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ORDINARY 14C

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A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening / Centering Prayers

Find a comfortable place to sit, and close your eyes.

Rest your hands on your lap, and allow your fingers to settle in place.

Take a deep breath in through your nose, and slowly let it out through your mouth

Lock your fingers together.

Think of the people you share your life with...the connections you have...the networks you are a part of...your loved ones, friends, family, colleagues.

Allow your clasped fingers to tense slightly, then relax them

Consider the way our relationships can sometimes feel strained, uncomfortable and tense. Hold all of your relationships in your heart and offer them to God

Cup your hands in front of you

Think of all the precious gifts you have received from God,

The strength to face difficult situations,

Friends and family,

An everlasting relationship with Jesus rooted in a love beyond all understanding.

Hold out your hands palms-up in front of you.

Allow God to challenge you

To open your eyes and your heart,

Through this time of worship, may you hear God's voice, and feel called to serve

To love radically, give generously and stand for justice.

Relax your hands, and rest a moment in the silence

Amen.¹

Hymn:

239 STF – Sent by the Lord am I - [YouTube](#)

Reading: [Luke 10:1-11, 16-20](#)

Responding to the reading

*"It was nevertheless considered part of a Jedi's responsibility to train the next generation of the Order. Apprentices would often go on missions with their masters."*²

"Is not this the carpenter's son?" – Matthew 13:55

¹ Opening prayers written by Emma Dobson

² <https://starwars.fandom.com/wiki/Padawan>

*“Jesus said to them,
“Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own,
but only what he sees the Father doing;
for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.” – John 5:19*

Joseph, Jesus, and even Jedis from the *Star Wars* franchise have all been apprentices.

Who has nurtured you? We can spend a moment or two bringing those people to mind and thanking God for them. In this week’s Gospel reading, we learn about the apprenticeship of those first disciples of Jesus.

There have been people following Jesus since his ministry began after his baptism. People listening, observing, and taking in what he said and did. In the verses preceding this week’s reading, the followers have seen Jesus demonstrating how he went about his mission of proclaiming the kingdom of God. Now, Jesus commissions them to go and to continue his ministry of proclaiming the kingdom of God. He gives them final instructions about what to take with them, what to say, what they should focus on... They go... Then they return to report back and receive a debrief from Jesus. After being nurtured, after learning, the disciples are sent out on mission. Do you think the balance is right in the discipleship of your church between nurturing existing followers and going out to proclaim the kingdom of God?

Jesus sends out 70 (in the Hebrew Bible) or 72 (in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) of his followers ahead of him as they journey towards Jerusalem. Within the Jewish tradition, the number seventy was used to signify the number of nations of the earth based on Genesis chapter 10. Like those of us who tune in to see who gets fired at the end of the BBC television show *The Apprentice*, perhaps the author of Luke’s gospel liked a bit of anticipation too – the sending of the seventy can be seen as an anticipation of the time when the Church would go to proclaim the kingdom of God to all the nations of earth. For the author of this week’s Vine reflection, there are also sadly things to repent about how some of that mission has been carried by the Church in the name of Christendom and earthly empires, to the devastation of Indigenous cultures... Jesus however is clear about what an initial evangelistic or missional approach should look and sound like:

“Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’” – Luke 10:5

Families I have spoken to who are hosting Ukrainian guests talk about a gratitude for a place of sanctuary as well as being blessed in return by the presence of their guests as part of their family.

Spend some time looking at and thinking about these four questions, and perhaps look for a time when you could have a conversation about them, with a friend, a loved one, someone from your local church, or someone you trust.

In this week’s Gospel reading, we learn about the apprenticeship of those first disciples of Jesus.

- How might their experience inform us as disciples, pupils, apprentices of Jesus today?
- How might we seek to nurture and apprentice others as the mission of proclaiming the kingdom of God is passed from generation to generation?

From individual to the family, the focus for mission then broadens again to encompass the whole community.

- What is your church's sense of mission to the wider community beyond the church family or building?
- Are there signs of God's kingdom you can notice beyond the church? If so, how might you and your church join in with these aspects of God's mission?³

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

Hymn:

367 STF – When I was lost, you came and rescued me - [YouTube](#)

Blessing

Go in peace, transformed by God's Spirit within you, to hear the call and respond simply: 'here I am, send me'.

Amen.⁴

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

Monday 4th July

- Here I am, send me.
- What does that look like for you, in your life, at this moment?
- Offer some prayers around this thought and idea today. Lord, show me what is mine to do. Amen.

Tuesday 5th July

- One of the songs suggested for this Sunday was 'Your love has lifted me'. You might like to listen to it again: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73JuxCgFEgk>
- Do you find these words helpful? Do you enjoy the melody? Or perhaps it jars with you for some reason. Think about how the song works (or doesn't) for you, and pray into them.
- A hymn of praise to Almighty God, hallelujah. Amen.

Wednesday 6th July

- Creator God, great shepherd of the sheep, fill me with your hope as I pray. Holy Spirit, give me the strength and courage for this day, fill me with the peace I need, and the joy of being surrounded by your love. Help me to notice where your love is at work in the world, and to get involved where I can.
Lord of love, show me what is mine to do today.
Amen.

³ Reflection and questions written by James Morley – for a full reflection on a similar theme please find out if your circuit has a subscription to The Vine – email us at thevine@twelvebaskets.org.uk

⁴ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Thursday 7th July

- Today, why not choose stillness?
- You might like to light a candle, or set a timer, or find a way to mark out some time where you will do nothing. No content, no plans, just the stillness of your body and your breathing.
- Listen to the still voice of the one who is close, closer than you notice most of the rest of the time...there is a peace that passes understanding.

Friday 8th July

- Prayer can be enriched by a connection to nature – sometimes even a physical connection with nature. If you are someone who regularly gardens or works on the land, then this won't feel strange to you, but if you don't have your own garden or don't regularly spend time in it, it might feel a little odd...
- At some point today, hold some soil in your hand. You might like to go outside and find somewhere where you can sit on or near the floor, or you may get a pot-plant and dig out a handful of the soil.
- Feel the earth between your fingers, let it run through your hands, allow your hands to feel the dirt.
- As you do so, pray this line from the Psalms: 'the earth is the Lord's and everything in it'. You might like to repeat the line over and over again.

Saturday 9th July

- Holy God, today I am thankful. I come in prayer, recognising and remembering this day that all I have received is grace, all is gift. I have received so much, and so often I take it for granted. Today, I come with a thankful heart, knowing how richly blessed I am, and seeking to offer gratitude.
- You might like to list the things you are grateful for – go on as long as you possibly can!
- Thank you God. Amen.