

twelvebaskets

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ORDINARY 24C

11th September 2022

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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For more information <https://theworshipcloud.com/terms/free-weekly-resource>

Opening Prayers

You might like to say these words out loud:

Loving God,
Open my ears, so that I may hear your word anew today
Open my heart, so that I may be moved and inspired by your Spirit.
Speak your word to me
Challenge me
Strengthen me.

Hold a moment of stillness and listen, listen to all the noises happening around you, listen for the still, small voice of the Spirit of God, breathing over all things, perhaps speaking to you?

Walk alongside me, this day, as I strive to be one of your people of light and love
In Jesus' name

Amen.¹

You may now wish to say The Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are most comfortable.

Hymn:

440 STF – Amazing grace - [YouTube](#)

Or you might like to worship along to this alternative version by the National Methodist Choir: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoYGIYdwMVs>

Readings: Luke 15:1-10 – [Click for reading](#)

Response to the readings:

How familiar are you with the Christian concept of 'grace'?

In one online dictionary, the definitions read as follows:

- The free and unmerited favour of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings.
- A divinely given talent or blessing.

What does it mean to you? Do either of these definitions help? Why not look up a few more, or try to write your own?

¹ Opening prayers written by Emma Dobson

One of the great thinkers about grace is the theologian Paul Tillich. One of his most famous quotations about what grace is like is from his book, *Shaking the Foundations*. It's worth having a read:

You are accepted. You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!

Grace is this ongoing miracle that 'everything is gift' and that 'I am accepted'.

The sheep is lost, but the shepherd has gone out looking for the sheep. Not because the sheep has earned this care and attention, but because the sheep is accepted, and all the sheep has to do is accept that it is accepted, and return with the shepherd to the fold.

Can you do the same? Can you accept your own acceptedness?

When you talk about faith, or love, or life, or hope with your friends, can you tell your story through the lens of grace? Can you tell them about your own acceptedness?

Why not take some time this week to reflect on your own story. Where have you experienced grace – the sense that you are accepted, despite of who you are and the mistakes you have made?

What other stories are you aware of that channel or capture this idea of grace? You might like to watch the opening few minutes of Terrence Malik's film 'Tree of Life', which grapples with the difference between grace and human nature. You can look up the opening sequence on YouTube or buy the whole film and watch it all! When you are talking about your own story, your life, when you are giving your testimony, are you able to articulate how grace has played its part?

As part of your reflections, you could listen to this song from Canadian worship leader, Chelsea Amber: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2ov5WnQeyE>
(Please note: Twelvebaskets does not own the copyright to this video and you must seek prior permission from the copyright holders before using it in public worship or an online stream. Thank you.)

Blessing

Loving God, you walk with us in the hills and the valleys of life,
You rescue us when we go astray,
You welcome us back when we wander from you.
God who is shepherd, guide me on straight paths this week.

Amen.²

² Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

Monday 12th September

- This is the day that the Lord has made. This day, the day you are living right now.
As the worship hymn continues: 'let us rejoice and be glad in it'.
- It isn't always easy to rejoice or 'be glad', but the hymn writer is inviting us into recognise that today is a gift from God, and we can celebrate that – if nothing else.
- How are you celebrating the gift of today? How are you making use of it? How are you using it to offer worship to God?
Pray about that this day, as you are out and about.

Tuesday 13th September

- God of all grace,
Come and be known to me here, by your grace,
Show me how to put your love to work in the world,
Show me how to be a part of all that is good and wholesome and right,
Show me how to share the good news of your love with people I meet,
Show me how to follow you.
Amen.

Wednesday 14th September

- Today, seek out a space to be quiet. Seek out a moment when you can just be in a quiet space, and listen to the sound of your own breathing.
Stay in this space as long as the responsibilities and calls on your time allow (i.e. don't get fired for disappearing from work for 2 hours!) and just listen to the rhythms of your breathing. Hear, in those rhythms, the ancient name of God: Yhud, Hey, Vah, Hey. Y H V H. Yahweh.
- God is present, in your breath. Within and around you. In your very being.
Amen.

Thursday 15th September

- Today is World Lymphoma Awareness Day. So our prayers are for all the people affected by this increasingly common form of cancer: nearly 1,000 people are diagnosed with this disease every day.
- Let us pray for all who live with the disease, all who care for them, all who are seeking a cure, all the research that is happening into how we can cure this illness, all who are living with the grief and the pain of having a friend or family member who is suffering.
- Come, O God of healing, God of hope, God of love. Amen.

Friday 16th September

- Look at your feet. Notice the scraps and marks on your shoes or slippers, or if your feet are bare notice the lines and wrinkles. Wriggle your toes and notice how that feels.
- Look at the ground your feet are on. Is it a carpet? Or wood? Laminate or something else?
- Pray this prayer:
- Lord God, help me to stay grounded today. Help me to stay connected to you and to your beautiful creation, so that all my decisions might reflect your glory.
Amen.

Saturday 17th September

- Time to get creative.
- Today, if you can, why not make a prayer mosaic? You could take strips of tissue paper, bits of recyclable rubbish, the newspapers from the week that have piled up in the front room, or anything you like...and tear out strips or pieces in different colours and stick them to a piece of paper.
- You might like to make a particular pattern or shape – a cross, a representation of the earth, some praying hands if you feel particularly creative...or you might like to just enjoy the process. Tearing and sticking. Cutting and sticking. Arranging.
- As you make your mosaic, think about the week just gone. Pray for the people you have met. Pray for the news stories that have stuck with you. Offer prayers for those on your heart today.