

twelvebaskets



LENT 1C

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

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First Sunday in Lent - Year C
30th March 2025



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

494 STF – Come, thou fount of every blessing OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly father, lead us

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

317 STF – At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow OR

88 STF – Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

Readings: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Hymn:

463 STF – Deep in the shadows of the past OR

657 STF – You give rest to the weary

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

236 STF – Forty days and forty nights OR

357 STF – Jesus – the name high over all

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

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

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life

Blessing

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Call to worship

Here we come to worship, to meet with you, O God, in the midst of all the uncertainty of the world we live in. We come to be forgiven and accepted, to love and be loved, to hope for a better world and to take inspiration to play our part in building that world. We have come. Come, O come Immanuel.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

494 STF – Come, thou fount of every blessing OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly father, lead us

Opening Prayers

Holy God,

You are a creative God, weaving our lives together into community, creating space for each of us to flourish and thrive.

Today, we commit ourselves once more into your hands,
May our lives become the tools to build your kingdom here on earth.

Today, our prayers are for all involved in creativity and productivity, all who produce new things in order to create life, fulfil potential and enable each of us to flourish.

Holy God,

We bring you our prayers of thanks and praise – and ask you to weave them together by your spirit, like a basket, the empty vessel, the storage place, the offering plate, the fruit bowl, the bread holder, the coin collector. A basket of prayers, which has many uses, and each design is suited to a particular need.

As we look out on your world, help us to listen, with an attentive ear, to the role you have called us to play, to meet the needs we are called to, to make use of our skills in the building of your kingdom.

Gracious God, weave our lives as the basket weaver weaves. Weave our lives by your love we pray,

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

At Calvary Reformed Church, in Holland, Michigan, a youth group leader named Janie Tinklenberg began a grassroots movement to help the teenagers in her group remember

¹ Call to worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

the phrase WWJD, which became a popular bracelet design in the 1990s, does anyone know what that stands for?

What Would Jesus Do?

Remember that phrase for now because we will come back to that later.

Have you ever had a moment where you really wanted something you knew you shouldn't have? Maybe it was sneaking an extra biscuit when no one was looking, or staying up late even though you had school the next day. That feeling is called temptation—when we feel pulled to do something we know isn't the best choice.

Today, we're looking at a time when Jesus himself faced temptation! But instead of giving in, he showed us how we withstand temptation.

After Jesus was baptised, he went into the wilderness for 40 days—that's over a month! He didn't eat anything, and he spent time praying and preparing for his mission.

The devil tempted Jesus in three ways:

1. Through food. An easy way to tempt someone to eat is when they are hungry. The devil said to Jesus: "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." Despite the hunger Jesus was experiencing, he refused to eat at that moment, refused to use a miracle purely on himself and his own desires.
2. The second temptation was with power. The devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and said, "I will give you all their authority if you worship me." However, Jesus reminds the devil that the only person we worship is God, not those in power or success.
3. The third and last temptation we know of was the devil testing that Jesus was really the Son of God. "Throw yourself down from here! God will send angels to catch you" – the devil challenged Jesus. However, like the previous two times, Jesus knew to say no.

Each time Jesus used his relationship and knowledge of God to withstand temptation. Who remembers the phrase we quoted earlier?

This week, if you face a tough choice, stop and ask yourself: What would Jesus do? Maybe you'll choose to be honest instead of telling a little lie. Maybe you'll choose kindness instead of anger. Maybe you'll choose justice instead of prejudice. Every time we make a good choice, we can build healthy habits, holy habits, and become a little more like Jesus.

Amen.³

Hymn:

317 STF – At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow OR

88 STF – Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

Readings: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Hymn:

463 STF – Deep in the shadows of the past OR

657 STF – You give rest to the weary

³ All Age Talk written by Matthew Forsyth

Reflections on the readings

Lent draws us into the wilderness, not as a place of punishment but as a place of deep reflection. It is here, in hunger and vulnerability, that Jesus confronts the forces that shape human existence—scarcity, power, and security. These temptations are not abstract; they are deeply embedded in the structures of our world. Who has enough to eat and who does not? Who holds power, and at what cost? Who is made to feel worthy, and who is cast aside?

Jesus enters the wilderness at a critical moment. He has just been baptised, affirmed by the voice from heaven as the beloved Son, yet before He steps into public ministry, He must walk through this place of testing. The wilderness is not an easy place, but it is a necessary one. It is where faith is shaped, where illusions are stripped away, and where the struggle for justice and truth begins.

The First Temptation: Scarcity and Survival

“If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread”

At the heart of this temptation is the question: what does it mean to trust in God when hunger is real? Jesus had been fasting for forty days; His body was aching for nourishment. In a world where food insecurity is a daily reality for millions, this temptation is not distant. Families across the world are forced to choose between feeding their children or paying rent. In war-torn regions, supply chains are deliberately severed to starve populations into submission. Even in wealthy nations, food banks struggle to meet demand, while supermarket shelves remain stocked for those who can afford them.

Jesus does not deny the urgency of hunger, but He refuses to accept the logic that provision must come at the cost of dependence on worldly powers. *“One does not live by bread alone.”* This is not a dismissal of physical hunger—it is a call to resist systems that commodify basic needs, to reject the idea that life is only about securing enough for oneself. True provision comes from God, and it is meant to be shared. Jesus’ response challenges a world where hunger persists not because there isn’t enough food, but because resources are hoarded, and access is controlled.

The Second Temptation: Power and Oppression

“To you I will give all this authority and their glory,.. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.”

The tempter’s offer exposes the nature of power in the world: it is something to be seized, traded, and manipulated. Jesus is shown the kingdoms of the world—the structures that determine who rules and who is ruled, who thrives and who suffers. The temptation is clear: take control, claim dominion, impose justice from the top down.

How often have the oppressed been offered a false choice: conform to the systems of power or be crushed by them? Colonised nations were told they could have “progress” if they accepted foreign rule. Workers are promised fair wages only if they do not question corporate greed. Women in patriarchal cultures are given a seat at the table only if they do not challenge the very structures that exclude them. The cost of power, the tempter suggests, is submission to its terms.

Jesus refuses. *“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.”* True power does not come from domination but from faithfulness. Jesus’ response is a warning against the temptation to seek change through oppressive means. Justice cannot be won by adopting

the tactics of empire. The kingdom of God is not built on deals with the devil but on radical, self-giving love.

The Third Temptation: Identity and Worth

“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’”

This final test is about identity. The tempter demands proof—if you truly are who God says you are, then force God’s hand. Let the world see undeniable signs of divine favour.

Many today face this same temptation: prove your worth, justify your existence, show that you belong. Refugees are asked to prove they are “good immigrants” before being granted safety. Survivors of abuse are questioned about whether their suffering was “bad enough” to be believed. Those struggling with mental health are asked to justify why they need help. The demand is always the same: prove yourself, because your worth is not assumed.

But Jesus refuses to perform. He does not need to test God’s faithfulness, because He already knows it. His identity is not up for debate. And in that refusal, He declares that God’s love is not conditional. It does not depend on displays of power or forced demonstrations of worth. It simply is.

For all who have been told they must prove themselves, Jesus’ response is a powerful affirmation: you are enough. You do not need to test God’s love—it has already been given.

The Wilderness as a Place of Resistance

Jesus’ time in the wilderness is not just about personal discipline; it is about resistance. He resists a world where people must fight for their own survival while others hoard abundance. He resists systems where power is secured through oppression. He resists a culture that demands people justify their worth. And He does so not with force, but with trust.

Lent invites us into this same resistance. It is a time to examine the ways we have been shaped by the logic of scarcity, power, and worthiness. It is a time to ask where we place our trust. Do we believe that security comes from accumulating wealth? Do we believe that change must come through the politics of dominance? Do we secretly believe that God’s love must be earned?

To follow Jesus is to walk through the wilderness, not alone, but led by the Spirit. It is to trust that God provides, even when resources seem scarce. It is to reject the kind of power that demands submission. It is to rest in the truth that we are already beloved. And it is to stand in solidarity with all who are told otherwise.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where do we see the temptation of scarcity in the world today? How does Jesus’ response challenge our assumptions about provision and security?
2. What are some examples of power being used in oppressive ways? How can we resist the temptation to seek justice through domination?
3. Have you ever felt pressured to prove your worth? How does Jesus’ refusal to perform speak to our own struggles with identity and belonging?

Amen.⁴

⁴ Reflection written by Jasmine Devadson

Hymn:

236 STF – Forty days and forty nights OR

357 STF – Jesus – the name high over all

Prayers of intercession

God of the wilderness,
You journeyed with Jesus through hunger and trial,
And You walk with us today.

**Empower us to act justly,
And guide us in Your truth.**

We pray for those who struggle to survive—
For those who are hungry while food is wasted,
For those denied shelter while homes stand empty,
For those whose dignity is questioned because of their poverty.
Give us hearts that do not simply pray, but act.

Open our eyes to see, and our hands to serve.

We pray for those caught in the grip of power—
For those who are silenced for speaking truth,
For those who resist injustice at great cost,
For those whose lives are controlled by forces beyond their choosing.
Give us courage to stand alongside them.

Strengthen our voices for justice, and our feet for the journey.

We pray for those who long for belonging—
For those told they must prove their worth,
For those who have been excluded from communities of faith,
For those who wonder if they are truly loved.
May they hear Your voice, calling them Beloved.

Help us to welcome, embrace, and love without condition.**(Space for silent or personal prayers.)**

God of truth and justice,
Teach us to resist the false promises of the world.
Lead us through the wilderness,
That we may walk in faith, in love, and in the power of Your Spirit.

**Guide our hearts and hands to build Your kingdom,
Through Christ, our refuge and Redeemer.**

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Jasmine Devadson

Bless these gifts, O God, that they might be put to use for justice and grace.
Bless our lives, O God, that we might be channels for your peace, your love, your hope, into the world around us.
Bless this day, O God, that each of us may come to know you more before we retire to our beds this night.

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

459 STF – Captain of Israel’s host, and Guide OR

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life

Blessing

Go in peace, and seek to play your part,
Go in grace, and remember that all is a gift,
Go in love, and show that love to every person who you meet,
Go in hope, believing a better world is possible.

Amen.⁷

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker