

twelvebaskets



ORDINARY 33B

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

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Ordinary 33 - Year B
17th November 2024



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

60 STF – My soul rejoices in God my Saviour OR

148 STF – Come, let us with our Lord arise

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

56 STF – King of glory, King of peace OR

186 STF – Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Readings: 1 Samuel 1:4-20; Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25; Mark 13:1-8

Hymn:

81 STF – Now thank we all our God OR

455 STF – All my hope on God is founded

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

633 STF – My soul finds rest in God alone OR

319 STF – Christ triumphant, ever reigning

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

350 STF – I cannot tell why he whom angels worship OR

134 STF – Christ, whose glory fills the skies

Blessing

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Call to worship

Come, let us gather,
Come, now is the time to worship,
Come, here is the place of prayer,
Come, the Holy One is in this place,
Let us meet with the divine, together,
In Jesus' name,

Amen.¹

Hymn:

60 STF – My soul rejoices in God my Saviour OR

148 STF – Come, let us with our Lord arise

Opening Prayers

Loving God,

We come to worship today choosing to open our hearts to all that holds glimpses of your love surrounding us. May we bring Autumnal spirit into our time together this morning and allow ourselves to be at peace with the season of the present despite all that tries to pull us away.

Let us sit in your love with the peace of creatures hibernating below ground: resting safely with calm and steady heartbeats in the knowledge that now is time for stopping and that the warmth will always come again.

Let us experience the world around us with child-like tastebuds: savouring cinnamon, nutmeg and clove aftertastes and feeling gratitude to the earth for the sustenance of the root vegetables it provides.

Let us allow the Autumn breeze to help us to let go of that which weighs us down and holds us back from entering fully into the wonder around us and within us.

As ongoing news of violence, hatred and selfishness threatens endlessly to pull us into despair, we stop this morning to turn our eyes and our hearts to the beauty of your creation. Thank you for the wonder of the natural world and for making us a part of it.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

¹ Call to worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Hannah Baker

All Age Talk

I have a question: Have you ever seen a really big and cool building, like a skyscraper?

In our story today, Jesus and His disciples walk near the temple in Jerusalem. Now, this temple was HUGE! It was one of the most beautiful and impressive buildings in the world at that time.

The temple felt unshakable, permanent like it would last forever.

But then Jesus said something surprising. He told them, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down.” Whoa! Can you imagine how shocking that would be for the disciples? Jesus was saying that this big, strong temple wouldn’t last forever.

Later, as they sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked Jesus, “When will this happen? How will we know when these things will take place?”

Jesus answered by telling them that difficult times would be ahead — wars, earthquakes, and even people trying to trick them into following false teachers. But he also gave them an important message: “Do not be afraid.” These things might happen, but they are not the end. He told them to trust in God through everything.

Now, let me ask all of you something. Have you ever felt like everything around you was changing or falling apart? Maybe you moved to a new school or had to deal with something hard like a family problem or sickness. How did it make you feel? (*Pause for responses.*)

It can feel pretty scary when things change and when life feels uncertain, right? But Jesus’ message to the disciples — and to us — is that even when life feels shaky, we can stand strong when we trust in him. Amen.³

Hymn:

56 STF – King of glory, King of peace OR

186 STF – Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Readings: 1 Samuel 1:4-20; Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25; Mark 13:1-8

Hymn:

81 STF – Now thank we all our God OR

455 STF – All my hope on God is founded

Reflections on the readings

Today is Remembrance Sunday – a day of ceremony, where people all across the world pause for a moment. There will be silence at cenotaphs, wreath laying, lighting of candles and bugles playing. Let’s think for a moment about ceremonies, especially ceremonies held within church.

³ All Age Talk written by Matthew Forsyth

What is your first memory or experience of a church ceremony? Pause for a moment and think about it.

[You may like to tell your own story here, of a baptism, or a funeral, or similar, that you remember. How did the ceremony make you feel? How did the ceremony make space for God, or get in the way of noticing God? You could ask the congregation the same questions and get them to reflect in pairs or in silence].

How does all that compare to today's remembrance ceremonies? I expect there are some of the same themes – some of frustration, some feeling it's a difficult and painful day, some seeing it as a challenging duty with lots of polishing, cleaning and rehearsing. Some as a complete waste of time. But for many – especially those who have experienced war or seen the dangers of conflict – the importance of it becomes clearer. The sounding of the bugles, the reading of the poetry, the singing of the well known and well loved hymns, and of course the laying of the wreaths, becomes meaningful for them and eventually it engages the whole of their being.

Perhaps it becomes a means of grace, a way for God to speak to us.

On this Remembrance day, I invite you to think about all church services, for they are all ceremonial acts of remembrance, of one sort or another. How is God at work in the act of the ceremony? How are you made aware of the divine presence as you worship? What ceremonial acts or postures do you need to take, or duck out of, in order to tap into God's love.

Is church just an interesting spectacle that you attend out of duty? Or does the ceremony, the worship engage your heart, your soul and your mind too? Is there a meaning in them for you?

It is important to realise that Jesus left us without specific instructions on how conduct church services - hence the wide variety of worship styles offered by different groups of his people. You will find no details of when and where to meet in the New Testament. No formal liturgy. No specific music of any type or style. And that is the invitation into our own creativity, our own context – to create spaces of ceremony where we can encounter God in a way that works for each and every one of us.

In today's gospel reading, Jesus talks about the destruction of the temple and the bringing about of the 'end times'. All the ceremonies, all the habits, all the earthly buildings and systems we have become used to, will fade away. And what then are we left with?

The experiences of having lived through the Covid pandemic may have left similar questions for us... Similar experiences. Our 'temples' were torn down. So many of the things we came to take for granted were taken away. What then are we left with? What is meaningful, and how do we make meaning out of what is left?

How are those earthly things changing and transforming us at a spiritual level? How are they deepening our connection with the divine? How are they helping us to seek peace and pursue it, as the Psalmist says.

Make me a channel of your peace, O God. In a world torn apart by war. Make each of us a little channel of that peace.

In the gospel reading, Jesus is full of warnings – and I suppose the big take away message seems to be: stay on your toes! Be alert! Don't let the warning signs pass you by...

You may have seen the political slogan: 'if you are not angry, then you are not paying attention'. Whilst this might not always be a gospel-message, I think there is something of Jesus' urgency in that slogan for us to pay attention to today. How can we be a part of the response to a world in need? How can we notice the conflict, the wars and rumours of wars, the nation rising up against nation, and not seek to be advocates for justice and peace?

The Methodist Church stands in a long and proud tradition of seeking peace. We have our very own Methodist Peace Fellowship, which is now part of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. If you didn't know that before today – go away and look them up! Some of the most famous conscientious objectors and peace advocates were Methodists. And the very first meeting of the United Nations, formed after the Second World War to help ensure global peace...was held at Methodist Central Hall Westminster.

You are part of that story today, part of a justice-seeking, peace-pursuing church. What does it take for you to take the solemn occasions of remembrance and be inspired to turn them into sources of strength for action, activism and peace, in Jesus' name?

Let us pray.

Show me what is mine to do, Lord God.

Show each of us what is ours to do.

Help us to stand up for justice, joy and peace in your world, we pray,

Amen.⁴

Hymn:

633 STF – My soul finds rest in God alone OR

319 STF – Christ triumphant, ever reigning

Prayers of intercession

Our response for these prayers is simple, when I say 'let us pray', would you join in the response, 'for peace in our world.'

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

Let us bring our prayers to God, holding before Him our longings for peace, our memories of those who have been lost, and our hope for a future of justice and reconciliation. We pray for our community, the world, and all who seek peace.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of all nations, on this Remembrance Sunday, we bring before you the pain and destruction caused by war and violence. We remember those who have suffered, died, or lost loved ones in conflicts throughout history and today.

Grant, O Lord, that the world may learn the ways of peace. Where there is conflict, may your Spirit bring understanding. Where there is hatred, may your love sow compassion.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of peace, guide the leaders of the nations in the ways of justice and mercy. May they seek the well-being of all people, setting aside the lust for power, greed, and division. May your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

Merciful God, we remember today all those who have laid down their lives in service to their country. We honour their memory and grieve their loss. We also pray for those who

⁴ Reflection written by Tim Baker

returned from conflict, carrying with them the wounds – visible and invisible – of war. Comfort all who still bear the scars of violence and heal the brokenness in mind, body, and spirit.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of comfort, bind up the wounds of those who grieve, and grant healing to those who suffer. May we honour their lives by working tirelessly for the peace for which they longed.

Loving God, we lift up our own community. Help us to be agents of peace in the world around us. Where there is division, may we bring understanding. Where there is hurt, may we bring healing.

We pray for our neighbours and all who work for justice and reconciliation here, that we may be united in the common cause of peace and compassion.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of unity, may your peace begin with us. Inspire us to act with kindness, humility, and courage as we seek to embody your love in this community.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of the oppressed, we remember today all those who are most vulnerable in times of conflict — the refugees, the displaced, and the marginalised. We pray for those who live in the shadow of war and violence, whose homes and lives have been torn apart. Grant them protection, and may we, as your people, extend our hands to welcome and support them.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of justice, strengthen us to stand in solidarity with those who are suffering. May we seek peace not only for ourselves but for all who long for safety and security.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

God of hope, we ask for your guidance as we seek to build a future free from the horrors of war. Teach us to be peacemakers in our daily lives, in our decisions, and in our relationships. As we remember the past, may we commit ourselves anew to the work of peace, reconciliation, and justice for all.

God of hope, fill us with the courage to build bridges of peace, and guide us as we strive to create a world where all people can live in dignity, free from fear and violence.

Let us pray,

For peace in our world.

Gracious God, we thank you for hearing our prayers. As we remember the past, help us to act in the present, and guide us toward a future of peace. Let your peace reign in our hearts, our communities, and our world.

Amen.⁵

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Tim Baker

We will now take up the offering.

Lord of this Sunday,
Take up these gifts, and bless the hands that use them.
Use our meetings, our committees, our treasurers and spreadsheets, our hopes and our dreams,
For the fulfilment of your desire for a world of justice and joy.
In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

350 STF – I cannot tell why he whom angels worship OR

134 STF – Christ, whose glory fills the skies

Blessing

Come, our time of gathered worship is over,
Come, our time of life-long worship is just beginning again,
A fresh week awaits,
New opportunities to encounter the risen Jesus.
Let us go out, and discover a God who is already there, waiting for us.

Amen.⁷

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker