

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 22C

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

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Twenty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C
31st August 2025



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

67 STF – This, this is the God we adore OR

443 STF – Come, let us sing of a wonderful love

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

107 STF – I sing the almighty power of God OR

429 STF – Lord, we turn to you for mercy

Readings: Jeremiah 2:4-13; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Hymn:

51 STF – Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father OR

322 STF – How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

327 STF – Jesus is King and I will extol him OR

241 STF – When we were in the darkest night

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life OR

711 STF – Pray for the Church, afflicted and oppressed

Blessing

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Call to worship

Heavenly parent-God,
We come to you as siblings in Christ,
Seeking to learn more of your presence in our lives,
And how we might follow in your way.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

67 STF – This, this is the God we adore OR

443 STF – Come, let us sing of a wonderful love

Opening Prayers

Generous God,
As we reflect upon our days, weeks, months and years in this life.

Let us look upon it with humility.
With faithfulness.

We are grateful for the life we have been given.
For the people we experience life with and those we encounter along the way.

Help us to live in your image.
To live out our lives in faith with humility.

Lord,
You love tenaciously.

Care for the vulnerable.
As was shown with how your son Jesus lived, you value simplicity and contentment.
In your eyes we are all equal.

Lord, we pray to live our lives modelling your ways.
To look at all as equals.
Showing love and hospitality for all those we meet.

Caring for the vulnerable and needy to give selflessly.
To reverse the roles of status, race, gender, sexuality and age society places upon people.
Looking at all as you do, equal in your eyes.

Help us, Lord of generosity and love, to live our lives imitating you and your values.
We thank you for setting an example of how to live our lives to the fullest extent.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

¹ Call to worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Alice Arbon-Maher

All Age Talk

Do you have any ideas how we can listen to God?

How do you listen to God?

Some of the easiest answers might be ‘through prayer’ or ‘through reading the Bible.’ These are absolutely right, as Christians we are encouraged to do both these things regularly, both praying and reading the Bible.

Imagine you have a friend who lives quite far away, if you don’t ring them or write letters to them, how can you continue to know one another well.

Prayer doesn’t have to be lots of words, or a long list of things that we want God to put right in our lives, prayer could be silent, it could be images that we conjure up in our head. There is no right or wrong way to pray, everyone will do it differently.

When we pray, sometimes we want God to speak clearly to us, to give us an answer but that isn’t often the case, we have to do something called discerning, where we interpret what God has said, this could be interpreting through events or actions that happen in our life after we have prayed about something.

We can also hear God through others. This might not be someone saying “God has told me to say this to you” but it could be other people recognising God-given gifts and skills in us, that we cannot see ourselves. It could be someone offering to help us with something and giving up their time for us. It could also be someone calling us out on something we are doing that is wrong.

In essence a relationship with God is about sharing with him, but also being open to hearing God, whatever form that may come in. It can take time to be able to discern God, but God is always there, and responding.

Amen.³

Hymn:

107 STF – I sing the almighty power of God OR

429 STF – Lord, we turn to you for mercy

Readings: Jeremiah 2:4-13; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Hymn:

51 STF – Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father OR

322 STF – How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

³ All Age Talk written by Pippa Lupton

Reflections on the readings

Christianity as we know it now is vastly different to the early church and is now a church with many different denominations that follow varied traditions, practices and worship styles. It can become easy to focus on what separates us rather than what should unite us.

Question for discussion in small groups or as a whole congregation (if in small groups, allow a bit of time for people to feedback to wider group):

- What does a healthy Christian church look like to you?

[As a leader, note what your congregation focuses on. Are there any key themes that stand out to the congregation as they chat and share.]

The passage from Hebrews today shares a list of exhortations for the communal church to remember and hold close. Note that they are directed to the communal church, rather than the individual Christian. As Christians we are called to be part of a gathered community, and we therefore have a responsibility to the congregation of which we are part.

Below is an exploration of each of these exhortations, with a question to accompany each one. Use the material below as you wish to enable your church to explore the passage from Hebrew.

Hebrews 13: 1 – ‘Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters.’

The instruction to love one another is not a commandment unique to Hebrews. Jesus instructed us in this way, and it appears multiple times throughout the New Testament, namely Romans 2:10, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 1 Peter 1:22 and 2 Peter 1:7. Whilst this call to love one another as siblings is not an alien concept, one thing to consider is the impact that this would have had on the early church. Many Christians in the early church experienced rejection from their family because of their faith. This call to be of brother and sister to one another is a call to a family that you can rely on and find support in, and ultimately find a home and safety to be yourself.

Question for discussion: Does a call to be siblings together in Christ change how we love those who are Christians?

Hebrews 13: 2 – ‘Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some have entertained angels without knowing it.’

This direction to hospitality in Hebrews is a call to radical hospitality. For the early church, hospitality was a way of making connections and showing the love and kindness of Jesus Christ to those who did not yet know him. It was how they expanded their communities. In a world that is becoming more secularised, it is important to consider how our hospitality is reaching into the communities. But it also implies that hospitality needs to be a place of no judgement for we do not know who we are truly serving.

Question for discussion: How does your church create space for connection within the communities you serve?

Hebrews 13:3 – ‘Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them...’

In the context of the early church, this exhortation is not about the mental note of remembering those in prison, but instead a call to support prisoners. Unlike the prison system that exists today, it was only through the support of associates that prisoners received food and drink.

Question for discussion: When we are called to ‘remember’ groups/situations in prayers, how often does our remembering result in direct action to support those who we are praying for?

Hebrews 13:4-5 – ‘Marriage should be honoured by all...’

Whilst both of these verses could be explored individually, both of these exhortations explore desire and self-control, and further a need to rely fully on God to provide all that you need. Throughout the old testament, you see greed and hoarding, and adultery cause friction within families, and in the relationship that God’s people have with one another and God.

Fully relying on God is arguably one of the hardest of these exhortations to follow but it is this dependence on God that can lead to contentedness due to there being no more searching for something which will fulfil you.

Question for discussion: How might you practice contentedness in your day-to-day life and with your congregation?

Hebrews 13:7-8 – ‘...Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.’

Whilst, as Christians, it is Jesus that we should intend to echo in the actions and the way that we live our lives, it is sometimes through various Christian leaders that we can see how Christian living can be practically applied to our everyday lives. Not only are we called to reflect on their motivations, and respect them, we are called to recognise the exemplary lives of faith that they lived.

For the early church, leaders may have lost their lives for their faith or stood up against power which meant that they had ended up in prison. However, today, it may be ministers or other Christian leaders who we look to emulate in the way we live our lives as a congregation.

Question for discussion: Who has a minister or Christian leader that they admire and aspire to? How have they impacted your life?

When looking at these exhortations as a complete picture, it doesn’t suggest that a healthy church is about what type of worship a church has, or how big a congregation. Instead, maybe the markers should be how a church expresses deep love, are hospitable to the communities around them, how take action against those facing persecution and how they work together to find trust and contentment in what God is doing.

Question for discussion: When reflecting on these exhortations, does it change what you think a healthy Christian church looks like to you?⁴

Hymn:

327 STF – Jesus is King and I will extol him OR

241 STF – When we were in the darkest night

Prayers of intercession

The prayers of intercession below are structured on the hymn Peace Perfect Peace. You could either sing each verse or just use the first line of the verse to lead into the next section of the prayer.

Peace, perfect peace, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Lord, we pray for peace. The world does not seem peaceful right now. There are countries engaged in war, people experiencing uncertainty, fear, hunger, longing for safety. May

⁴ Reflection written by Naomi Prince

those in power realise the impact that these wars are having on the citizens of these countries and may the hearts of all those engaging in fighting be changed.

Help aid be received by those who need it and call on action to enable peace to flow throughout these lands.

Love, perfect love, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Gracious God, we think of those who do not know of your love. May we be part of the story that brings them to know you through our actions and our embodiment of Jesus. As we share your love with the people we interact with each day, enable us to have conversations with people that share you with them. Let our church be a church that reaches to those who do not yet know you and welcome them in with open arms.

Faith, perfect faith, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Everlasting God, we pray for faith that those leading our government are making good decisions. May they turn to you and find guidance and instruction as they face the challenges of the world. Let us be challenged by what is going on in our nation and local community and be spurred to action.

In particular we pray for all that has been in the news this week – *input here anything that has occurred in the last week*

Hope, perfect hope, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Eternal God, we pray for hope: we live in a world where social injustice thrives. May all who experience injustice or discrimination find hope in people around them who support and stand with them. May we be part of this group. Help us, loving Father, to discover how we can be a hopeful person in a world that sometimes feels so dark. Jesus, the true eternal light, can overcome all darkness, so we pray that we can be a hopeful voice in the darkness.

Joy, perfect joy, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Forever God, we pray for those who we know whose lives are challenging them at the moment, whether that be through mental or physical illness or through problems with relationships or work. We spend time thinking of those we know in our lives whose lives are challenging now:

May these people find pockets of joy in their challenges.

Lord, we bring these prayers to you now

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

God of all grace,

Bless these gifts and bless our lives,

That we might put them to good use to help make a difference in our community and in the wider world.

Come amongst us, by your grace, O God, we pray

Amen.⁶

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Naomi Prince

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Hymn:

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life OR

711 STF – Pray for the Church, afflicted and oppressed

Blessing

May the love of the Lord who is all around you, be known to you.

May the peace of the Christ who spans all time, be close to you.

And may the fire of the Spirit who inspires us all towards a better, brighter world, forge a path for you, this and everyday,

Amen.⁷

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker