

# twelvebaskets



## EASTER 2A

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

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# Second Sunday of Easter - Year A

12th April 2026



## Order of Service

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**44 STF – Come on and celebrate OR**

**295 STF – Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord**

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**335 STF – Rejoice, the Lord is King! OR**

**342 STF – All hail the power of Jesu's name!**

Readings: Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

**Hymn:**

**782 STF – Thuma mina (Send me, Lord) OR**

**318 STF – Christ, our King before creation**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**406 STF – Have you heard the good news? OR**

**345 STF – And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood?**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**487 STF – You shall go out with joy OR**

**489 STF – All I once held dear, built my life upon**

Blessing

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## Call to worship

Here we are to worship,  
Here we are to follow your call on our lives,  
Here we are to learn more of your love,  
Here we are, make us aware of your presence, we pray.

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Hymn:

44 STF – Come on and celebrate OR

295 STF – Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord

## Opening Prayers

Unshakeable God,  
Let us come together and praise you for your great mercy.

When death appeared to have won and our hope was sealed away,  
your love and power shone through the emptiness of our hearts as your promises were fulfilled.

We were not, and will not be, abandoned in the grave.

Fear is transformed into faith as you never leave us alone in the darkness.

Calling witnesses to Jesus' resurrection as the stone was rolled away, their pain and suffering faded as you revealed the risen Christ.

You conquered death, and because you live, we too live in hope.

Though we may face many trials and heartbreaks in this life, we ask you to speak your peace into our anxious hearts.

In your presence there is unbreakable joy, as your heart is shown so clearly for us and with us.

Our faith may be tested, but you never leave us.

When Jesus was on the cross, you were there,  
shedding and sharing tears in his suffering, as you do for us.

Our pain is yours, and our love too is your love.

Blessed are those who are not yet with you; let them come to know you and to feel the peace we feel each day and in every walk we take in this life with you by our side.

When the world may seem as though the lights have gone out and cruelty still exists in the sins of the world, let all see your faith and hope shine through in the work of your disciples.

You are the source of our living hope and the foundation of all our joy.

Lord Jesus, deepen our trust and unwavering faith in you as we boldly proclaim your name.

Oh Lord, our God, we pray to you,

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

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

<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by Alice Arbon

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

### **All Age Talk**

Explain to everyone that you have brought something very precious today and that you'd like to give it away to someone. But the only way they can have it, is by coming to the front and holding it in their hands. And one final thing – they have to wear a blindfold while holding it. Ask if anyone is brave enough to try. When a volunteer comes forward, have them put a blindfold on and hold out their hands. Tell the person that you have a heavy gold bar whilst showing everyone else that in fact it is a large brick! Encourage the person to hold and feel it, asking would they like to keep it? Have some fun with their responses and ask people in the congregation if they think the person should keep it. Then remove the blindfold to reveal the brick! What's their reaction? Are they pleased or do they feel deceived? What difference did it make to not be able to actually see and know what the item was?

It can be very hard to believe something when we haven't seen it with our own eyes. It can leave us unsure about what is or isn't true. That's exactly what happened when Thomas encountered Jesus after he had risen from the dead. He found it hard to accept it really was true. What did he want? Proof. He needed evidence and to see the wounds Jesus bore as signs that he was who he said he was. Many of us may feel the same way, that evidence is important and it is difficult to believe in something unless it has been proven to us.

Jesus knew people would need to see him to believe, and spending time with those he was close to: his friends and disciples, mattered a great deal. As they begin to understand the purpose of recent events and what Jesus has been through, everything is finally making sense. They now know with great confidence that Jesus truly is the Messiah, the saviour of the world.

Like them, we too bring our experience, facts, belief and evidence together, all pieces of the bigger picture that help us to make sense of who Jesus is and why he matters. It's what helps our faith to grow as we put our trust in Jesus.

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

### **Hymn:**

335 STF – Rejoice, the Lord is King! OR

342 STF – All hail the power of Jesu's name!

**Readings:** Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

### **Hymn:**

782 STF – Thuma mina (Send me, Lord) OR

318 STF – Christ, our King before creation

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<sup>3</sup> All Age Talk written by Gail Adcock

## Reflections on the reading

Psalm 16 begins with a small, easily skipped phrase: “*A Miktam of David.*” It’s the sort of heading our eyes often glide past on the way to the “real” content. But those little introductions in the Psalms are often doorways. And this one opens into something rich.

The word *Miktam* is mysterious. Scholars are not agreed on its meaning. Some think it might have been a musical term, a performance instruction for temple worship. Others think it refers to something engraved or inscribed, something meant to last. But there’s another tradition, one that has endured in the life of the church: that *Miktam* means “golden.”

A *Miktam* is a golden psalm, a poem of surpassing worth, polished and precious, offering something solid, something beautiful, something enduring.

And when we read Psalm 16, we can see why generations have called it that. This is a psalm that shines. It glows with trust. It gleams with hope. It is a golden piece of poetry lifted from the depths of human experience and held before God.

But Psalm 16 is not merely a golden psalm because it’s comforting or beautiful. It is golden because it speaks to the full journey of faith. It begins with a cry for refuge and ends with joy. A real fullness of joy, in God’s presence. It moves through fear, assurance, gratitude, and hope. And like a finely crafted poem, it says things simply, but never shallowly.

Psalm 16 reminds us that Scripture is full of poetry, and that poetry is not an optional extra. It is not merely aesthetic decoration to the “real” teaching. Poetry *is* one of the ways God speaks. The Psalms, Israel’s prayerbook, are poetry from start to finish. The prophets use poetry to announce God’s word. Jesus himself teaches in stories, images, and metaphor. The Gospel of John begins with a poem: “*In the beginning was the Word...*”

Poetry is woven into the fabric of Scripture because poetry reaches places that plain language cannot. Prose can *explain* truth, but poetry helps us *experience* it. Prose can instruct us about faith, but poetry allows us to *feel* it. Its tensions, its depths, its beauty, its mystery.

Poetry has a way of honouring complexity. It allows multiple layers to exist at once. It can hold sorrow and hope, doubt and trust, lament and praise, without needing to resolve them too quickly.

Think of how Psalm 16 works. David doesn’t give us a theological lecture. He gives us images...

*“You are my portion and my cup.”*

*“The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places.”*

*“I have set the Lord always before me.”*

These images are not mere ornaments. They *carry meaning*. They help us inhabit the psalm, to feel its trust, to share its confidence, to step inside its hope. Poetry slows us down. It invites us to linger. It gives us room. And through it, God meets us not only through the clarity of instruction but also through the beauty of language.

I’ve always believed that some truths cannot be forced. They have to be opened like a window. Poetry does that. It opens us.

Many of you will know that Leonard Cohen is one of my favourite poets. Even though he’s known as a songwriter, I think “poet” is the truest description. Before the melodies, before the arrangements, before the polish, Cohen was a poet. His work is full of biblical imagery, prophetic longing, and that strange mixture of beauty and brokenness that marks the human heart.

On his posthumous album *Thanks for the Dance* there is a song called “It’s Torn.” It’s a bittersweet, fragile piece, full of fragmentation and longing and half-finished threads.

Cohen sings...

*“My birth, it was a scene;  
my death, it was a dream;  
I don’t know who I dreamt;  
I do not know who I seem.”*

Everything in the song feels undone, unravelled, incomplete, *it’s torn*. And yet it is deeply truthful. Cohen understood something essential. Our lives are full of fractures, uncertainties, contradictions. We are, in many ways, patchworks held together by grace.

And what makes Cohen’s poetry powerful is not that he resolves those tensions but that he tells the truth about them honestly, humbly, and with a kind of sacred tenderness.

Why mention this here?

Because Psalm 16, this “golden psalm,” doesn’t pretend that life is simple. It doesn’t ignore our fears. It begins with a plea...

*“Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge.”*

This is the voice of someone who knows life can be torn.

This is the voice of someone who has felt the fragility of being human.

But unlike Cohen’s song, Psalm 16 does something else: it places that torn-ness into the hands of God. It trusts that even in the fractures, God is present, guiding, restoring.

If Cohen’s song honours the fragments, Psalm 16 honours the One who can hold those fragments together.

The heart of Psalm 16 is its declaration of trust:

*“You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing.”*

This is not the language of self-sufficiency. It is the language of dependence, gratitude, and clarity. David is saying everything that is good, everything that is whole, everything that is healing, everything that lasts, comes from God.

Not from wealth. Not from status. Not from power.

Not even from his own strength or cleverness.

Goodness comes from God.

In a world where we are constantly told that goodness lies in achievement, in possessions, in personal success, Psalm 16 quietly refocuses us: “Apart from God, I have nothing. With God, I lack nothing.”

*“The Boundary Lines Have Fallen for Me in Pleasant Places”*

This is such a beautiful line of Scripture. It paints a picture of a life framed by grace, a life enclosed by God’s love. Importantly, these boundary lines are not fences of limitation, they are lines of identity, stability, and belonging.

When David says this, he is not boasting. He is confessing gratitude:

“My life, with all its imperfections, with all its torn edges, has been held by God. I have been placed in a space of blessing, not because I deserve it, but because God is faithful.”

There is a humility in this line, a recognition that the goodness in our lives is not the result of our own careful plotting but of God’s gentle leading.

Psalm 16 moves from gratitude to guidance. David describes God as a counsellor, even as one who speaks in the quiet hours...

*“Even at night my heart instructs me.”*

There is something tender here. God is not only the giver of gifts but the giver of wisdom. God speaks into our thoughts, our anxieties, our nighttime questions.

Many of us know that nighttime voice, when the house is still, when tomorrow feels uncertain, when our minds turn to the things we cannot solve. According to the psalm, God meets us even there, not with condemnation but with counsel.

*“Because He Is at My Right Hand, I Shall Not Be Shaken”*

This is not bravado. It is quiet confidence.

Why shall David not be shaken?

Because *God is near*. Because God stands beside him like a defender, a companion, a strength.

And here again we see the power of poetry. David doesn't give us an argument; he gives us an image...

God at my right hand.

The place of support.

The place of strength.

The place of honour.

This is a relational image, not just a theological one. It is a picture of intimacy, of presence.

Then the psalm takes an extraordinary turn, so extraordinary that early Christians read it as a foreshadowing of the resurrection...

*“You will not abandon my soul to Sheol...You will show me the path of life.”*

David expresses hope that even death cannot undo God's relationship with him. This is not a fully formed doctrine of resurrection as later generations understood it, but it is a seed of hope, a recognition that God's care extends beyond the grave.

This is what makes Psalm 16 truly golden. It is not only about the goodness of life with God now; it is about the unbreakable future God promises.

A golden psalm because it leads us into golden hope.

*“In Your Presence There Is Fullness of Joy”*

The psalm ends where faith always points: toward God's presence, toward joy, toward life. Not happiness that comes and goes. Not pleasure that fades. But fullness: overflowing joy, rooted in the very being of God.

This is the joy that steadies us.

This is the joy that shines even when life is torn.

This is the joy that carries us through uncertainty into peace.

And so, we return for a moment to Leonard Cohen. His song *“It's Torn”* is full of broken lines and unresolved images, yet there is something sacred in the way he honours the truth of being human, how he admits the unravelled edges we all carry.

Psalm 16 does not deny those edges but it does reveal something deeper.

The God who holds us can take fragments and form them into something whole.

That the torn places do not have the final word. That joy, deep, full, lasting joy, is possible even in the midst of life's uncertainties.

If Cohen gives us the beauty of truth-telling in brokenness, Psalm 16 gives us the beauty of trust in the God who holds every broken piece.

Psalm 16 is indeed a *Miktam*: a golden psalm. Not because life is easy. Not because faith removes every fear. But because it names the God who accompanies us, guides us, steadies us, and ultimately brings us into fullness of life.

It is golden because it reflects the glow of hope.

It is golden because it shines with beauty.

It is golden because it reveals that God is with us, our portion, our cup, our counsellor, our refuge, our joy.

In a world where so many things feel torn, this golden psalm offers what we need most. A God who is faithful, a presence that does not leave us, and a promise that leads us through life, through death, and into joy everlasting.

Some questions for reflection and discussion in small groups:

1. Where do you personally resonate with the “torn” places described in Leonard Cohen’s song, and how does Psalm 16 speak into those spaces of fragmentation or uncertainty?
2. Psalm 16 uses poetic images “my portion and my cup,” “pleasant places,” “at my right hand.” Which image stands out most to you, and why might God be speaking to you through that particular picture today?
3. The psalm moves from plea (“keep me safe”) to deep confidence (“I shall not be shaken”) to hope beyond death. What practices or experiences in your life help strengthen this kind of trust in God’s presence?<sup>4</sup>

### **Hymn:**

406 STF – Have you heard the good news? OR

345 STF – And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood?

### **Prayers of intercession**

God of the near and the far,  
God of the steady ground and the shifting sea,  
you hold our lives in your keeping.

Trusting in your goodness,  
we bring before you the needs of the world.

***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

For the world:

For the earth beneath our feet  
and the sky that arches over every land;  
for places torn by war,  
for nations restless with fear,  
for all who long for peace but cannot yet see it

***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

For creation:

For the fields and forests,  
the rivers that remember their source,  
the seas that cradle life;  
for wisdom to cherish rather than consume,  
to guard what you have entrusted to us

***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

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<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Graeme Dutton

For the Church:

For your Church in every place,  
ancient and new, broken and beloved;  
for courage to walk faithful paths,  
for humility to listen,  
for joy in serving Christ  
***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

For our communities:

For our towns and villages,  
for neighbours known and unknown;  
for those who carry heavy responsibilities,  
for those whose voices are rarely heard,  
for all who seek belonging  
***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

For those in need:

For the sick and the weary,  
for the grieving and the lonely,  
for those anxious about tomorrow,  
for all who feel the ground giving way beneath them  
***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

For ourselves:

For the paths before us,  
the choices that trouble us,  
the joys we scarcely dare to name;  
teach us to rest in you,  
and to trust you with our whole lives  
***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

God of life,  
you set our boundaries in love  
and hold our future in your hands.  
Receive these prayers, spoken and unspoken,  
for we place our trust in you.  
***You are our refuge, O Lord.***

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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

Lord, you have blessed us,  
Take now these tokens of our gratitude,  
And bless the work this money, and these people, will do in service of your kingdom here on earth.

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Graeme Dutton

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

**Hymn:**

487 STF – You shall go out with joy OR

489 STF – All I once held dear, built my life upon

**Blessing**

As you head from this place, know that the grace of God goes before you,

Go with the Spirit in your midst, and the love of Christ in your hearts.

Go, to love as you were first loved.

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

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