

# twelvebaskets



# CHRISTMAS 1C

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

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## Order of Service

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**190 STF – Angels, from the realms of glory OR**

**83 STF – Praise, my soul, the King of heaven**

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**212 STF – O come, all ye faithful OR**

**228 STF – Hail to the Lord's Anointed**

Readings: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**193 STF – Born in the night, Mary's child OR**

**207 STF – Jesus is the heart of Christmas**

What am I being called to?

**Hymn:**

**566 STF – Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee OR**

**516 STF – What shall I do my God to love**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**504 STF – May the mind of Christ my Saviour live in me from day to day OR**

**330 STF – Joy to the world**

Blessing

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The Vine Services are compiled and produced by twelvebaskets.

Many more resources and inspiration for this week's lectionary, leading worship and other church use are available on [www.theworshipcloud.com](http://www.theworshipcloud.com).

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## **Call to worship**

He has been.

He is here.

He has come to change and transform us.

God is here, as we God's people gather.

God is here, the miracle of Christmas.

A very happy Christmas to you,

In Jesus' name.

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **Hymn:**

190 STF – Angels, from the realms of glory OR

83 STF – Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

## **Opening Prayers**

### **A prayer of adoration**

Praise be to you, O God, in this Christmas season of joy and hope.

You spoke... and we were created

You spoke... and the prophets brought us your message

You spoke... and came amongst us, the Word made flesh.

You knew the messiness of human life, and so in our messiness we praise you.

You knew the fragility of human life, and so in our fragility we adore you.

You knew the wonder of human life, and so in our wonder we worship you,

Creating God, Living Word, Restless Spirit.

Amen.

### **A prayer of thanksgiving**

Christmas God, for your many blessings to us we give you thanks;

In a season of gatherings we thank you for your constant companionship with each one of us;

In a season of caroling we thank you for placing a song of joy in our hearts;

In a season of feasting we thank you for every way in which you sustain our lives;

In a season of giving we thank you for the gift of yourself, incarnate in Jesus.

And in a season of tragedy, destruction and grief we thank you

for your identification with us in our sorrow,

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<sup>1</sup> Call to Worship written by Tim Baker

your strength when ours is gone,  
your grace when we are broken,  
your love which binds us, renews us and walks with us, every moment.

Amen.

### **A prayer of confession**

Incarnate Jesus,  
when we have denied your humanity by thinking you don't understand us,  
**be born in us again,**  
when we have denied your divinity by thinking you can't help us,  
**be born in us again,**  
when we have felt threatened by your claim on our lives and sought to deny you,  
**be born in us again,**  
when we have harmed others in our pursuit of power or status,  
**be born in us again.**

In quietness we reflect on the parts of our lives into which we invite Jesus to be born...

Thank you, Jesus, that you are gentle and humble and do not turn away even from the messiness of our lives.

We receive your forgiveness in thankfulness.

Be born in us again, Jesus Christ, that we may live lives filled with love, grace and truth, in your strength.

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

### **We say together the Lord's Prayer**

#### **All Age Talk**

Can you believe that only yesterday we were celebrating the birth and the arrival of Jesus?!

Now I want you all to blink once. [*Demonstrate blinking and wait for others to do so.*]

You see in that blink of an eye we come to today's Bible readings and in our Gospel reading for today, Jesus is going to be twelve years old. Wow, didn't that time fly by? Jesus was just like each one of us. He lived and aged on this earth. He had birthdays just like us.

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<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by Jill Baker

Jesus went to worship, Jesus travelled with his family, Jesus made his mom and dad worry. Have you ever done something mom and dad were worried about? Jesus was a part of growing up, learning, experiencing smells, and touch and sound just like us.

And that is also what the word Emmanuel means. God is with us. God is with us. So even in the small and the big and the difficult things, like when we worry our parents, and in the joys and the sadness of life the truth is that God is with us. What is important as we come away from Christmas is that just like the toy we've been given this year, it's not just for Christmas. Christ (Jesus) is for all year round and we need to remember that He is with us every step we make, regardless of what age we are.

Let us pray. *[You might like to invite the congregation, or perhaps just the children in the congregation, to say each line after you. Pause after each full stop in the prayer to allow them to repeat the line back to you].*

God, help us to walk with you as we grow up. Thank you that you are with us in the big days and in the little days. Help us to know you and to keep the words of love you give in our hearts.

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Hymn:**

212 STF – O come, all ye faithful OR

228 STF – Hail to the Lord's Anointed

**Readings:** 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

#### **Reflections on the reading**

'They grow up fast, don't they' – it's one of the typical lines people say to youngish parents, as the children seem to add an extra inch every time you look in the opposite direction. Or perhaps one of the things you might say to the person sitting next to you in church when that child you remember being a babe in arms is now doing one of the readings, or preaching the sermon...

And the gospel story for today certainly feels like that moment for Joseph and Mary's little family – just yesterday ago we were all celebrating the miracle of the virgin birth and now the young lad's turned twelve!

But this is a week with lots of parallels – the couple walking away from Jerusalem who have lost Jesus find despair, and then great joy. Is this Luke setting up the end of his Gospel when Cleopas and his friend (or wife?) are walking away from Jerusalem despondent and encounter the risen Jesus?

And the final verse of the Samuel reading shows a definite parallel with Jesus – both young boys are said to be 'growing in stature and favour with the Lord.' Both of them have a large task ahead of them and as 2021 draws to a close, we look into the

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<sup>3</sup> All Age Talk written by Matt Forsyth

future of 2022 and see our own parallels with the story that Samuel and Jesus have ahead of them.

They must both step out into deeply unjust societies filled with corruption and poor leadership. In that context, they must both offer a different kind of leadership style that enables others to grow but also offers a corrective to the broken system they are in. The verses we skipped out of the Samuel reading (following the lectionary) shows the levels of corruption and malpractice in the religious institution he is growing up in, and if you've heard any of the Gospel stories you will know that Jesus' time was equally immoral. As these boys become men, they will have much work to do to build the kingdom where they are.

This begs the question for us – how are we responding? How are we building the kingdom where we are? How are we letting go of our own plans and aims and selfish desires, in order to allow God to move within us?

As we are in this ‘in-between Sunday’, which is both the sixth day of Christmas and the day before New Year, what are we looking to be a part of in 2022? How are we going to be involved in making the world a better place, how can we bring Christ closer?

As 2022 dawns, can we continue to grow in stature and favour with the Lord? However old we are, however long we have been on this journey with God, let us make 2022 a year of growth, where we seek to experience new things, we open ourselves up to the encounter with the incarnate God, and we commit our lives to channeling the divine into our everyday lives.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Hymn:**

193 STF – Born in the night, Mary's child OR

207 STF – Jesus is the heart of Christmas

#### **What are you being called to?**

We pray this prayer together:

As the year draws to a close and we take stock of what has happened and imagine what the future may hold, let us pray for our church and our relationships and our work, as we prepare to renew our commitment to God in the year that lies ahead.

God of our past and future, we come to confess that there are times when we have allowed our differences to become grievances and our opinions to prevent us from seeing that others may also have a vision given by you and that all are equally valid.

You gave us individuality and yet you called each of us to your service. So our varying gifts are all acceptable and are meant to be used in the cooperative community of your fellowship of Christians.

Help us, at this time, to be tolerant and caring of the feelings of others and to work together to achieve the mission that you have set for this church and the area that it serves.

Teach us to be gentle, kind, humble and patient, especially when situations become difficult and relationships are tested. Remind us that we have been forgiven by you and that sometimes the things that we confess to you are actions that we hope will never be made public.

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<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Tim Baker

So, as we recognize our own imperfections, let us be tolerant and understanding when we see faults in others. Above all, keep us loving, because we know that will help us to overcome many of the problems we create when we judge others more harshly than we judge ourselves.

Love conquers all may sound like a trite statement, but you proved it to be true in the life and death of Jesus. Help us always to remember that.

Then as we move on, let us take the peace of Christmas on into the New Year. Let us remind ourselves that the words and mission of Jesus are now ours and that we can continue to find strength and guidance in them.

So we celebrate and sing of peace and joy, love and forgiveness and thank you for all your goodness towards us. May that joy spill out from this church to infect the world with its grace.

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

### **Hymn:**

566 STF – Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee OR

516 STF – What shall I do my God to love

### **Prayers of intercession**

We rejoice that we are created in your image, that we are called to be your sons and daughters. May the church at all times reveal your glory and lead many to the glorious liberty that is for the children of God.

We pray for all who teach the faith and each of us as we are called to share the faith. We pray for all who are seekers, all who long for you and for a glimpse of your glory. Lord, we seek you and your love.

Come, be known among us.

We pray for all young people in their search for truth and meaning, that they will not be led astray or directed in wrong paths. Guide and direct all who influence the minds of young people through broadcasting, music and publishing.

We pray for young people who have left home and for parents anxious for their well-being.

Lord, we seek you and your love.

Come, be known among us.

We give thanks for our homes and loved ones,

For those who have sought us out when we have gone astray,

For those who have accepted us even when we have ignored their advice.

We pray for all families where there is tension and lack of trust,

For all who are anxious about loved ones at this time.

Lord, we seek you and your love.

Come, be known among us.

We pray for those who have gone astray and cannot find their way back.

We pray for street children and those separated from loved ones through war.

We pray for children in care and or in hospital,

For all who feel unloved or unwanted.

We remember all who have lost a child or a loved one this week.

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<sup>5</sup> Taken from Full Worship Service by Marjorie Dobson and Andrew Pratt

Lord, we seek you and your love.  
Come, be known among us.

We rejoice that you will bring us home to your eternal kingdom where sorrow and pain are no more.  
Lord, we seek you and your love.

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

### **We will now take up the offering.**

#### **Blessing the offering**

Today is a day for thank yous.  
Thank you letters and phone calls,  
FaceTimes and video messages.  
Amidst the wrapping paper, the tags and the gift receipts, we thank you for your gifts to us Lord God, and pledge these gifts as tokens of our whole lives as we recommit them to you.  
In Jesus' holy name we pray.

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Hymn:**

504 STF – May the mind of Christ my Saviour live in me from day to day OR  
330 STF – Joy to the world

#### **Blessing**

We are the people of the incarnation,  
We tell the story of the God who comes,  
Who lives and walks and loves and sleeps and eats.

Go out into the world, and tell them of the hope of the Christ, the hope of the God who comes and keeps on coming.  
God is with us. God is with you.  
Go in peace, and serve the Lord.

Amen.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Prayers of intercession taken from Glimpses of Glory by David Adam

<sup>7</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker

<sup>8</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker