

# twelvebaskets



## ORDINARY 29B

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

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**Ordinary 29 - Year B**  
20th October 2024



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**28 STF – Jesus calls us here to meet him OR**

**80 STF – My God, I am thine**

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**82 STF – O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder OR**

**362 STF – Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity**

Readings: Job 38:1-7; Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c; Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45

**Hymn:**

**55 STF – Immortal, invisible, God only wise OR**

**548 STF – Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**747 STF – Give me the wings of faith to rise within the veil OR**

**415 STF – The Church of Christ, in every age**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**347 STF – Crown him with many crowns OR**

**503 STF – Love divine, all loves excelling**

Blessing

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## **Call to worship**

Creative, Creator God, reveal yourself to us through your eternal word.  
Incarnate, living Jesus, reveal yourself through us in the love that we share.  
Unexplainable, Holy Spirit, reveal yourself in us through the gifts that we use.  
Three in One, be the life within us as we journey with you.

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **Hymn:**

28 STF – Jesus calls us here to meet him OR

80 STF – My God, I am thine

## **Opening Prayers**

Dear God, we give you thanks for this world,  
We gaze on in wonder.

The beauty around us, the stars at night,  
Our forests, fields, seas and lofty mountains.

The animals, large and small, the people that we share this planet with.

Our soul sings out and we are in awe and wonder...

We give thanks.

We know though that sometimes we forget the wonder of your world.  
We don't respect and protect the beauty that surrounds us.

We can be unthinking and uncaring towards the people we share this world with.  
We are sorry.

We ask for your forgiveness.

Help us.

Breathe new life into us.

As you breathe that new life into us let us breathe deeply.

Give thanks.

Appreciate all we have.

Help us breath new life and love into our world in any way we can.

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

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

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

<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by Lorna Dobson

## All Age Talk

Later on in our service, we will hear a Gospel reading in which Jesus is taken to one side by two brothers. They have heard about Jesus and seen how people gravitate to him like a celebrity. In the reading, you can tell that they want a bit of that for themselves.

The two brothers are called James and John. They ask Jesus, “Can we sit on your left and your right?”

In the story, Jesus replies: “Do you even know what you’re asking? Are you willing to drink from my cup?”

I suppose that what he meant was: can you live the life that I’m living? Do you really want that?

When the rest of the twelve overheard it, they got angry with John and James. Surely Jesus would see they were unfit! Perhaps they were jealous? Jesus then gathered his friends the disciples around him. In true Jesus like fashion he spoke with patience as he described what being great is all about.

It’s not thrones, crowns, gold or gems, but serving others needs before your own. Those who are greatest don’t look it. You would never guess who they are. They may look like a maid or a servant. But in God’s eyes they’re really a star. Jesus literally demonstrated this in his life. He came down from heaven and washed his friends’ feet. He came to help and serve and show what love truly is about.

Being great is not about the followers we have on social media. Nor is it measured on how much money we have in our account, or how ‘popular’ we are. Greatness and living a life well lived is about serving and helping others. Who could you serve and help this week?

Let us pray.

Lord, help us to serve others like you did on earth. Help us to put others needs before our own.

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

### Hymn:

82 STF – O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder OR

362 STF – Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity

**Readings:** Job 38:1-7; Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c; Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45

### Hymn:

55 STF – Immortal, invisible, God only wise OR

548 STF – Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine

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<sup>3</sup> All Age Talk written by Tim Baker

## Reflections on the readings

John and Charles Wesley were brothers. With just a few years separating them in age (being born in 1703 and 1707 respectively), they were both committed to sharing the gospel of Christ as widely as possible. They combined their differing gifts to great effect, with Charles' talent for hymn writing greatly complimenting John's organisation – as well as their joint passion for preaching.

The brothers were close, often confiding in each other and seeking each other's advice. However their relationship was put under serious strain by the choices they each made in their romantic relationships.

When Charles fell for Welsh landowner's daughter Sarah (Sally) Gwynne in 1748, and the couple decided to marry, John did not approve! He didn't think that Sally would make a good wife for Charles because of her 'privileged' background. He did not signal his approval of the marriage until the day before it took place! However it was a good match, and Charles and Sally enjoyed many happy years together.

About the same time, John met Grace Murray. Grace was the housekeeper at the Methodist-run orphanage in Newcastle and was one of the first female preachers. John admired Grace very much and wrote that "she lightened my burden more than can be expressed".

She began to accompany John on preaching tours, which caused Charles great concern. He felt she was comprising her reputation, and stepped in to prevent John and Grace from tying the knot. Historian Gary Best writes that Charles "more or less forced" Grace to marry someone else – a lay preacher called John Bennet, who Charles believed she been promised to in marriage for a couple of years. Some of the female society members in Newcastle were also making their feelings known that they thought Grace was an unsuitable partner for John.

What a scandal! Deep down, it may have been that Charles felt John was unsuited to marriage due to his commitment to the Gospel and to his demanding work and travel ethic. He knew that John would not make any partner or family his first priority.

Understandably, the relationship between the brothers soured. John went on to marry Molly Vazeille, but this union turned out to be a disaster. It was only when John almost died in December 1753 that the brothers were reconciled, and even then, their relationship was never quite the same.

In Mark chapter 10 we are also introduced to two brothers - James and John, the sons of Zebedee, also known as the 'sons of thunder'. They come to Jesus with a request which could be interpreted, quite bluntly, as glory hunting.

*"Teacher", they say – we want you to do for us whatever we ask.*

*"What do you want me to do for you?" asks Jesus.*

*They reply "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory".*

They seem to be looking for some kind of special recognition, to potentially be seen as the most holy and blessed of disciples by everyone else. However, Jesus has other ideas.

His response is suitably challenging, reflecting the upside-down nature of his kingdom and his refusal to conform to the world's ideas of what glory and kingship mean, the ideas that James and John seem to have been swayed by.

For Jesus, greatness means becoming a servant and a slave – in a way which entails total and utter service, to the point of giving up your life.

In his commentary on Mark's Gospel, Tom Wright also points out that aiming to be at Jesus' left and right hand will soon come to mean something very different. Jesus will be crucified like a criminal and thieves will join him to die on the hill at Golgotha. It's as if Jesus is saying to James and John – be very very careful what you wish for!

So we have two brothers divided (John and Charles) and two brothers united (James and John) and a lot of heartache and challenge in both situations.

URC minister Terry Hinks has written a book called *God's Passion: Praying with Mark*. In his reflection on this passage, he asks how this story would have gone down in the early church. Were there people in it like James and John? Was the inclusion of it designed to call out people who were seeking power and status rather than offering humble service? He writes: "*for those in Mark's church (and in our own) who wish to ape the ways of the Roman Empire, with absolute power, strict control and rigid hierarchy, this is a hard lesson to hear, but it is the way of Jesus.*"

However the tale is retold, the message remains the same. Glory and power in the upside down kingdom of Jesus look very different to the glory and power that the world praises and values. Here, the glory is found in a commitment to following Jesus in radical service and self-giving love.

Amen.<sup>4</sup>

### **Hymn:**

747 STF – Give me the wings of faith to rise within the veil OR

415 STF – The Church of Christ, in every age

### **Prayers of intercession**

God of all relationships, we pray for our families.

We give thanks for the love and support that we can know in sibling relationships.

While at the same time offering to you those relationships which are strained or broken.

May we meet each other in our imperfections and act and speak with grace and mercy.

### **God of all relationships, hear our prayer**

God of all relationships, we pray for our siblings in Christ whom we connect with at church and through associated activities.

Thank you for the times when we can worship together, laugh and cry together, encourage each other, feel as if we are one big family.

Forgive us for the times when we might try and get our own way, or criticise others because their approach is different from our own.

May we meet each other in our imperfections and act and speak with grace and mercy.

### **God of all relationships, hear our prayer.**

God of all relationships, we pray for the world. We keep a short time of silence as we remember nations and peoples who are broken and displaced by war, terrorism, violence and climate change.

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<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Mandy Briggs

*(Silence)*

We pray that instead of creating hierarchies of power, we might follow the way of Jesus and offer radical service and hospitality to those in need. May we learn how to be a people of peace, mending and healing instead of fighting and arguing.

May we meet each other in our imperfections and act and speak with grace and mercy.

**God of all relationships, hear our prayer.**

God of all relationships, help us to explore what it means to serve and be served, and to live as disciples of Jesus in the communities where we live.

Enable us to experience what it means to be guests as well as hosts and receivers as well as providers. Help us to explore true partnership with others.

May we meet each other in our imperfections and act and speak with grace and mercy.

**God of all relationships, hear our prayer.**

God of relationships, in another time of silence, we pray for people we know who may be struggling today; people who are ill; people who are worried and anxious, or need our prayers for another reason:

*(Silence)*

Hold these and all our prayers God  
Help us to see your glory.

Call us out to be your people, the servants of Christ  
Connecting with you and with each other in the power of the Holy Spirit  
May we meet each other in our imperfections and act and speak with grace and mercy.

**God of all relationships, hear our prayer.**

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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

Thank you, Living Lord for all the amazing gifts you have given us – and we return these gifts to you now: the gifts we have given here today, but also the gifts of our lives and all that we are.

In the days and weeks ahead, we commit ourselves to working for your kingdom.

In the name of the Creator, the Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

**Hymn:**

347 STF – Crown him with many crowns OR

503 STF – Love divine, all loves excelling

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<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Mandy Briggs

<sup>6</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker

## **Blessing**

Companion God, show me how to follow you, out in the world.

Fire us with your courage.

Touch us with your humility and bless us as we face the reality of our everyday service to others.

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

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