

# twelvebaskets



## ORDINARY 26B

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

Produced by **twelvebaskets**. Subscription available from **[theworshipcloud.com](http://theworshipcloud.com)**

**Ordinary 26 - Year B**  
29th September 2024



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**293 STF – All heaven declares OR**

**83 STF – Praise, my soul, the King of heaven**

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**66 STF – The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases OR**

**620 STF – Thou God of truth and love**

Readings: Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22; Psalm 124; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50

**Hymn:**

**416 STF – There's a wideness in God's mercy OR**

**531 STF – What a friend we have in Jesus**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**628 STF – Faithful One, so unchanging OR**

**685 STF – In Christ there is no east or west**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life 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](http://www.theworshipcloud.com).

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

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

## Call to worship

Gracious God,  
Your love has called us here,  
And here we have come, to worship, to pray, to praise, to receive, and to share your love  
with the wider world.  
Come amongst us, as we worship, by your Spirit, Lord God,  
Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Hymn:

293 STF – All heaven declares OR

83 STF – Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

## Opening Prayers

This morning, rather than prayer-words from the front, we are going to have a conversation about prayer, taken from All We Can's 'Moving the Dial' resources, available as a kit full of fun activities and ideas from the All We Can website.

Here are four questions, to look at in small groups or pairs (or if you have a very small congregation, to do all together):

1. What does prayer mean to you? How might you define that word to someone who had never heard it?
2. What are your most healthy prayer-practices (What modes, actions, routines or rhythms best help you to pray, to connect)?
3. In Luke 11, the disciples turn to Jesus with the simple, but crucial question: 'Lord, teach us to pray.' Jesus' response is to teach them the prayer we now call 'the Lord's prayer'. If someone asked you to 'teach them to pray', what advice might you offer?
4. Praying for justice can be particularly difficult – because we know that people have been praying for peace, for an end to poverty, for relief for those in need for days, weeks, months, centuries...and yet suffering continues. How do you resolve these tensions? Where do you find hope in your prayers?

*There are no easy answers here, but a space to share wisdom and lament amongst your group.*

After the conversation, come together to share the Lord's Prayer.<sup>2</sup>

## We say together the Lord's Prayer

---

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

<sup>2</sup> Opening prayers written by All We Can - [allwecan.org.uk/practices](http://allwecan.org.uk/practices)

## All Age Talk

Let us learn a bit more about what it means to be a Justice Seeking Church!

The Justice Seeking Church report is a series of resources from the Methodist Church, written and coordinated by Rachel Lampard, and adopted by the Methodist Conference last year. Importantly, this work doesn't replace the church's ongoing commitment to justice and peace, born out of Jesus' earthly ministry and emphasised throughout Methodist history, right up to today. Rather, this piece of work hopes to help focus and gather our justice-seeking efforts together. To provide spaces where we can share together and achieve more. To help us ask and answer the question: what is mine to do?

This is the second in a series of five worship resources produced by The Vine, exploring each of the five priorities identified by the Justice-Seeking Church work, today's theme is **Pursuing peace: seeking justice and reconciliation**. Even if you are not leading worship or using The Vine in any other capacity this month, I do recommend looking up the other four in the series, or exploring the justice-seeking church pages of the Methodist Church website so you become familiar with the other priorities.

Peace and justice are tightly woven together. Peace cannot exist without justice. In order to create peace in the world we need to know peace within our own relationships and communities too.

So what is ours to do?

- Communicate – speak more confidently about peace and non-violence – theologically and politically – whilst recognising our disagreements.
- Stories – share experiences of violence and conflict.
- Campaign – advocate for a just peace, for example through campaigns to fund post-conflict reconciliation and alternatives to conflict.

A starting point might be...

Find out whether your bank or pension scheme is investing in nuclear weapons through #InvestingInChange (investinginchange.uk) supported by the Methodist Church, and write to ask them about their policies.

And what about finding out about and using some resources that reflect on peace on Peace Sunday or Remembrance Sunday?<sup>3</sup>

### Hymn:

66 STF – The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases OR

620 STF – Thou God of truth and love

**Readings:** Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22; Psalm 124; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50

---

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

## Hymn:

416 STF – There's a wideness in God's mercy OR

531 STF – What a friend we have in Jesus

## Reflections on the readings

What matters most to you? What is the most important thing? What might you describe as your 'top priority' or 'the principle you live by, and want to encourage in others?'

Do you know the answer to this question? Do your friends and family?

Let me put it another way: if you went into a coma today, if everything stopped working, if you died... and then you walked out of the local hospital on Tuesday afternoon, having been out of it for 3 whole days, after thinking you'd died...what would you do first?

The first thing we do when all that we take for granted disappears reveals what really matters to us, what we really care about.

Perhaps it would be family, perhaps you'd want to call someone, be with someone. Or your friends, or one friend in particular. Maybe you would jump in the car or on a train, out to a favourite spot. Perhaps you would say a prayer? Would you rush home to listen to your fav piece of music? Or order a Domino's pizza (other brands are available, and no judgement here!)

At the end of John's gospel, we find out what this moment is for Jesus – he goes to broken, terrified group of misfits we call disciples - and says 'Peace be with you'.

Jesus' reaction to resurrection and new life is to say: peace be with you.

And in so doing, he echoes what he's been saying all along, including in today's gospel from Mark. Even in this reflection about the value of salt, he ends with this: "Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other."

The Jesus-stories in the gospels reveal that peace is a God-thing. Peace is something God is keen on. Peace is a priority. Peace is part of the gospel story.

So, point one of this reflection, is to hear that **God is peace**.

What do I mean by peace? What does Jesus mean? In the Jewish tradition, the English word 'peace' is a translation of an ancient Hebrew word and idea – shalom. Shalom is more about wholeness, completeness, harmony. A presence of something wholesome rather than an absence of conflict.

In fact, Shalom is possibly even another word for God. God IS Shalom, and Shalom is God. God is peace.

Peace matters to God. God desires peace.

Peace is God and we encounter God through the wholeness, completeness and harmony in world around us, in our work place, in our relationships, in the natural world, in our prayers, in our reading. May you come to know, to live, to experience that truth: God is peace.

The second point is this invitation to hear Jesus' instruction: **be at peace with each other**.

If God is peace, and we are seeking after peace, then how can we build relationships of peace in our own lives, and with those around us? Too often, our lives are defined by opposition, by angst, by competition, by comparing ourselves to others. But is that driving us towards peace?

Story of Good Friday is that God has been there with us. The story of Easter is that, no matter how dark and violent the night, there is a dawn, a chance for change.

As Paul puts it – there is a peace that passes understanding. When all the world has turned to war, conflict, violence, profit, competition, argument... Peace offers an alternative. The still small voice of peace, of quiet, of invitation. Will you listen? Will you turn aside and join in with the Jesus story, the story that ends: peace be with you.

The Methodist Church has a great tradition of being involved in peace movements, including our own Methodist Peace Fellowship, part of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

- Methodist Central Hall Westminster hosted the inaugural meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in 1946.
- There has been a significant strand of Conscientious Objection particularly amongst some in the Primitive Methodist Church, co-existing with chaplaincy in the armed forces, with the current Army Chaplain General and Deputy Chaplain General both being Methodist ministers.
- Methodist Conference supported the signing of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017.

We have a heritage to be a part of, a story to continue, a role to play in bringing peace.

And that's where we'll end, with an invitation to think about how we can **seek peace and pursue it** (as the Psalmist puts it, and is echoed in 1 Peter).

What about us? Are we a people of Shalom? Do we testify to peace that passes understanding? Do we say 'peace be with you'? Do we practice peace together?

Shalom is a way of life. The writer and thinker Noel Moules has written a lot about being a Shalom Activist. That peace is not something that just happens to you – you seek it, you strive for it, you change and challenge systems of oppression that get in the way.

Get to know what peace feels like. Practice stillness, prayer, creativity, walking, running, painting, whatever it looks like for you.

And then pursue it: bring it about in the world. Chase peace. Make peace happen. Bring about shalom. Walk the path of peace.

Resist conflict. Be a peacemaker in your family life and relationships. Live a life that reflects wholeness, harmony, being at peace with yourself and the world around you.

This isn't easy - harder than signing up to receive emails from a global peace network. But being a shalom activist is not always the easy life.

But that is the Easter people's story, the Jesus story, the story of being a part of a justice-seeking church.

Let us pray...

Gracious God,

Guide the way as we take the next step in our walk with you.

Lead us towards peace and justice;

Show us the path of abundant love;

Set our feet on the road towards building your kingdom.

May our next steps follow yours,

And our hearts be turned outwards as we love by following your example.

In Jesus' name,  
Amen.<sup>4</sup>

**Hymn:**

628 STF – Faithful One, so unchanging OR  
685 STF – In Christ there is no east or west

**Prayers of intercession**

*The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though they may stumble, they will not fall, for the Lord upholds them with his hand.*

Loving God,

We pray for ourselves, our loved ones and community. As we look ahead, we ask that you will light the way for us and continue to draw us closer to you. We thank you for the members of our community who continue to serve in frontline services; give them rest and encouragement.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though they may stumble, they will not fall, for the Lord upholds them with his hand.

Merciful God,

We lift up our leaders to you as they guide our nation. We pray that you will give them wisdom, compassion and willing ears to listen. We pray that they will be able to find the balance of championing our country whilst being a caring and generous global neighbour.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though they may stumble, they will not fall, for the Lord upholds them with his hand.

Gracious God,

We pray for All We Can's work around the world, and all who work to tackle poverty and injustice, and to advocate for peace and justice.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though they may stumble, they will not fall, for the Lord upholds them with his hand.

Creator God,

We are sorry for the times when we have not looked after and protected the beautiful world you have given us. We are sorry for the times we are a part of injustice and discrimination, for when we fail to extend a welcome to all, to when we play a part in systems of oppression and poverty.

It's time for that to change, Lord. Help us to be agents of that change. Show me, what is mine to do.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though they may stumble, they will not fall, for the Lord upholds them with his hand.

Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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

---

<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Tim Baker

<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by All We Can

Living, loving God,  
We thank you for these gifts,  
And we commit them to your kingdom-building again today.  
Guide us, and all who will use these gifts of money, and the gifts of our lives, that they may  
be used for the demonstration of your love for each person and the whole cosmos.  
In Jesus' name we pray,  
Amen.<sup>6</sup>

**Hymn:**

638 STF – Through all the changing scenes of life OR  
503 STF – Love divine all loves excelling

**Blessing**

May you leave this place, knowing the power of peace in your heart,  
May the Spirit of the living God go with you.  
May you be a blessing to others, and receive blessings from those around you,  
Go in peace, hope and love, and in the power of the Spirit,  
To be a sanctuary to others and to yourself  
Amen.<sup>7</sup>

---

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

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