

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 14B

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

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Ordinary 14 - Year B
4th July 2021



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

683 STF – Great is our redeeming Lord OR

548 STF – Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

Reading: Mark 6:1-3

All Age Talk

Hymn:

483 STF – We are marching in the light of God OR

378 STF – Father of everlasting grace

Readings: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10

Hymn:

455 STF – All my hope on God is founded OR 634

STF – Fight the good fight with all your might

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

423 STF – "Forgive our sins as we forgive" OR

462 STF – Come with me, come wander

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

658 STF – A charge to keep I have OR

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

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

548 STF – Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine

Opening Prayers

From the very beginning, you were there God.

In the first moments of creation, amongst big bangs, creative sparks and a divine word spoken, you were there.

At the very end, you will be there, our God.

When meaningfulness collapses, life ends, universes fade and creation stops creating, you will be there, our God.

You are Alpha. You are Omega.

You are A. You are Z.

You are first and last.

We praise you, God of the beginnings and God of the endings.

God of the first breath, and God of the last.

God of the labour pains and God of the dying moments.

We praise you, God of all time, in this moment, this time.

Come amongst us, spirit of the living God.

For our prayer of confession, we are just going to pause for a moment to reflect on some of the ways in which we have not been our best selves, ways in which we have let ourselves down. If it helps you to write, or draw, as you reflect, then by all means do that. Let us just be still for a moment, and reflect on the places where we are not living up to our true potential.

[Hold quiet for a few minutes. You might like to play some quiet reflective music, and it may be helpful to have pen and paper on hand for people to use if they wish or would be more comfortable doing so].

Living God, we want to be better, we want to be our best, for you and for your world. Move within us, transform us, change us.

Challenge and inspire us, by your Spirit, to fulfil your desires for our lives.

¹ Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

We are sorry, for all the times we've turned away from that desire, all the times we've let each other down.

And even as we say sorry, we know that you forgive and accept us, you accept us just as we are. We see in you the love we wish to reflect into the world – a love that always accepts, and always hopes for better.

May we be reservoirs of that love, overflowing out into a world in need.

In Jesus' name
Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

Reading: Mark 6:1-3

All Age Talk

I have a question that I want you to answer for me today if you can. Riddle me this.

[As you are reading the list, pause between each item]. What do gloves, twix earrings, headlights, knitting needles cufflinks socks, shoes all have in common?

[Take some suggestions].

Well the answer is that they all come in pairs. A pair is defined as "a set of two things used together or regarded as a unit."

So, look at our text in the Bible today where we see Jesus: "Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two."

Jesus, the Son of God had his friends who were called his disciples who travelled, ate and learnt from him. These friends were very special to Jesus, but it was now time for them to go and do some of the amazing things that Jesus was able to do. However, Jesus didn't say go on your own, no, Jesus said go in pairs.

One sock is fairly useless by itself. So too is one shoe. One of either would leave your foot vulnerable to being wet when it rains or cold in the winter. Only one creates a weakness. That's the same when it comes to what Jesus is encouraging the disciples to do when they go out.

Jesus knows that life might not always be easy when his friends go out and share the good news of Jesus. So Jesus is being loving and caring and making sure they go out in pairs so they can be strong together.

Who are your friends? Who would you take with you on a trip like the disciples?

² Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

Let's say a prayer and thank God that we have friendships and that we are encouraged to be with them when times are difficult and hard.

God, thank you for our friends. Thank you that we don't have to face the difficult moments alone. Help us to be kind and share the good news of your Son Jesus.³

Hymn:

483 STF – We are marching in the light of God OR

378 STF – Father of everlasting grace

Readings: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10

Hymn:

455 STF – All my hope on God is founded OR

634 STF – Fight the good fight with all your might

Reflections on the Reading

Today is a day of celebration for some of our sisters and brothers across the Atlantic, but may well be an unremarkable day for many in the UK. It's Independence Day! Recounting the story of the independence of America can be heard differently and remembered differently by various people throughout history. As a university student, I, a British citizen, was shown an American cartoon about this historical event by an American lecturer, to see how our student cohort would respond to the way the British were depicted – this was not an exercise in flattery!

Oliver Cromwell is another historical figure who has been seen in myriad ways, a leading statesman, a successful general, and a treasonous criminal. Whatever words come to mind – if any – as you hear his name, perhaps the most famous words associated with him are 'warts and all.' He is remembered for his insistence that his official portrait would not be an exercise in flattery, but show him, 'warts and all'. This was a radically unusual move for the time when artists were not only permitted, but often expected to massage the truth. Photoshop might be a modern tool, but its end goal is far from modern.

David is the Bible's 'warts and all' personality, and the Jebusites, who inhabited Jerusalem prior to its capture by David may have a very different view of him than the biblical authors. More than anyone else, David had the power to control the written depictions of him that would be seen by generations and yet we can frequently read of his shortcomings and learn that he was considered a good king despite his behaviour, rather than because of it. So how does the portrayal of David in these few verses speak to us, of God and who we are before God?

³ All Age talk written by Matt Forsyth

Since David was first anointed King of Judah and reigning from Hebron, Saul's son, Ishba'al, has been made king of the other territories, creating a cycle of inter-tribal conflict, defection, changed loyalties, and a growing list of the names of the dead. After seven and half years of this, we reach the news of David brokering peace between the various factions and forming a covenant with them. David achieves what few throughout history have been able to manage, and can set aside any hubris to bring cohesion, when an easier path might be to perpetuate the cycle of hatred, revenge, and counter-revenge. David is anointed king over all the Israelite tribes – in a city in an impartial site on the boundary of the northern and southern tribes – an action which is bound up with the possibility of peace. David gives hope that God can work with humanity to achieve a similar peace, in the myriad global conflicts today. Swords can indeed be turned into ploughshares.

This is brought to its pinnacle in the declaration made over David – 'It is you who shall be shepherd over us.' This pastoral image for kingly leadership is a profoundly unexpected one. Shepherding, with its connotations of care and nourishment is not what a king is for. The elders of Israel demanded of the prophet Samuel to be like other nations, with a king to judge/govern/arbitrate/rule over them (the Hebrew contains all these ideas in the one word). A king was usually expected to be a military leader, a warrior and wise judge to impose rules and arbitrate in internal disputes. There were appealing elements of this for the elders of Israel, in having a named person on whom all decisions would ultimately fall, and who would engage in international relations as a kingly equal.

One word that is not used to describe a king is to call them a shepherd. And yet, this is what the elders recognise is a gift David can bring to his calling as king. A military general and a shepherd are surprisingly similar and yet deeply contrasting. Both of these can only succeed in their roles by being protectors who are prepared to fight off threats – the general fighting invading armies, the shepherd fighting off predatory animals or thieves. Both roles require an in-depth knowledge of land – the general to plan military manoeuvres to use the terrain as an advantage, the shepherd to know in each season where the fertile ground, and good water will be. When successful both the general and shepherd are protectors, are cares, are people who demonstrate wisdom and discernment. They are so similar, and yet profoundly different. A dandelion and a rose are flowers that can bring colour to a grey day, can feed bees and insects and can play important roles in ecosystems. Both can achieve the same ends, yet are perceived very differently, with the lowly dandelion unlikely to achieve the same reaction as a rose on Valentine's day. David's kingly call to bring the characteristics of the lowly shepherd is a God-given reminder of the wisdom of looking beyond initial impressions.

David doesn't forego what is required of a king, but he achieves the same ends from a different direction. There are ways of living out our calling that we have known may no longer be the most healthy. How can we share the gospel in a new way, from a new direction, how can we serve our communities in a new way, how can we make disciples in a new way that doesn't fall back into the patterns which God might be

leading us away from? What is God asking of you, and how might God work through you to achieve the same purposes from a different direction?

This passage is not a biblical exercise in flattery, but a pause to reflect on the flawed human that was David, and the God who worked through him despite his many actions rather than because of them, and acknowledge that the same God can do likewise today. ⁴

Hymn:

423 STF – "Forgive our sins as we forgive" OR

462 STF – Come with me, come wander

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray,
God of our hearts ,
Come into our feelings, our emotions, teaching us the art of love.
Show us how to embrace your world and your people, with arms of grace.
Guide us in each moment, that the very impulses of our bodies might be tuned to you.

God of love, enter our hearts,
And tune your world to love.

God of our minds,
Come into our thoughts, our intellects, and help us to focus the work of our brains on you.
Show us how to be agents of love in the workplace, at school, in our reading, our writing, our thinking.
Guide us to come to know you more, through the power you have given us in our minds.

God of love, enter our hearts,
And tune your world to love.

God of our families,
Come into the places we call home, that we might show and discover something about you in our houses, at our mealtimes, in our beds.
Show us how to love each other, and reveal your nature of love to us, through our relationships with those closest to us – our family and closest friends.
Guide us in the difficulties and struggles that come with our family lives, and the suffering of those closest to us – bring them your love.

God of love, enter our hearts,
And tune your world to love.

God of the Church,
Come into the midst of your people, come to bring healing, to bring unity, to build a movement that can shape the world for good.

⁴ Reflection Written by David Lees

Show us how to love each other, to heal broken rifts within churches and between denominations. How to reach out into the world around us, bringing peace, not division, bringing love, and not conflict.

Guide us in our decision making and our worship, our committees and young church, our church councils and prayer meetings, bring the church closer to your design, your hopes for humanity.

We pray for the circuit, for all those looking for a fresh start. Lord, bring your newness, your refreshing and re-charging love. We pray for this church, as your people here begin afresh their journey with you.

God of love, enter our hearts,
And tune your world to love.

God of this country,
Come into broken Britain, bruised Britain, bringing healing and comfort.
Show your love to those suffering in this country – the elderly, those suffering with mental illness, those without homes, those carrying a disease, those struggling to make ends meet, and those suffering from damaged relationships.

God of love, enter our hearts,
And tune your world to love.

God of the world
Come into your suffering, unequal planet, bringing peace and harmony where there is war and discord.

Show your love to those who cannot see it this morning – those tied up in war and conflict, battling with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, those struggling with a life of poverty.

God of love, enter our hearts,
And tune your world to love.

God of our hearts - help us to be agents of love across your world, in the way we live our lives, in the people we meet and the situations we hold influence.

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Blessing the offering

Gracious God, we give you praise for your goodness to us. Take these gifts, and use them in the ongoing transformation of the world, in the name of all that is good, and right, and just and loving.

Amen.⁶

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by The Joint Public Issues Team

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Hymn:

658 STF – A charge to keep I have OR

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

Blessing

Go and enter into the flow of love that is at work in the universe.

Go and discover that God is out there, moving, transforming, touching lives and all creation.

Go and encounter the Spirit of God.

Amen.⁷

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker