

# twelvebaskets

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## ORDINARY 22C

28th August 2022

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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## Opening Prayers

Find a comfortable position to sit or lie down in.

Take a deep breath in through your nose, and let it out through your mouth.  
When you are ready, say out loud or in your head...

*Lord, I come into your presence*

Breathe in...breathe out...

*I come just as I am*

Breathe in...breathe out...

*I bring everything I have experienced this past week - the things I'm proud of, and the things I wish had been different*

Breathe in...breathe out...

*I bring the people that enriched my week, and the people I found it hard to share my week with*

Breathe in...breathe out...

*I bring the moments of joy, peace, pride, sorrow, frustration, regret and pain*

Breathe in...breathe out...

*I bring my hopes for next week*

Breathe in...breathe out...

*I lay all of these things at your feet, and rest in your loving presence*

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

**You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you most comfortable.**

### Hymn:

102 STF – For the beauty of the earth - [YouTube](#)

**Readings:** Psalm 81 – [Click for reading](#)  
Luke 14:1, 7-14 – [Click for reading](#)

### Response to the readings

*[This response is based on a longer reflection written by Christine Dutton for The Vine resources. To read the full reflection, find out if your circuit or church is subscribed by contacting us on [thevine@twelvebaskets.co.uk](mailto:thevine@twelvebaskets.co.uk)]*

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<sup>1</sup> Opening prayers written by Emma Dobson

'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.

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

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-connection-resources-for-your-journey/>)

Maybe you could download the challenges and spend some time either on your own, with friends or by calling up someone else who you might be interested, discussing which challenge God might be calling you to and pray for one another and the challenge you are preparing to take.

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 at home 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.<sup>2</sup>

### **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.<sup>3</sup>

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## **Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week**

### **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August**

God of all creation,  
Help me to see that you are alive in all living things,  
And that I can sense your presence by closing my eyes, or opening them to notice the flowers, the trees, the rivers and sunsets.

- Show me how to pray as I walk, as I breathe, as I live my life.  
Show me your presence.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.

### **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August**

- When we pray, we step into a river of connection and spirituality that is flowing all around the world, all the time. We become part of a community of people seeking connection with the divine.  
Step into the river today. And be still, try to remain open. Listen. Really listen.
- In this, you are praying.

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<sup>2</sup> Reflection written by Christine Dutton

<sup>3</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker

### **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August**

- On this day in 1997, Princess Diana, her companion and driver all died in a car crash in Paris.

Today, our prayers are for those who are still living with stories of grief.

Princess Di's death led to an outpouring of national grief, including becoming a way for people to talk about their own loss and bereavement. Today, pray for the people who walk with grief, and go gentle with them. If that includes you – go gently with yourself today.

### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September**

- Here at the beginning of the new school year, church year and for many people a new start in their financial or operational planning, we pray for new beginnings, new opportunities, new starts.

Lord, show me how to make a fresh start again today with you, letting go of all the baggage and shame from the last year.

Living God, show me how to seek fresh ideas and newly opening doors, and to resist doing something just because 'we've always done it'.

Amen.

### **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

- In some traditions, today is celebrated as the 'Saint Day' of 'Hieu', a 7<sup>th</sup> century abbess who was born in Ireland but did most of her work in Northumbria. She founded abbeys at Hartlepool and Healaugh in Yorkshire. We don't know very much about her, but she met Aidan of Lindisfarne and he appointed her abbess, making her the first known woman to be abbess of two monasteries.
- Today we pray for women in positions of leadership, recognising that we still have further to travel in our search for gender equity, in a world of gender pay-gaps, unfair representation, misogyny and violence against women.
- We give thanks for pioneers like Hieu, and pray for all who – like her – take on the responsibility of challenging gender injustice.

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

- If you are going on a journey today, you could use this as an opportunity to think about your journey of discipleship and following Jesus.
- What are you learning? What direction are you being taken on? Where is God calling you to go next? What do you need to take the next steps?
- Pray into those questions, and the answers that are starting to emerge.