

# twelvebaskets



## ORDINARY 32B

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 32 - Year B**  
10th November 2024



## **Order of Service**

Call to worship

**Hymn:**

**342 STF – All hail the power of Jesu’s name! OR**

**521 STF – Here as we kneel, here as we pray**

Opening Prayers

The Lord’s Prayer

All Age Talk

**Hymn:**

**455 STF – All my hope on God is founded OR**

**593 STF – Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour**

Readings: Ruth 3: 1-5; 4: 13-17; Psalm 127; Hebrews 9: 24-28; Mark 12: 38-44

**Hymn:**

**562 STF – O God, what offering shall I give? OR**

**566 STF – Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee**

Reflections on the readings

**Hymn:**

**663 STF – I the Lord of sea and sky OR**

**243 STF – A rich young man came seeking**

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

**Hymn:**

**732 STF – Day of judgment! Day of wonder! OR**

**327 STF – Jesus is King and I will extol him**

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**

All that we have is yours, Lord God,  
All that we claim as our own is a gift, the gift of your all-consuming grace.  
Today we come to you in worship, singing your praise, learning, reflecting and praying together.  
May we know your presence amongst us this day, we pray in Jesus' name,  
Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## **Hymn:**

342 STF – All hail the power of Jesu's name! OR  
521 STF – Here as we kneel, here as we pray

## **Opening Prayers**

God of love and hope, as we come today to worship we are filled with gratitude that as this week has thrown up worries, distractions and uncertainties for us you have all the while been alongside us - constant and steadfast. We seek refuge and stillness in that presence now.

We give thanks that in this ever-changing and unsettling world you are constantly grounding us and guiding us home: a lighthouse for our hearts, minds and souls.

God of refuge, we sit with you here ready to let go of that which has held us back from seeing your light clearly and brightly across the harbour as we have struggled as small boats do out in stormy waters. We cut the ropes that restrict our movements and prevent us from sailing closer towards your harbour now.

We give thanks that in this ever-changing and unsettling world you are constantly grounding us and guiding us home: a lighthouse for our hearts, minds and souls.

God of sanctuary, we sit with you here in the knowledge that your light shines across these waters - dazzling and glorious - and that if we are paying attention there is no doubt it will guide us to safety today and always.

We give thanks that in this ever-changing and unsettling world you are constantly grounding us and guiding us home: a lighthouse for our hearts, minds and souls.

Amen.<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 Hannah Baker

## All Age Talk

*Materials needed (optional, see below): Two jars, one filled with marbles (or equivalent) and one filled with two small stones (or equivalent)*

In today's story, Jesus is at the temple, a busy place where people come to worship and pray. There is a special area where people can put their offerings — their gifts to God. Some people, especially the wealthy, come and put in a lot of money and make a big show of it. They want everyone to see how much they are giving.

But Jesus wasn't impressed by those people. He was watching something else — someone else. He saw a poor widow, a woman who didn't have much at all. She quietly came to the offering box and put in two small coins. These coins were so tiny they probably didn't make much noise. They were worth almost nothing compared to what the rich people were giving.

But do you know what Jesus did? He turned to His disciples and said something surprising. He said, "This poor widow has given more than all the others!" What?! How could that be? Let's think about that for a moment.

I have a question for all of you — who do you think gave more: the rich people who gave a lot of money or the widow with her two tiny coins? (*Pause for answers from the children and congregation.*)

You might say the rich people. They gave a lot! But Jesus explained that the rich gave their extra money, and it didn't cost them much. But the widow gave everything she had. She didn't have much but gave it all to God out of love and trust.

Now, this story isn't just about money — it's about how we give to God, and how we live our lives. Let's think about what we can learn from this widow:

1. God sees our hearts: God isn't impressed by how much we give or how much we do, but by why we give. He cares about what's in our hearts
2. It's not about the amount, it's about the sacrifice: sometimes, we don't have much to offer. Maybe we're not the best singers, or we don't have much money or time. But just like the widow's small offering was precious to God, whatever we give — our time, talents, and kindness — matters to God
3. Trusting God with everything: the widow trusted God completely. She gave what little she had, believing God would care for her

### *Optional illustration:*

Let's do something fun to help us understand this better. I have two jars here. (*Hold up two jars, one full of marbles, and one with just two small pebbles.*)

- This jar (the one full of marbles) represents the rich people who gave lots of money. They had plenty to offer, and it didn't hurt them to put in a lot
- This jar (the one with two small pebbles) represents the widow's offering. She didn't have much, but she gave it all

Now, if I shake the jars, which one makes more noise? (*Shake both jars — the jar with lots of marbles will rattle loudly, while the one with the two pebbles will be quiet.*)

You see, sometimes the loud, showy things get all the attention. But to God, it's not about who makes the most noise or has the most to give. God is looking at our hearts, just like he was watching the widow's heart.

When we give with love, kindness, and trust in God, our small gifts can make a big difference in God's eyes. Amen.<sup>3</sup>

**Hymn:**

455 STF – All my hope on God is founded OR

593 STF – Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour

**Readings:** Ruth 3: 1-5; 4: 13-17; Psalm 127; Hebrews 9: 24-28; Mark 12: 38-44

**Hymn:**

562 STF – O God, what offering shall I give? OR

566 STF – Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee

**Reflections on the readings**

Money is not a subject we like to talk about in church. In fact British culture is notorious for never wanting to talk about it at all. So this may not be a popular talk!

But we live in a time of financial crisis. According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, more than 1 in 5 people in the UK live in poverty. That's 14.4 million people, including 4.2 million children and 2.1 million pensioners. And because of our avoidance of the subject, people in poverty may feel shame about their lack of financial resources. Jesus, however, was more likely to shame the rich!

There are many stories in the Bible of people experiencing poverty, often because of social and cultural practices and norms which were out of their control. In today's readings we heard about the widows Ruth and Naomi. Lacking financial provision from their family and without a way to make their own money, they take the only option available to them – finding a man to care for them. Contrasting with Boaz's generosity, in the passage from Mark, Jesus criticises VIPs who look holy but only give a fraction of their wealth away. Meanwhile, they are taking advantage of widows, who are left at the mercy of the state or extended family when their income-making husband dies).

Interestingly, though we tend to praise the widow in the Mark passage for her generosity in giving "all that she has", some commentators note that just four verses earlier, Jesus has criticised the teachers of the law for devouring widow's houses. And two verses later, he prophesies the destruction of the temple. We might respect the widow's generosity, but does that mean that it was right for the temple to take all of her money? Those VIPs were called out not just for their pride in showing off their wealth, but also for their neglect of financially caring towards this widow and others like her.

---

<sup>3</sup> All Age Talk written by Matthew Forsyth

For some of us, money is an always-lacking necessity to keep our families fed and well. Others may have been blessed with more than we need. Either way, money – or lack of it – is not a sign of how much God loves us. God’s love for us is unconditional.

Which of the characters from the passages from Ruth and Mark do you identify with? If you’re able to, close your eyes for the next few minutes and consider what encouragement or challenge God might have for you in their stories today. We will take a moment of silence after we think about each character, to consider what God might be saying to us. *[note to speaker: pause for a moment after each of these characters, to give people time to reflect.]*

Do you feel like Ruth, impoverished in a foreign land for reasons outside of our control? Feeling the burden of caring for another who is dependent on us. Desperately searching for a place to call home, and for financial security. If you feel like Ruth, ask God to show their love to you today. *[pause]*

Or perhaps you feel like Naomi – relying on others to support us because of our age, or illness, or other reasons. Living in the place where we were born, but still feeling apart from those around us. Feeling disappointed or bitter about the unexpected things that have happened in our life. Powerless to do much ourselves to change our circumstances, but trusting in God. How might God be encouraging the Naomis amongst us? *[pause]*

Unlike Naomi and Ruth, Boaz is able to give generously to others, and is willing to do so. Another relative had the legal responsibility to look after Naomi and Ruth, but Boaz went above and beyond to care for them. Boaz’s are compassionate, willing to do more than our fair share. Our money belongs to God, and we want to use it to serve God and our communities. Where might God be asking us to show love to one another, by caring for them in practical, even financial ways? *[pause]*

Or maybe you identify more with the widow in Jesus’s story. We have little, but we give a lot. Perhaps more than we really should. What would be God’s message of love to us today? *[pause]*

I’m sure none of us want to identify with the teachers of the law, called out for giving only to look good. But perhaps, in our deepest of hearts, some of us must confess that we do not give out of an attitude of generosity or compassion, but because of the status our giving brings us. How might God be lovingly asking us to reconsider how our finances could play a role in sharing God’s love with the community around us, and those far away? *[pause]*

Many of us may feel like the disciples in Mark’s gospel. We are bystanders, watching the crisis from a comfortable position of observation, not really feeling involved personally. We don’t feel particularly in need, but neither do we feel flush with cash. We feel empathetic to what others go through, we judge some for their attitudes towards money, we give where we can. But we feel helpless to make much of a difference as the challenges are huge, and far beyond us. How might God be calling on us to show love to those around us, whether financially or in other ways? *[pause]*

Open your eyes. Maybe you don’t feel like any of these people, and that’s fine too, you don’t have to share anything now. It’s hard to reflect on money. But be encouraged that whatever your financial situation, and whether you feel burdened, ashamed, uncomfortable, desperate, or eager to take action, God sees you, God knows you, God loves you, and God believes you are worthy.

*If you have prayer ministry, a service like CAP, or any other spiritual or financial support or programmes associated with your church, this would be a good time to mention them.*

For discussion during the service or in mid-week classes and small groups:

- Why don't we like to talk about money? What do you think would happen if we talked about it more?
- Jesus speaks of the widow's generosity. Do you think some commentators are right to question the temple's acceptance of her money? What might be a different response to the widow, other than taking her money, that is still respectful and loving of her generosity?
- How might we, where appropriate, encourage people to financially support the church, our ministries, and charities?
- How might we, where appropriate, encourage people to support the church and ministries in ways *other* than financial giving, which are just as valuable?
- If you are interested in exploring how your church could rethink its attitudes to money and poverty, take a look at The Joint Public Issues Team website ( <https://jpit.uk/issues/poverty-and-inequality>) and Church on the Margins area of the Methodist Church website (<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/evangelism-growth/discover-church-at-the-margins/>).<sup>4</sup>

### Hymn:

663 STF – I the Lord of sea and sky OR

243 STF – A rich young man came seeking

### Prayers of intercession

*These prayers are taken from the Methodist Church's creative prayer cards. You can buy a pack for £4.99 or download a free PowerPoint at [www.methodist.org.uk/faith/the-prayer-hub/prayer-cards](http://www.methodist.org.uk/faith/the-prayer-hub/prayer-cards)*

Let us pray.

Many local business and high street shops are suffering financially at the moment. Let's pray for them in quiet for a moment.

Is there a shop you visit frequently? Spend a moment writing a blessing for the people who work and shop there.

In the story from the Old Testament, Naomi and Ruth's poverty was connected with the loss of their family and home. Let's pray for people like Naomi and Ruth, who are searching for a spiritual or physical home.

As it says in Psalm 46:1: 'God is our refuge and strength'.

Spend a moment thinking about what kind of refuge God is for people looking for peace.  
[Pause]

Imagine yourself there now, with God. How would you describe it to others?

Jesus spent most of his time with people who society would have considered to be outcasts. Let us reflect on how we might share the love of Jesus with those around us.

As Jesus says in Luke 4, 'He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor'.

---

<sup>4</sup> Reflection written by Abi Jarvis

Spend a moment praying, thinking and praying about how Jesus might be inviting you to be good news to the people around you today. *[Pause]*

We have spent time thinking about the needs of people around us. Let's thank God for the things we are grateful for.

Choose a letter of the alphabet. Think of something that you are grateful for that begins with that letter.

Take some time to express your gratitude to God.

We finish by remembering God's love for us. *[Pause]*

We bring these, and all our prayers, in the name of the one who loves us, Jesus Christ, Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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

Lord of the gifts,  
Bless these gifts we pray,  
That they, and each of us here today, might be used to for your glory,  
And the building of your kin-dom here on earth.

Amen.<sup>6</sup>

### **Hymn:**

732 STF – Day of judgment! Day of wonder! OR

327 STF – Jesus is King and I will extol him

### **Blessing**

God of all grace,  
Show us how to use the resources we have,  
The blessings you have given us,  
To transform society and bring peace and justice,  
In the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit,

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Prayers of intercession written by Abi Jarvis

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

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