

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 22C

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

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Ordinary 22 - Year C
28th August 2022



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

443 STF – Come, let us sing of a wonderful love OR

499 STF – Great God, your love has called us here

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

102 STF – For the beauty of the earth OR

107 STF – I sing the almighty power of God

Readings: Psalm 81:1, 10-16; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Hymn:

564 STF – O thou who camest from above OR

531 STF – What a friend we have in Jesus

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life OR

362 STF – Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

363 STF – My Jesus, my Saviour OR

692 STF – Your hand, O God, has guided your flock, from age to age

Blessing

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Many more resources and inspiration for this week's lectionary, leading worship and other church use are available on www.theworshipcloud.com.

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Call to worship

The Spirit of the Lord is here, in this place.
We have come, to encounter, to learn, to grow and to be connected.
Come amongst us this day, Holy God.
Take our lives, and move amongst us.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

443 STF – Come, let us sing of a wonderful love OR
499 STF – Great God, your love has called us here

Opening Prayers

Lord of all,
Creator of heaven and earth,
We draw near to you with songs of thanksgiving.
You hear our prayers,
Know our hearts' desires
And understand our unspoken hopes.

We thank you that you have promised to never leave us;
You will never forsake us.
We pray that you will help us to share the love you have taught us and shown us,
With our communities,
Our loved ones,
And strangers to us.

Help us to focus our minds, hearts, and lives on what will honour you.
Strengthen us by your grace,
And give us confidence as your holy people to live and love as you wish.
Help us to do good,
To be generous and hospitable,
Willing to walk alongside others and,
Open to the holy spirit's teaching.

Together we declare:

The Lord is our helper; we will not be afraid.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Sheila Matthews

All Age Talk

[A drama for two voices – ideally an adult and a child, entitled Not Listening]

Parent: You never learn, do you?

Child: Learn what?

Parent: And you never listen either, do you?

Child: Sorry! What was that you were saying? I was just looking at my phone.

Parent: That's your trouble. You're always doing something else. You never listen to a word I say.

Child: Oh, hang on. I've just had another text. Be with you in a minute.

Parent: There you go again. Everything you're doing is important. Anything I have to say is insignificant.

Child: No it isn't! But I've just got to reply to this. It's really urgent.

Parent: How urgent is really urgent?

Child: Well everybody seems to be planning on a night out tonight and it's important to know where to meet. Isn't it?

Parent: Isn't it also important to hear what I have to tell you?

Child: (distractedly) Probably, ... but ...

Parent: But, nothing! I am your parent. I have cared for you since you came into this world. I've looked after all your needs; fed you and clothed you and given you a home. I've tried to support you all the way so far – I even bought you that phone – and pay the costs of it – and you still don't listen to a word I say, do you?

Child: Eh? Sorry. I was distracted again.

Parent: I know. It happens all the time. Don't you think I have any good words of advice or guidance to offer you? Are you always going to be drifting off in your own direction – a direction that doesn't seem to be getting you anywhere at all?

Child: Oh, here we go again! You always think you know best, don't you?

Parent: I always try to do my best for you, you know that. You're special to me and I want the best for you.

Child: Maybe! Maybe! But I think I'd prefer to go my way, if you don't mind.

Parent; I mind, for your sake. But you don't seem to want to listen, or learn.

Child: What did you say? Oh, sorry again, but I must go now. Friends calling.

Parent: And God said – 'But my people would not listen to me ... so I gave them over to their own stubborn hearts to follow their own devices.'³

[Pause]

[Ideally a third voice]

How do you respond to this little dialogue? Is it a scene you recognise from your own life?

It draws on a quotation from today's Psalm, reflecting on the frustration at the heart of God when we turn away from the path we are being invited along. What are some of the things that distract you? Just share those with the people next to you.

[Pause to allow people to do so]

³ Taken from Full Worship Service by Andrew Pratt and Marjorie Dobson

As we go on into the week ahead, how can we continue to focus better? Perhaps you could be more aware of the ways we are distracted from God's love and God's call on our lives.⁴

Hymn:

102 STF – For the beauty of the earth OR
107 STF – I sing the almighty power of God

Readings: Psalm 81:1, 10-16; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Hymn:

564 STF – O thou who camest from above OR
531 STF – What a friend we have in Jesus

Reflections on the reading

'Sing Praise to God our strength' so begins Psalm 81. It seems so straightforward yet these words can offer us much in an unsettled, traumatised world, searching for justice and security.

Let's start with singing. Where do you sing? In the shower? In the car? In the garden or around the house? Are you the sort of person that you only need to hear the first few bars of an introduction or the first line of a song and you know what comes next? For Christian Churches where congregational singing is part of their DNA, and the Methodist Church even has a hymn which reminds us that we sing! Born in Song. Congregational singing is a bit like communal karaoke – it has the ability to form community and to engender a common sense of purpose.

But in this Psalm we are called to a particular type of singing – a song of praise to God. These words remind us of how we orientate ourselves towards God – with a posture and attitude of praise and thanksgiving. This Psalm doesn't start with ourselves but with a need and desire to acknowledge who God is, and what God has done. We praise God for creation, for life itself, for God's promise of faithfulness to God's people. We praise God for God's strength which sustains people in times of trouble and uncertainty.

Adoration and praise is the first step in developing a relationship with God. It is not the only part of our life of worship and prayer, but it is a reminder of a good place to start. The danger of beginning with prayer that centres on our own needs is that a very narrow lens can prevent us from recognising all that God has done and continues to offer us through his life giving Spirit, promised by Jesus.

Walter Brueggemann categorises the Psalms themselves into ones of orientation, disorientation and re-orientation and sometimes we can see those three stages or

⁴ All Age Talk written by Tim Baker

elements flow through any of the individual psalms. I wonder what that would look like if we applied those stages to our own lives and faith journeys?

Maybe we can recognise times when we have felt profoundly disorientated, separately from God, challenged by situations over which we have no control, times of grief and anger, times when our relationships have been strained or even seemingly beyond repair. When we not able to meet during the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, initially the congregations I was part of found this disorientation hard to navigate. Creativity through technology and the sharing of worship material, pastoral care over the phone and then in the open air enabled us to hold this disorientation together. Maybe we learned lessons about living with disorientation that we want to remember as we embrace a move from a heroic response to a time of collective trauma, through disillusionment to a re-imagined way of being the church in the world.

In verse 8, we hear the lament of God, 'If only you would listen to me'. God longs for us to continually gaze upon God's goodness, to retreat and spend time with Jesus, to breathe continually the gift of the Holy Spirit, As we lean in, incline our ears and hearts to God, then we can begin to use God's lens to 'read' the church and the world. We are more attentive to the cries for peace and justice, for the need to campaign and add our voices to political action, to gently care for and listen to our families, friends and neighbours. The work of the Evangelism and Growth Team in encouraging us to see where our strengths are and where we might take the next steps both as individuals and churches are to be found on the Methodist Church website (<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/god-for-all-junction-resources-for-your-journey/>)

Here you will find lots of resources to get you praying, thinking, acting and embracing holy risk taking.

Maybe you could download the challenges and spend some time together this morning, either on your own, as a congregation or in small groups discussing which challenge God might be calling you to and pray for one another and the challenge you are preparing to take.

As we come to the end of this Psalm we hear the promise that God will 'satisfy us with wild honey from the rock' – in our disorientation we hear once again a promise of God's providence as we re-orientate ourselves to new realities. This verse draws on two stories from the book of Exodus – that of Moses bringing water from the rock (Exodus 17:6) and to the gift of honey in the promised land (Exodus 3:8). As post-Pentecost people, we see the gift of this new life and promise given to us in the overwhelming and amazing grace we each are invited to receive and respond to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and to share the Good News of the gospel with others in our everyday lives.

We are always invited to 'taste and see that the Lord is good' – this in turn will bring us back to a place of song and praise. You may want to listen to the following songs or join in yourselves so here are a couple of suggestions as we receive from God. *[Please check you have the appropriate licenses before using these videos in corporate worship].*

- A contemporary worship song with a country feel by Brooke Ligertwood <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4dloOdLSOA>
- And a more traditional bluegrass chorus by The Carter Family <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFUm6YedvJQ>

May you know the peace and love of Christ, as you continually sing God's praises, listen to God's heart and receive the sweet gift of the continual presence of God, three in one, creator, redeemer and sustainer.

Amen.⁵

Hymn:

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life OR

362 STF – Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity

Prayers of intercession

Holy God, three in one

We offer our prayers for your world

We pray for peace in our time

We pray for those who are far from people and places they love, remembering especially those who are displaced through war and conflict.

We pray for the leaders of the nations – that they would rule with integrity and that their decisions may be wise and careful

Lord, help us to sing a song of peace and hope in your world.

We offer our prayers for your church

We pray that we may model the way of Jesus as we speak of hope, as we seek to live well with difference and diversity, as we challenge injustice, as we listen to and learn from the communities we serve.

Lord, help us to sing a song of peace and hope in your church.

We offer our prayers for others

We lift before you those we care for and those we care about -our families and friends, those who are ill, those who are mourning, those who are anxious about tomorrow.

As we bring them to mind, we pray that they may they know the healing presence and comfort of Christ encircling and upholding them.

Lord, help us to sing a song of peace and hope as we pray and care for others.

We offer our prayers for ourselves

⁵ Reflection written by Christine Dutton

We praise you that you see us as beautiful, fearfully and wonderfully made in your image

May we be constantly assured of your love for us, your confidence in us,

We pray for your wisdom and strength as we answer your call upon our lives to follow Jesus

We pray we would let your love hope speak through our worship that we offer, our work and our rest, our conversations, our homes and our relationships.

May we constantly be attentive to your transforming presence in our lives

Lord, help us to hear your song of peace and hope in our lives.

We ask these prayers in confidence in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit

Amen.⁶

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the offering

God of this moment, we are present to you. And as we come into this moment, aware of your presence with us, we commend these gifts and the gifts of all our hearts to you and to the work of your kingdom in the world.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.⁷

Hymn:

363 STF – My Jesus, my Saviour OR

692 STF – Your hand, O God, has guided your flock, from age to age

Blessing

You are set free, from all that limits and contains you.

You are not defined by your actions, but by God's love for you.

Now go out, and live a life that reflects that love out into the world.

Go, in the grace and the name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.⁸

⁶ Prayers of intercession written by Christine Dutton

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁸ Additional prayers by Tim Baker