

# twelvebaskets



## ORDINARY 13A

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

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**Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A**  
28th June 2026



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**471 STF – Lord, I come to you, let my heart be changed, renewed OR**

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

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**611 STF – Brother, sister, let me serve you OR**

**661 STF – Give me the faith which can remove and sink the mountain to a plain**

Readings: Genesis 22: 1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6: 12-23; Matthew 10: 40-42

**Hymn:**

**249 STF – Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love OR**

**238 STF – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**239 STF – Sent by the Lord am I OR**

**256 STF – When I needed a neighbour were you there**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**440 STF – Amazing grace, how sweet the sound OR**

**459 STF – Captain of Israel's host, and Guide**

Blessing

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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](http://www.theworshipcloud.com).**

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## Call to worship

Here we are Lord, come to gather in your presence.

Here we are Lord, opening ourselves up to receive from you.

Here we are Lord, let us become aware of you, with, alongside and within us, by your Spirit, we pray.

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Hymn:

471 STF – Lord, I come to you, let my heart be changed, renewed OR

548 STF – Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine

## Opening Prayers

God of light and life,

Shine your love into our hearts this morning,  
so that we may come to worship open-hearted,  
full of compassion for every living being.

Shine your breath of grace into our bones this morning,  
so that we may come forgiving those who have wronged us  
and forgiving ourselves for the mistakes we have made along the way.

Shine your majesty into our eyes,  
so that we might be awed by what is possible  
and imagine a better future rooted in your love for us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

## We say together the Lord's Prayer

## All Age Talk

What do you think of, when I ask you to think about your family? What are some of the words and phrases that come to mind?

*You might like to ask people to share, if appropriate.*

Later in our service we'll hear a difficult story from the Old Testament, which it is hard to get our heads around today. A story about family, and a difficult moment in a relationship between a father (Abraham) and his son (Isaac), in which it is hard to believe that God would really ask anyone to do what God appears to ask in the story.

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

<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by Hannah Baker

It raises difficult questions for us, and we'll explore one take on those later in the service but, for now, let us use it as a chance to focus in on our own families. Are there difficult relationships there too? Are there painful memories? Is there confusion?

One affirmation we can take from this Bible story is – we are not alone. In the midst of our own confusing relationships with those we are related to, perhaps those we love deeply... our tradition is right there too.

As you listen to the reading later in our service, maybe this story from Genesis can be a reminder that throughout all of our lives, there are complications, challenges, fall-outs and pain. And that God is at work amongst all that. That having complicated family relationships does not stop Abraham becoming the father of many nations, nor Isaac one of the founding figures of Jewish and Christian heritage.

Wherever your at, whatever complications you are working through, God is at work in your life, and can be again.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

### **Hymn:**

611 STF – Brother, sister, let me serve you OR

661 STF – Give me the faith which can remove and sink the mountain to a plain

**Readings:** Genesis 22: 1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6: 12-23; Matthew 10: 40-42

*[You may wish to change the format of the service this week, and embed the readings into the sermon – with someone reading the Bible reading and then another voice offering the short reflection on that passage, as below. If so, you might like to have two hymns back-to-back, or change the order of service to suit your needs].*

### **Hymn:**

249 STF – Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love OR

238 STF – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

### **Reflections on the readings**

This week's readings speak into a world that often feels fractured and fearful. Wars rage in many places, communities are displaced, and trust between people can feel fragile. Many of us are aware of a church in decline, struggling to be a beacon of hope in a society that questions faith and moral leadership. Amid these realities, these readings invite us to reflect on courage, hope, and the transformative power of small acts of love.

*[If following the suggestion above, you could read Genesis 22:1-14 at this point, rather than at the point indicated in the order of service, and similarly with the other readings, below].*

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

### Genesis 22:1-14 – The Test of Trust

Abraham's story challenges us to trust in God even when the future is uncertain. God asks Abraham to offer Isaac, his beloved son, a demand that at first seems unbearable. In contexts of war, violence, and oppression, this story resonates with those who are asked to place their hope in the unseen and to take courageous steps toward life and justice, even when the risk is real.

Desmond Tutu reminds us: "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." Abraham's story is not about blind obedience; it is about courage rooted in hope. Even when we live in a world scarred by conflict and injustice, we are invited to trust that love, life, and faithfulness will ultimately prevail.

### Psalms 13 – A Prayer from the Depths

Psalms 13 voices our human frustration: "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?" In today's world, we may feel abandoned, witnessing suffering on screens and in our communities. This psalm teaches us that it is not wrong to bring anger, sadness, or doubt before God.

Yet it also models a movement toward hope: "I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me." Even in a church facing decline, even in communities where trust is broken, this psalm invites us to lift our gaze, to seek God's presence, and to nurture hope that motivates action rather than despair.

### Romans 6:12-23 – Living Freely in Grace

Paul speaks of freedom from the powers that enslave us and freedom to serve others in love. Our "slavery" to fear, apathy, or hatred can be transformed into people who live for life-giving action. In a world where distrust is rising, Paul's words challenge us to resist cynicism and to choose service and solidarity.

Oscar Romero said, "Aspire not to have more, but to be more." In the face of war, exploitation, and societal division, being "more" means allowing our faith to shape our decisions, to stand with those who suffer, and to resist systems that dehumanise. Freedom in Christ calls us to risk, to speak, and to act, even when trust is fragile and outcomes uncertain.

### Matthew 10:40-42 – The Sacred in Small Acts

Jesus reminds us that every encounter matters. To welcome a prophet or even offer a cup of water to someone in need is to welcome Christ. Pope Francis emphasises: "Each of us can do something. Even small gestures of care and love are precious in God's eyes."

In a world where communities are divided, where war and fear can harden hearts, these small acts are revolutionary. They remind us that hope, trust, and connection begin in everyday gestures, in welcoming the stranger, in listening deeply, in acts of kindness that restore faith in humanity.

During the conflict in Ukraine, a small church in a town on the front line began hosting local children and families displaced by war. The volunteers did not have much: they shared what little food they had, offered blankets, and spent hours listening to frightened children. One mother said: "It was just a cup of tea and a smile, but it felt like home."

Their actions were small in the scale of the war, but profound in the lives they touched. They embodied Abraham's courage, the psalmist's hope, Paul's freedom to serve, and Jesus' call to welcome even in the smallest gestures. It reminds us that even when the world feels divided or hopeless, our choices: our care, our courage, our welcome, each of these can be transformative.

## Reflection and Discussion Questions

*[You might like to break into small groups and look at one question each, or work through these as a whole congregation, or leave one or two for further reflection at home / after the service].*

1. Abraham's trust required stepping into uncertainty. In a world of conflict and fear, how are you called to trust God, or to take courageous steps toward hope and justice?
2. Psalm 13 shows that lament is part of faith. How can our honesty about doubt and frustration help communities heal, particularly when trust in others is weak?
3. Paul speaks of freedom to serve. How might our daily choices challenge systems of injustice or indifference around us?
4. Jesus affirms the importance of small acts. What small acts of welcome, kindness, or courage can you offer in a world that often feels divided?
5. How can the church—and our own faith—be a place of hope and reconciliation, even as trust declines and society feels fragmented?

*[When the conversation is over, bring people back together and share these words:]*

These readings call us to live faithfully amid uncertainty, fear, and division. Abraham models courage; the psalmist models honest lament; Paul models transformative freedom; and Jesus models radical welcome. Even in war-torn places, even in communities where trust is fragile, our acts of hope and kindness matter.

Desmond Tutu reminds us that hope is active, Oscar Romero calls us to courage, and Pope Francis invites us to see the sacred in even the smallest gestures. May we leave this reflection ready to trust, serve, and welcome, becoming beacons of hope in a world longing for light.

Amen.<sup>4</sup>

## Hymn:

239 STF – Sent by the Lord am I OR

256 STF – When I needed a neighbour were you there

## Prayers of intercession

*If you can project or print these prayers so people can join in with the responses, feel free to do so. Otherwise you might want to have two voices – one reading the parts for 'leader' and the other for 'all'.*

### Leader:

Jesus, you called Matthew from his table—  
not when he was respectable,  
but while he was still seen as compromised, excluded, and suspect.

You sat at tables with those others avoided,  
and revealed a love that crosses every boundary.

So we pray:

for those in our world who are judged, labelled, and kept at a distance—  
those whose dignity is denied by systems, by prejudice, by fear.

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<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Romeo Pedro

*(Pause)*

For refugees and displaced people,  
for communities under occupation or violence,  
for those treated as less than human in the places they call home.

**Leader:**

God of mercy,

**All:**

*teach us to see as you see.*

**Leader:**

Jesus, you said, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

We confess how easily we cling to what is comfortable—  
how often we protect institutions, reputations, and traditions  
instead of people.

So we pray:

for your Church across the world,  
that it may be a place of healing rather than exclusion,  
a table with room for all, not a gate that keeps people out.

*(Pause)*

For courage to listen to voices long ignored,  
for humility to learn from those whose stories unsettle us,  
for wisdom to choose compassion over control.

**Leader:**

God of mercy,

**All:**

*teach us to love as you love.*

**Leader:**

Jesus, you took the hand of a girl others had given up on,  
and you restored her to life.

You welcomed the touch of a woman  
who had been told for years that she did not belong.

So we pray:

for those whose bodies carry pain, stigma, or exhaustion—  
for those who are overlooked, silenced, or made invisible.

*(Pause)*

For women and girls denied safety or opportunity,  
for those living with illness or disability,  
for all who are told they are "unclean," unworthy, or unseen.

**Leader:**

God of life,

**All:**

*restore your people in hope.*

**Leader:**

Jesus, you noticed faith where others saw only interruption.  
You honoured courage where others saw only inconvenience.

So we pray:  
for the places in our world where life feels fragile—  
where hope seems buried, and voices cry out unheard.

*(Pause)*

For regions torn by war,  
for communities living under daily threat,  
for those grieving loss—recent or long carried.

**Leader:**

God of life,

**All:**

*bring healing and peace.*

**Leader:**

Jesus, you walk towards those in need,  
even when others resist, dismiss, or laugh.

Send us out in your way—  
not to stand apart, but to draw near;  
not to judge, but to accompany;  
not to control, but to serve.

*(Pause)*

Where there is division, make us bridge-builders.  
Where there is harm, make us agents of repair.  
Where there is despair, make us bearers of hope.

**Leader:**

God of mercy and justice,

**All:**

*send us in your name.*

**Leader:**

And so we gather all our prayers—spoken and unspoken—into the compassion of Christ,

**All:**

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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

Lord, you have greatly blessed us, and we are truly thankful.  
Today, we come to you in gratitude and offer you these gifts.  
May they be used, like all that we have and are, for the building of the kind of world that  
Desmond Tutu and Oscar Romero were seeking to build,  
A world rich in the love of you, O God.  
In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Romeo Pedro

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

**Hymn:**

440 STF – Amazing grace, how sweet the sound OR

459 STF – Captain of Israel's host, and Guide

**Blessing**

May you go out, with the grace of God present in your souls.  
May you go out, with the love of Christ flowing in your hearts.  
May you go out from this time, from this space,  
With the Spirit of peace within, alongside and before you.

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

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