

twelvebaskets



LENT 1B

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

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First Sunday in Lent - Year B
18th February 2024



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

18 STF – Be still and know that I am God 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 OR

254 STF – Seek ye first the kingdom of God

Readings: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Hymn:

20 STF – Be still, for the presence of the Lord OR

610 STF – Best of all is God is with us

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

636 STF – O love that wilt not let me go OR

237 STF – Jesus, tempted in the desert

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

404 STF – God's Spirit is in my heart OR

357 STF – Jesus - the name high over all

Blessing

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Many more resources and inspiration for this week's lectionary, leading worship and other church use are available on www.theworshipcloud.com.

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Call to worship

The Spirit of God says 'come'.
Jesus Christ, the bride of the church, says 'come'.

Let anyone who hears this say 'come'.
Let anyone who is thirsty, thirsty for the water of life, come.

Come, all are welcome,
The Spirit of God is in this place. Come.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

18 STF – Be still and know that I am God OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

Opening Prayers

During Lent, All We Can are inviting people to ask the question 'What is Mine to Do?' Recognising that discerning where our voice and actions are most needed is a key part of justice-seeking. Each week, they are focussing on one word which represents one possible answer to that question. In Week 1 of Lent, that word is Pray. Find out more at allwecan.org.uk/lent

Lord, teach us to pray.

As we enter Lent – a time of discernment and reflection, help us to listen to you in prayer. May we know that though we can discern your will through scripture and reason, there is no replacement for the simplicity of speaking and listening.

Teach me, O Lord,

What is mine to do

Thank you, Lord that you are always readily available to us, requiring no test of ability nor intellect for the privilege of coming to you in prayer. We rejoice in your ever-open arms.

We also acknowledge that despite your openness to us, we do not always come to you in prayer when the situation invites or requires it. For that, we are sorry.

Teach me, O Lord,

What is mine to do

When we are confronted with injustices around the world and in our own communities, teach us to pray not as those who would rather rely on divine intervention than use our own influence, nor as those who don't create space for you move powerfully.

Instead, let us pray as those who understand that we are your hands and feet in the world, and yet recognise we can do nothing in our own strength.

Teach me, O Lord,

What is mine to do

¹ Call to worship written by Tim Baker

We acknowledge that we are not able to pray for all of the people, places, and situations we would like. Guide us, Lord in our discernment of which areas we have a particular responsibility and calling to pray for.

Teach me, O Lord,
What is mine to do

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hands up all those who have either given something up for lent or have taken something up for Lent?

[Go around and hear from those who offer answers]

They are brilliant things! Now, can anyone tell us what caused us to observe these 40 days?

[Await answers. If anyone goes "God" then say...]

In a way, yes! God was the cause of us having this period of fasting for 40 days! And it all started with Jesus being baptised!

[Read Mark 1: 9-15 in a version you are comfortable with]

This is, what I think is, the funny side of God! In one moment: splitting open the sky and bathing Jesus in holy light and anointing him with a dove (a reminder of God's promise with Noah, who also experienced something involving God and water) and even proclaiming "You are my SON! Chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life!"

And then immediately after pushed Jesus into the desert! And not pushed out into the desert with supplies for a lovely camp; but 40 days of being tested by Satan, with wild animals around, the harsh weather and sand getting everywhere.

Yet! After those 40 days, Jesus came back with a clear focus, more than before: to declare that the Kingdom of God is here.

Whether we are giving up something for lent (give examples shared earlier, if any) or picking something up (give examples shared earlier, if any) at the end of this Lenten season we all know we'll be the better for it.

God, be with us over this season of Lent. Anoint us with you spirit as we journey towards Easter morning.

Amen.³

² Opening prayers written by All We Can – find out more about their Lent campaign and order resources at allwecan.org.uk/lent

³ All Age Talk written by Tim Annan-Hood

Hymn:

317 STF – At the name of Jesus OR

254 STF – Seek ye first the kingdom of God

Readings: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Hymn:

20 STF – Be still, for the presence of the Lord OR

610 STF – Best of all is God is with us

Reflections on the readings

Today's gospel reading takes us into the wilderness... In Mark 1:9-15, we encounter Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist and his subsequent time in the wilderness. This passage invites us to reflect on the profound significance of wilderness experiences in our own faith journeys.

What follows are a series of seven questions for you to consider in small groups. It might help for some groups to look at more than one question. Let's get ourselves into groups and choose a question off this list to look at:

You might like to write these out, have them on a screen or print this page out to share with people in the congregation:

1. Baptism and identity:

Just as Jesus was baptised and affirmed as the beloved Son of God, what does your own baptism mean to you? How does it shape your identity as a follower of Christ?

2. The wilderness:

The wilderness represents a period of testing and spiritual growth. Have you experienced times of spiritual "wilderness" in your life? What challenges did you face, and how did you grow through those experiences?

3. Temptation:

Like Jesus, we may face temptations during our wilderness moments. What are some common temptations you encounter in your faith journey, and how do you overcome them?

4. Repentance and belief:

Jesus proclaimed, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." What does it mean to repent and believe in the gospel in your daily life? Is that a phrase you are comfortable with? What does 'repent' mean to you? How can you actively respond to this call?

5. The Kingdom of God:

Jesus' message centred on the arrival of the kingdom of God. What does the kingdom of God mean to you, and how can you contribute to its realisation in your community and beyond?

6. The urgency of the Gospel:
Mark emphasizes the urgency of Jesus' mission. How can we, as modern-day disciples, convey the urgency of the gospel message to others? What practical steps can we take?

7. Prayer and solitude:
Following his time in the wilderness, Jesus often retreated to solitary places to pray. How can you cultivate a deeper prayer life and solitude in your own spiritual journey, and in this church community?

[Bring people back together and offer these words and a closing prayer. You might like to invite other people to share any prayers or prayer requests that have arisen from their time of conversation.]

This week, as you contemplate Mark 1:9-15, consider how the lessons from Jesus' baptism, wilderness experience, and ministry can inform your own faith walk.

What steps can you take to embrace your identity as a beloved child of God, navigate wilderness moments, resist temptation, and actively participate in the unfolding of God's kingdom?

This Lent, can you take any of the reflections from your conversation with you into the next 40 days? How will you be changed and shaped by the intentional practice of discipleship?

Let us pray.

God of all grace,

Thank you for the ways the Jesus story continues to speak to us today, and the way our conversation has been shaped by the Gospel message.

In the midst of our own wildernesses, and here in Lent 2024, help us to discern how we can best follow you. Show us what is ours to do.

We pray, too, for this church community. May we be a blessing to those around us, and a safe haven for all who are experiencing wilderness.

Come amongst us, by your Spirit, O God.

Amen.⁴

Hymn:

636 STF – O love that wilt not let me go OR

237 STF – Jesus, tempted in the desert

Prayers of intercession

Today, instead of using lots of words for our prayers of intercession, our prayers for the world, we are going to hold a couple of times of quiet, and I simply invite you to bring your own prayers into those spaces.

Firstly, I invite you to spend a moment praying for those close to you: people in your family, your friends, perhaps members of this church, who are in your thoughts. It might be the people you are worried about, or just someone who you know needs to feel God's presence today.

⁴ Reflection written by Tim Baker

In the stillness, hold that person, and their situation, in the light of God's love.

[Pause for a minute or two. You might like to play some quiet music during the stillness].

Come Lord God. Answer our prayers, in Jesus name.

And now, in this space, I invite you to bring a situation or person further afield. Perhaps a story from the news, or a situation or story that has found its way to you. It is probably about people or a person you will never meet, but in this moment, you want to hold those people in prayer.

In the stillness, we pray for a better world.

[Pause for a minute or two. You might like to play some quiet music during the stillness].

Come Lord God. You know the names, the faces, the situations that we've held in our hearts and minds over these past few minutes.

Answer our prayers, in Jesus name.

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Thank you Lord, for all you have given to us and all we have received. We respond to your grace with generosity – we give out of the enormous wealth we have received. We are yours, put us to what you will,

In Jesus' name. Amen.⁶

Hymn:

404 STF – God's Spirit is in my heart OR

357 STF – Jesus - the name high over all

Blessing

God of grace, Spirit of hope, Christ who transforms us – send us out with your courage, your love, your peace to bring into a community and a world in need.

Go in peace, and serve the Lord.

Amen.⁷

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Tim Baker

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker