

twelvebaskets



EASTER 7A

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

Produced by **twelvebaskets**. Subscription available from theworshipcloud.com

Seventh Sunday of Easter - Year A

17th May 2026



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

79 STF – I'll praise my Maker while I've breath OR

65 STF – Sing of the Lord's goodness, Father of all wisdom

Opening Prayers

All Age Talk

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn:

297 STF – Christ is alive! Let Christians sing OR

319 STF – Christ triumphant, ever reigning

Readings: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

Hymn:

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

312 STF – The head that once was crowned with thorns

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

701 STF – Heaven shall not wait OR

622 STF – When our caring love grows thin

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

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

503 STF – Love divine, all loves excelling

Blessing

The Vine Services are compiled and produced by twelvebaskets.

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

Copyright for content is retained by the original author / contributor.

www.theworshipcloud.com

Call to worship

The Spirit of God says come,
The Christ in our midst says come,
The Lord of Light says come,
And we come, O Lord, to follow in your way and worship you this day.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

79 STF – I'll praise my Maker while I've breath OR

65 STF – Sing of the Lord's goodness, Father of all wisdom

Opening Prayers

Let us pray,
Here we are bringing with us our hopes, fears and doubts, those things that can weigh us down.

If you haven't already, I invite you to close your eyes and take a deep breath.

Take this moment to quieten yourself.

As you breathe, if you can, I would like you to imagine you are sitting in a clearing in a peaceful wooded area, a nourishing place surrounded by beauty, a place where there is space for honesty and love.

Imagine, if you can, laying down at least some of those things that trouble us, weigh heavily upon us

As we lay things down let us acknowledge where we have gone wrong, the things we could have done differently.

God loves us and forgives us... God, help us love and forgive ourselves.

In this moment, let us bring our thanks to God for all that we have and for the opportunities we have.

Let us give thanks for this moment, this time to stop, to breathe, to recharge.

Let us think of things we are grateful for...

Now I know some days it is easier to feel gratitude than others, but I encourage you, in a moment of quiet to find at least one thing you can acknowledge in this moment.

Today, in prayer, we meet with God, help us breathe in love and peace and breathe out our fear, shame and uncertainty, leaving behind those things that weigh us down and trying to walk on more lightly in your world accepting and sharing your love.

Amen.²

¹ Call to worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Lorna Dobson

All Age Talk

[Optional- Post it notes and pens]

Have you ever listened to something – a story, a song, a piece of music, a preacher, and thought WOW? *(gather examples from the congregation if appropriate)*

In today's reading we hear something which should make us go WOW.

We hear Jesus praying.

Just before the events of the cross, Jesus pauses and prays to God his parental figure. And in this prayer, he speaks about his friends.

He knows they will soon face difficult moments. They will be confused, frightened, and uncertain about the future.

So, Jesus prays for them. He prays that they will remain close to God. He prays that they will stay united. He prays that they will be protected.

This Gospel reminds us that prayer is also something Jesus does for us. He speaks our names before God. He holds our lives before God. He entrusts us to God's care. That changes the way we think about our own prayers as well.

Prayer is sometimes seen as something we do when we need help. We can sometimes be in danger of using prayer like an emergency service line like 999. We use it when we face a crisis or a real problem. Now, that isn't wrong entirely, but it misses the bigger picture of what prayer is all about.

If Jesus prays for people, then prayer must be something important. Prayer is not about fancy words or perfect sentences.

It is simply bringing people and situations before God.

Praying for friends. Praying for family. Praying for our community. Praying for our world. So perhaps this week we could try something simple.

Think of one person you know who might need encouragement.

Then quietly say a prayer for them. *[if you have post it notes, you might want to spend some time getting people to draw or write a first name of someone they wish to pray for, you can either collect them in or encourage them to take them home].*

Because when we do that, we are joining in the same kind of prayer that Jesus himself offered.

We say together the Lord's Prayer

Amen.³

Hymn:

297 STF – Christ is alive! Let Christians sing OR

319 STF – Christ triumphant, ever reigning

Readings: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

³ All Age Talk written by Matthew Forsyth

Hymn:

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

312 STF – The head that once was crowned with thorns

Reflections on the readings

Mountain top experiences have biblical precedence, but are something that we too can experience. Such experiences, in the very practical sense, vary significantly – you may have climbed Snowden with the entire mountain being in cloud, you may have scaled High Pike in glorious sunshine, or you may have bagged a Munro, climbing through the mist and gazing over the tops of the clouds, with the sun illuminating what seems to be the heavens. The very eager walker may even set out in the dark, well before the crack of dawn, and see the sun rise far into the horizon, viewing the glory of God's world in a whole new light.

The readings from Acts and John today speak of something of the glory of Christ. In one, he prays that he may be glorified, in the other Jesus is taken up in what appears to be a glorious opening of heaven, that we might imagine would rival the transfiguration. In human terms, we speak of glory in things like the winning of a sporting trophy, or some other significant accolade, something that few of us may actually encounter. Other than those mountain top experiences, or some other time when we have a mere glimpse at glory, it can be hard for us to grasp what it means for Jesus to be 'glorified'.

[A question you might like to ask people to reflect on in quiet, in twos and threes where they sit, or across the whole congregation. If you do this in groups, you might like to offer the chance for people to shout out their answers afterwards.]

- Where have you glimpsed the glory of God?

As we join Jesus in his prayer at the start of John 17, we are actually in one of the longest and most significant prayers in the Bible. Jesus is on the mountainside in that moment between the last supper and his arrest. He has gone off to pray, and Matthew and Mark tell us that the disciples have fallen asleep. John however focuses on the nature of that prayer, a prayer that ultimately will include each of us as Jesus prays for those who "will believe because of them [the disciples]". First however, he prays that he and the father may be glorified.

In the bible, to glorify is to give honour and praise in such a way that reflects the majesty and greatness of God, not to 'give' glory, but to proclaim the glory that God already has. If Jesus is to be glorified, in order that he may glorify God, it is to show, and reveal, the full nature of God and the honour that he deserves. Jesus hints at how he will be glorified, in that his people will become aware of the eternal life that is found through knowing "the one true God". It is in this that we also become part of giving Christ the glory, for we are called to reveal Christ to others, that they may know the fullness of life that is found in Him. In doing this we glorify Christ.

[Questions you might like to ask people to reflect on in quiet, in twos and threes where they sit, or across the whole congregation. If you do this in groups, you might like to offer the chance for people to shout out their answers afterwards.]

- What of God's nature inspires awe in you?
- How do we help others to see this side of God?

Very soon after these events, we find ourselves in Acts 1 and the Ascension. For some this is hard to imagine – did Jesus just float off? What happened between him leaving terra

firma, and being hidden by a cloud? We know that angels then came for a chat with the disciples, to reassure them of where Jesus was. All of this seems to hint at shining and dazzling white, the sun shining behind the clouds with rays of light pouring through as Jesus is hidden from their view. The glory of God, united in heaven, shining down on the earth that he has left in physical form but now inhabits through the Holy Spirit.

Just before returning to heaven, Jesus says to them “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Just as in the gospel passage, the revelation of Christ’s glory is tied up with his disciples being his witnesses, making him known to the world.

As believers receive the Holy Spirit, the presence of God dwells in them. Something of that glory that we have looked at already, dwells in the heart of those who receive the Spirit. Jesus himself says that the Spirit will bring power, and if we were to picture the full power of God, we would not come close to how awesome and majestic he is. The entire power of creation is present in the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is present in us. That does not mean that we embody the full glory of God, that would be getting a little ahead of ourselves, but it does mean that the glory of Christ is closer than we may have first imagined.

It is also when we embody the person of Christ, his love and grace, that we also bring glory to others. Where comfort is brought to the broken, there are glimpses of glory. Where the hungry are fed, there are glimpses of glory. Where those burdened by grief are offered words of hope, there are glimpses of glory. Where light shines in the darkness, there are glimpses of glory. Where we carry the Christ light, we also carry the glory of Christ. And where we carry the glory of Christ, we glorify both him and the Father.

[Questions you might like to ask people to reflect on in quiet, in twos and threes where they sit, or across the whole congregation. If you do this in groups, you might like to offer the chance for people to shout out their answers afterwards.]

- Where have you revealed glory recently?
- Is there a time when you have been surprised by the glory of God?
- Is there a situation where you may feel challenged to take the Christ light and reveal Christ?

Amen.⁴

Hymn:

701 STF – Heaven shall not wait OR

622 STF – When our caring love grows thin

Prayers of intercession

God of all creation, we grieve for those parts of your world where your glory appears far off, where your power seems absent, where darkness seems to dominate. Where war and violence rob your people of life and freedom and where oppression robs people of the fullness of life, we are sorry. We praise you though that your power is never defeated, that where the Spirit may seem absent, we only need to look harder. We thank you for those

⁴ Reflection written by Philip Jackson

small glimpses of your glory that carry your light into the darkest corners of your world. Empower your people by the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may reveal you to those who need you most.

God of grace and truth, we pray for those who are living with a personal darkness. We pray for those battling with their physical, emotional and mental health. We pray for those who feel that they are living a lie, unable to accept the truth of who they are and the world around them. We pray for those who know the reality of violence and oppression in their own homes. Into their lives, may we gently carry the light of your love, may our words be the balm that soothes and heals, may we channel the power of your Spirit in gentle care, that you are revealed afresh to them.

God of love, in our own lives, we acknowledge those times when you have felt far off, where the darkness has felt overwhelming, when we have relied on our own abilities and ignored your power within and around us. We thank you that your Spirit is a personal gift, that we may know the incarnate Christ with us and within us, ever present, ever holy. Reveal your glory to us afresh, that we may know the renewal of your power, enabling us to embody you in the world.

Then we pray, in the name of the Christ of glory,

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

There are many opportunities in your world,
In this community,
In our lives,
To share your love and peace, O Lord.
Help us to be good stewards of these gifts, and our other resources,
That those opportunities are taken and your grace unfolds, O God
Amen.⁶

Hymn:

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

503 STF – Love divine, all loves excelling

Blessing

The Church of Christ, in every age,
Must keep on rising from the dead,
And we face that same task today,
This week, and in the weeks ahead.
Show us how to follow in the way of resurrection, we pray,
Amen.⁷

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Philip Jackson

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker