

# twelvebaskets



## ORDINARY 3B

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

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

**Ordinary 3 - Year B**  
24th January 2021



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**250 STF – Jesus calls us! O’er the tumult OR**

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

Opening Prayers

The Lord’s Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**272 STF – From heaven you came, helpless babe OR**

**462 STF – Come with me, come wander**

Readings: Jonah 3:1-15,10; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**446 STF – I will offer up my life OR**

**60 STF – My soul rejoices in God my Saviour**

What are you called to?

**Hymn:**

**135 STF – I owe my Lord a morning song OR**

**440 STF – Amazing grace - how sweet the sound**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**660 STF – Called by Christ to be disciples OR**

**250 STF – Jesus calls us! O’er the tumult**

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, your people, gathered in your name on this Lord's Day.  
Here we are Lord, stepping aside from the world 'out there' to meet as your church.  
Here we are Lord, seeking an encounter with you again, a fresh taste of grace.  
Here we are Lord, we have come. Come amongst us, by your Spirit, we pray,  
Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **Hymn:**

250 STF – Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult OR  
46 STF – Everlasting God, the years go by

## **Opening Prayers**

Loving God, as you bring us together to worship you this day, fill all of our being with a longing to come close to you.

*[Pause]*

Loving God, we have kept silent but now is the time to give voice to our praise.

We come today because being part of this worshipping community gives rhythm to our week.

We come because you call us to be a faithful people, in times of sorrow and in times of joy. We come to encourage and affirm each other.

So therefore, let all of your people who try to be faithful disciples of Jesus offer prayer and praise to you. Let us worship!

Amen.<sup>2</sup>

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

### **All Age Talk**

Think of a time when you made a promise.

Perhaps it wasn't an easy promise to keep, perhaps – in the end – you couldn't keep it. But hopefully, in making a promise, you made a commitment to at least try and keep it. Whatever it was you offered or said, you then went out of your way to try to live up to your word.

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

<sup>2</sup> Taken from Gathering Prayers based on Psalm 32 by Christine Dutton

Perhaps already this year you have made promises – to your friends, to your family, in work or school, or perhaps to yourself in the form of a New Year’s resolution.

Every year, the Methodist Church has what is called ‘Covenant Sunday’ at the beginning of the year, when we reflect on the promises we are each making to God, and the promises the whole church can make to God. I wonder what those promises are for you today...

Each of us is different, and God is calling us to ‘be ourselves’ and to be the very best version of ourselves that we can be. What does that look like for you? How can you take the ‘next best step’ towards being a better person, a better member of your family, a better colleague or classmate, a better friend, a better disciple of Jesus?

We can’t fix all of our issues overnight, and we all have a long way to go on our walk towards being the best we can be, but let’s just try to take the next step in the right direction.

I invite you to spend a few minutes just sharing with those near you about one thing you could promise to do this week, to take the next step forward. Perhaps it is pray for someone, visit someone, make a phone call, or something else altogether...

*[If it is safe to do so, give a few minutes for discussion. You may wish to spend time hearing people’s views from around the congregation, or simply announce the next hymn].*<sup>3</sup>

**Hymn:**

272 STF – From heaven you came, helpless babe OR

462 STF – Come with me, come wander

**Readings:** Jonah 3:1-15,10; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

**Reflections on the readings**

The readings given today allow us to make lots of interesting comparisons. There is the call to Jonah who responds only after running away, getting caught in a storm and being swallowed by a fish. Compare that with the few lines we are given about the disciples in Mark where they are called by Jesus to ‘follow me; and the gospel writer tells us that they responded ‘immediately’, even to the extent of leaving a Father with only the hired hands for the family business. Both passages tell us of a message to proclaim, a short time scale, to call people to change. Both are set with lots of references to the natural world, the water, the boats and of course, the fish. You could even say that ‘people fishing’, be that with a big fish or by the disciples, is an aspect of both!

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

Both readings contain some kind of call from God, a proclamation to share, and change to make.

What can we learn about being called?

The call from Jesus to 'follow' comes to the disciples in the midst of what looks like a normal workday, fishing and fixing nets. A call that seems to come through a normal looking Jewish teacher, in a very simple way and yet they respond. Compare this with the response of Jonah, which was to hear God and turn and go the other way. Maybe many of us will relate more closely to the response of Jonah than to that response of the disciples as described by the writer of Marks gospel. Yet we also know that the disciples were not the perfect crowd, that this response might give us the impression of. No doubt like Jonah, each had been on a journey with God up to that point and a journey of doubt and faith, failure and hope, that was to continue as they walked with Jesus. God's call to Jonah was persistent, coming back to him even in his greatest turmoil and depths. God's call is not to perfect people, it's not to know all the details, but it is a call to follow and it may take some time to get there. What is God calling you to? What is that persistent nudge? That message that you need to share? Perhaps you're ready to respond? Perhaps you need to dwell in the depths with God some more? What will that call mean leaving behind? How would other people perceive that?

What proclamation is there for us to share?

Jesus shares the proclamation, 'The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news'. It is a message that God's kingdom looks different to the kingdoms here now. It is a message that calls everyone and every structure to re-examination and change. It is a message that challenges us to change our thinking and take on a new story of how the world can be. Allan Boesak, the South African preacher and anti-apartheid activist, once said, 'The more you say Justice, the more you have to say Jesus. The more you say Jesus, the more you have to say Justice'. The message of Jesus is one inextricably bound up with justice and a world transformed for the better.

Today there are significant messages of change and justice. Modern day prophets come in the form of young women campaigning for action on climate change and protesters with a message that Black Lives Matter. There a specific call in Britain for us all to re-examine our colonial history and the legacy that remains in our institutions, methods and thinking. Like Jonah, many of these prophets have to stand isolated, striking a radically different chord in the centre of a powerful kingdom. What is the proclamation that the church is sharing today? Is the church adding its voice to others in calling for change and justice? Is it leading? Or is it getting in the way? Is our teaching and theology drawing us closer to Jesus so much so that we go out to share the Good news of a Kingdom that is for all, that includes all. Are we sharing the message of Jesus that is challenging the kingdoms be they in our religious, political or economic worlds?

What change will we make?

We are told in Jonah that the 'wickedness of Ninevah had come up before God'. It is never revealed what that 'wickedness' specifically means but we are told that the leaders and the people responded to the message of change in sack cloth and ashes, traditional outward symbols of wanting to change. God recognises that heartfelt change and the story for Ninevah changes from destruction to life. The disciples too respond to the message of Jesus and change, it's quite a different situation, but again, just as with the people of Ninevah the direction of their lives is radically altered.

The church is called to re-examine the message of Jesus and repent. That means recognising the wrong it has done and changing course. In areas of keeping children and vulnerable people safe, equality, racism, and its care for the natural world the church has to often lagged behind and not heeded the call of those with a message for change. How can we be like the description of the disciples today and immediately get up, take action and follow Jesus? What are the places and things that we need to repent from individually and as an organisation. How can we work to repair and repay for the damage that has been done? Of course, this is not a one-time thing, but an ongoing process of repentance, renewal and following Jesus. Where do we need to change today? What reparations do we need to make? When the church seeks to change and repair how does that challenge the society we are in? Are we known for our humility, repentance and change? If not, why? What would it mean to be known as leaders in examining the 'wickedness' we have done?

The message of calling, proclamation and change is full of challenge. There is the personal challenge to follow Jesus in the midst of the normal working day. There is the challenge to the church to proclaim the Kingdom of God, one of justice, equality and living in step with creation. There is the challenge to change – so that the repentance of the church and the humility of Christians becomes the message of hope that all of us and all of society can change and become more like God's kingdom.

Amen.<sup>4</sup>

**Hymn:**

446 STF – I will offer up my life OR

60 STF – My soul rejoices in God my Saviour

*[Before introducing the next section, 'What are you being called to?', you might like to play the short introductory video - Vocations by Alison Ransome.]*

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<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Andy Dye

## **What are you being called to?**

“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:24, NRSV

Two questions for you to ponder, as we leave a few moments of quiet,

- 1) Think about a time when you experienced the presence of God vividly in worship: what was it that made that time special?
- 2) In what ways could you be involved in enabling people have an opportunity to meet with God?

*[You might like to play some music whilst people think and/or make notes].*

## **Hymn:**

135 STF – I owe my Lord a morning song OR

440 STF – Amazing grace - how sweet the sound

## **Prayers of intercession**

Sit in a comfortable position with feet on the floor and take two or three deep breaths. Relax each part of your body. Be aware of any sounds around you and focus on the sound of your breathing. Be still and know that God is with you.

*Keep a moment of silence*

Listen for the good news that God wants you to hear today.

Is it forgiveness for past wrongs? Hope for the future? Healing for a loved one? Joy in knowing that God is your rock and that salvation comes to you through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Listen, the kingdom of God is near.

*Keep a moment of silence*

Listen for good news that God offers those who are in pain: those who hunger and thirst, those who suffer grief and loss, those who are homeless, injured or living in war zones. Thank God for those who reach out with love and care, offering hope and hospitality, healing and reconciliation. Listen, the kingdom of God is near.

*Keep a moment of silence*

Listen for Christ's call on your life today. Hear his invitation to follow, to get involved, to trust the one who said 'I am the way, the truth and the life. Follow me.'

The kingdom of God is near.

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Alison Judd

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

**Blessing the offering**

Living God, put us and our gifts to what you will, rank us with whom you will, enable us to use all that we have in your service – whether we are employed for you or laid aside for you – that your Kingdom might come, your will be done.

In Jesus name we pray,

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

**Hymn:**

660 STF – Called by Christ to be disciples OR

250 STF – Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult

**Blessing**

May we go with the courage of Christ in our hearts.

May we go with the fierce energy of the Spirit in our bodies.

May we go with the God of love streaming through us and out into the world.

Go in peace, and serve the Lord.

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

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

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