for conversation].

The Israelites though, are instructed to give something up as part of their thanks and praise. As we enter with Jesus into the wilderness of Lent, we might well be thinking of giving things up as part of church history which sees the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter as a season of penitence – a time to reflect on how we fall short of what God requires of us and what, as in our Covenant Prayer, we have willingly offered. Even when God breaks it down to just three things for us to get our heads, hearts and lives around – show mercy, live justly and walk humbly with God and God’s creation – we find ourselves wandering our own way.

Lent, therefore, is a gift of time for us to say sorry by giving things up (especially those things that deny God’s love in our lives and how we might share that love with others). Indeed, giving things up, such as food during a time of fasting, are also ways from church history that can help some people focus on God.

But...

Giving something up and repenting – turning our minds, hearts and lives around so that we are again focusing on what God requires – by no means guarantees that life is going to be simple or easy. Today’s Gospel story makes this abundantly clear as we follow the Son of God into the wilderness where he is tried and tempted.

Jesus is tried and tempted at pretty much every level of human need and desire:

- The basic need for food and sustenance
- The offer of status, wealth and power – and all that come with them...
- To play the game – testing God just as Jesus himself is being tested

Yet...

It’s interesting that, in the story immediately before today’s reading, Jesus is called ‘Son’ by God and anointed with God’s Spirit and now, despite all he endures in the wilderness, Jesus is able to remain faithful – in body, mind and spirit – to the mission he has been called to and anointed for.

So, here then is the Good News for any of us who find ourselves wandering in a wilderness – this story reminds us that the unjust and oppressive systems by which the world appears to function are no match for the power of God. They can’t keep Jesus down. Not even the cross can do that. In the person, ministry, dying and rising of Jesus, God has overcome these systems. The kin-dom of justice and peace on earth as it is in heaven has begun. With more to come. And we are called and anointed as children of God, members of the kin-dom community, to be part of that continued becoming as, in love:

- We seek to offer physical and spiritual sustenance to those in need;

- We challenge the injustice and oppression of wealth, status and power that denies the basic needs and freedoms of creation; and
- Instead of playing the game, we follow the Way of Jesus by welcoming, including, and loving those who the world regards as 'other'.

We know from stories about Jesus like today's that it isn't going to always be quiet streams and green pastures. Indeed, Jesus tells us we will need to take up a cross if we are to follow his Way. But –

- As we follow, step by step, along that Way;
- As we daily re-orientate ourselves towards him –

May we know and experience – as encouraged by the writer of the letter to the first followers of this Way in Rome – that:

- The Word is near us;
- The Word is within us;
- The same Word that breathes life where there was only darkness and chaos.

Filled with the power of the Word, may we be – and, if we have to, speak – God's word of love, justice and peace to those we encounter who are wandering in the wilderness.

Amen.

A prayer of commitment

God, thank you that in Jesus you have walked where we have walked – even in the wildest wilderness – so that even when we feel alone and tempted to try a different path, we can trust that your Way, Yahweh, will lead us home.

For, your Word promises that your home, O Lord, is with us and all your creation.

And so, until that day fully comes on earth as it is in heaven, help us to continue putting one foot faithfully in front of the other.

Amen.⁴

Hymn:

415 STF – The church of Christ, in every age OR

696 STF – For the healing of the nations

Prayers of intercession

God of this moment,

We pray for people meeting to worship you today, especially those who have to do so in secret and in fear.

God of this day,

We pray for all who will find this day difficult, particularly those living in the countries and communities where All We Can is working – in places where there has been a recent disaster, or the long-term effects of poverty are impacting the local community.

God of this week,

We pray for political and societal leaders around the world, in the face of difficult decisions this week, and with the responsibility to do all that they can to bring about

⁴ Reflection written by James Morley

a better, fairer, more just world, we pray for wisdom and grace for each and every one of them.

God of this year,

We pray for all who are working to seek a better world – from the staff teams of relief agencies working in refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar and Za’atari, through to those who volunteer for and donate to charities who are committed to seeking justice and human dignity. Give each of us the courage to play our part in that work today, O Lord.

God of every moment,

Help me to be an answer to prayer for somebody else this day.

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the offering

Bless these gifts, O God, that they might be put to use for justice and grace.

Bless our lives, O God, that we might be channels for your peace, your love, your hope, into the world around us.

Bless this day, O God, that each of us may come to know you more before we retire to our beds this night.

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

459 STF – Captain of Israel’s host, and Guide OR

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

Blessing

Go in peace, and seek to play your part,

Go in grace, and remember that all is gift,

Go in love, and show that love to every person who you meet,

Go in hope, believing a better world is possible.

Amen.⁷

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by All We Can

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker