

# twelvebaskets



## ORDINARY 32C

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

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**Ordinary 32 - Year C**  
6th November 2022



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**148 STF – Come, let us with our Lord arise OR**

**185 STF – Sing we the King who is coming to reign**

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**63 STF – Over all the earth, you reign on high OR**

**46 STF – Everlasting God, the years go by**

Readings: Haggai 1:15b-2:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38

**Hymn:**

**333 STF – Majesty, worship his majesty OR**

**306 STF – Now the green blade rises**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**363 STF – My Jesus, my Saviour OR**

**185 STF – Sing we the King who is coming to reign**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

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

**364 STF – O for a thousand tongues to sing**

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, to worship, to praise, to give thanks and to learn and grow together.  
Here we are, turning aside from the business and busy-ness of the world, to meet with the divine.

Here we are. Come, Lord Jesus, by your Spirit

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **Hymn:**

148 STF – Come, let us with our Lord arise OR

185 STF – Sing we the King who is coming to reign

## **Opening Prayers**

Heavenly Father,  
You are our refuge and protector,  
our place of shelter and security,  
the one who walks with us.

We lift our eyes and hearts to you and give thanks for your endless love.

May we be reminded of the gifts you have given us,  
the strength you provide,  
and the eternal welcome you give to your people.  
With one voice, we will praise you and give thanks.  
Why not say a quick prayer of ‘thank you’ to God right now, in the stillness?  
*[Silence]*

And, together, we confess our sins and recognise all the ways in which we have fallen short, in a moment of silence...  
*[Silence]*

As we come together, we know ourselves forgiven, loved, accepted and set free.

Come and be with us as we share in this fellowship,

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

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

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

<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by Sheila Matthews

## All Age Talk

Being a leader is a great responsibility isn't it! They must make hard decisions, support others, guide people on their journeys. There are many kinds of leaders aren't there? From those that knew they would become a leader, such as a King or a Queen, or Ryder from PAW Patrol, those that unexpectedly became a leader, such as Gideon from those bible stories, Sherlock Holmes leading Watson into all manner of trouble or Aang from The Last Airbender, and there are those who seek to become leader to make a difference, like a Prime Minister or a politician, or Jafar from Aladdin.

Leaders come in all shapes and sizes, but they all, in some way give out some instructions to a group. Even I'm a leader! Because if I say the words "The Lord be with you" some of you might respond with (wait for the response "And also with you.")

Let's see if I'm a good leader then!

*[Play a game of Simon Says! Encourage the kids and maybe an adult or two to come forward. Start out slowly with simple instructions, such as touch your nose, touch your head, hop on one leg, etc. Gradually get faster and try and catch people out. Try using the "Simon says don't touch your head" for example to catch people out.]*

Would you say I was a good leader? Or was I trying to catch you out a little bit? We put a lot of trust in our leaders, but sometimes they can mislead us for their own reasons, just like me trying to catch you all out!

In Paul's letters to the People of Thessalonica, also known as 2 Thessalonians, Paul was warning people in the early church that some of their leaders might try and mislead them away from God. But he said that we should all trust in God and pray that we are not misled!

So why don't we pray that now?

Dear God,

Give us the strength to support our leaders, the courage to challenge them, and the wisdom to know when we are being misled.

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

## Hymn:

63 STF – Over all the earth, you reign on high OR

46 STF – Everlasting God, the years go by

**Readings:** Haggai 1:15b-2:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38

## Hymn:

333 STF – Majesty, worship his majesty OR

306 STF – Now the green blade rises

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<sup>3</sup> All Age Talk written by Tim Annan-Hood

## Reflections on the readings

We are going to use some of Judith Dimond's writing to help us engage with this reading from Luke's gospel – which is one of those that fits into the criteria of: religious leaders try to catch Jesus out.

Why not close your eyes, or find a way to remove some of the distractions of this space, and try to imagine yourself there, in that scene we've just heard read.

Gaze on Jesus – he must be tired by now, for he's been teaching in the Temple for hours, and time and again he's been questioned and even tricked. First the Pharisees challenged him over his authority, and he countered with the chilling parable of the tenants who would not acknowledge their landlord, even when he sent his son. Then he'd sidestepped the awkward question about paying taxes to Caesar, which was another attempt to catch him out and put him on the wrong side of the priests or the Romans. And now comes another sally, this time from the Sadducees, who try to ridicule the notion of resurrection. Jesus is unbowed by all these threats and tests. But he must have been so tired.

Consider if we were reading this Gospel in Lent, we might emphasize the controversy and the threat to Jesus posed by the Sadducees' questions. But reading the passage as we approach Advent, where we will consider the end of time, we are encouraged to think about God's eternal plan. Consider the kind of afterlife Jesus is describing here. Reject the vague fantasies of your childhood, and the confusion we have been left with by the advances of modern science, which have so clearly shown us what lies above the heavens. Yet wait a minute – what of Einstein's theory of relativity? What of recent descriptions of parallel universes and anti-matter? Consider the words of the Creed: if God is truly the Maker of 'all things visible and invisible', seen and unseen, we are acknowledging the mystery of other worlds, and the possibility of other states of being. There seems to be room after all for notions of eternity.

Jesus chooses not to pander to our childish urge to know exactly what life after death will be like, but rather turns to the words God spoke to Moses: 'I AM who I AM'. God is God of continuing creation, full of unending energy, and not God of destruction. In him all things are alive. And Jesus is saying that Abraham, once alive, is alive still. Once we have been lit by God's spark and ourselves have been loved into being, God will always know us and cannot let us go.

Contemplate the possibility of our senses and thoughts being so overwhelmed by God's grandeur that all our attention is directed to him, and all the restlessness of our earthly life is over. The longing to recognize our loved ones is relinquished as we are caught up in worship and joy and glory.

In the resurrection Kingdom we will be in the company of our great-grandparents we never knew and our great grandchildren yet to be born. In heaven we will all turn our faces towards God.

Let us pray:

Eternal God, I believe in you, the Maker of all things,  
Visible and invisible. So I give you thanks  
For all the people I have loved,

And all those who have loved me  
And are now united with you,  
For in you, they are alive.  
Amen.<sup>4</sup>

What about you? How does this passage make you feel? How do you wrestle with questions about the afterlife?

Let's spend a few minutes in groups of 3 or 4, just where you are sitting – have a conversation about how you feel about questions of resurrection and life-after-death. And, when you've done that, share some reflections on how you communicate what you believe with non-Christian friends: do you talk to them about it? Do you think it is a helpful topic of conversation, or not? How do you navigate around these issues, particularly when sitting with people who are grieving or close to death? What do you think you need to learn or get better at in order to do this sensitively in the future?

*After the conversation, thank people, invite them to pick up any issues that have been raised after the service and be sure to make pastoral leaders and/or your minister aware of the conversation and anything coming out of it that could be helpful for you to reflect on in upcoming small groups, sermons or conversations.  
Then announce the next hymn...*

**Hymn:**

363 STF – My Jesus, my Saviour OR

185 STF – Sing we the King who is coming to reign

**Prayers of intercession**

Let's learn the response for these prayers of intercession.

When I say, 'Light of the world', please respond with 'Shine bright in the darkness.'

Light of the world,

**Shine bright in the darkness.**

Almighty God,

The world is yours and all its inhabitants.

There is much we have neglected in our care for it, and we need your help to protect and preserve it.

Light of the world,

**Shine bright in the darkness.**

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<sup>4</sup> Taken from Gazing on the Gospels Year C by Judith Dimond – The Third Sunday Before Advent – Year C

God of miracles,  
You took a simple meal and turned it into a feast for thousands. There are so many who are hungry and living in poverty. We cry out on their behalf and ask for your intervention and help.  
Show us what we need to do to build your kingdom here.  
Help us to be bold in fighting injustice and speaking truth where needed.

Light of the world,  
**Shine bright in the darkness.**

Lord of the Sabbath,  
You took yourself away for solitude and silence.  
You taught us to pray and to rest. There are so many feeling weary and heavy. We pray for refreshment and restoration, that your Spirit will renew those who feel far from you.  
Lord, there has been so much grief and pain and some of us have not fully healed from the losses we have faced.  
Please comfort and hold close the ones feeling lost and alone. Help us to be filled with empathy and kindness when we encounter people who are hurt by life and struggling.

Light of the world,  
**Shine bright in the darkness.**

Ruler of all,  
You turned the tables on the ones who desecrated the temple and made the establishment nervous. You asked questions that made people ponder.  
We pray that you will stir up our government and leaders to be asking their own questions of their leadership and seeking to be honourable, honest, and have the people's best interests at the root of their decisions. Help us to lead with integrity and draw on your example in all that we do.

Light of the world,  
**Shine bright in the darkness.**

Lord, our maker,  
You have crafted and created us; you know each intricate detail of our lives. Nothing is hidden from you, no thought, no deed. In our vulnerability, we open our hearts for you to examine them.  
We say silently the causes, people, and places that fill our minds and hearts. We pray that you will see and hear and act. Help us to be right with you, bringing our whole selves in worship and relationship with you.

Light of the world,  
**Shine bright in the darkness.**

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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

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<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Sheila Matthews

Gracious God,  
We have been richly blessed by your grace,  
We have received so much.  
As we say thank you, show us how to use these gifts for your Kingdom aims,  
Show us how to be generous with what we have,  
And wise with how we use it.  
In Jesus' name we pray,  
Amen.

**Hymn:**

295 STF – Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord OR  
364 STF – O for a thousand tongues to sing

**Blessing**

Let us go out with joy and be sent forth with peace,  
Let us go and sing of God's goodness in the places where we spend the rest of our  
week,  
Let us be open and ready for the encounter,  
Charged and energized to be Christ's hands and feet.  
Amen.<sup>6</sup>

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