

twelvebaskets

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EPIPHANY 2A

15th January 2023

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

Hold a space, for prayer. You might like to candle, or kneel, or sit, or somehow change your posture to make this space feel, or become prayerful.

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?

A personal invitation to you, to follow Jesus. Not a generic shout or gesture or pressgang; its personal. Will you answer? Will you follow?

Will you love the “you” you hide if I but call your name?

You are seen by God. They know your dreams, anxieties, the things that weigh heavy on you, the things you put off, the things you bury deep. They are calling you out, worries and all, to be the person they know you are. Be emboldened and supported to be you. Share your worries. Love yourself as you are called to love others.

Will you use the faith you’ve found to reshape the world around?

How can we build your Kingdom here amidst ongoing conflicts? A world where hatred and fear come easier than love and understanding? Where the greed of others causes families to choose who gets fed? A world where “Warm Spaces” and “Foodbanks” are fixes to systemic problems?

Guide, inspire, and support me as I use my faith and trust in you to face the injustices of this world.

Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.

On this journey though life, keep me aware to the world around me, to hear the sound of your voice, and cast my gaze on what is on your heart.

May I be the change in the world. May I be transformed by your love, the love of others, and be the love that transforms others in our community.

I bring this all to you, in the name of your son,

Jesus Christ.

Amen.¹

You many now wish to say the Lord’s prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Hymn:

83 STF – Praise my soul, the King of Heaven - [YouTube](#)

Readings: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 – [Click for reading](#)
John 1:29-42 – [Click for reading](#)

¹ Opening prayers written by Tim Annan-Hood

Response to the reading

The language of choosing and being chosen is used quite a bit in the Old Testament. The Jews in the Hebrew Bible are chosen by God. They are a chosen people, who God cares for and has set aside a land for. We see God protecting them, teaching them and punishing them when they choose false idols or disobey the laws set down for them. We see this quite notably in the story of Moses where God leads the Israelites out of slavery into the wilderness and on to the promised land – with a few hurdles along the way. God chose the Israelites to be an example, to live by God's way and to be different from the gentiles.

But then, in our gospel reading and the first few verses of Paul's letter to the Corinthians, we see a shift from God's people being chosen people to being people asked to choose.

Paul talks about being called rather than chosen, and people 'calling' on the name of the Lord. After Jesus, we become called people rather than chosen people. God calls on us to be followers and we can choose whether or not to follow. While God may call us to a particular role or place we are the ones choosing whether to take this up rather than being assigned to a specific task or role that we must fulfil.

Jesus walked among us so that everyone had the opportunity to choose life in all its fullness and through our choice we can have a personal rather than collective relationship with God.

What does that look like for you today?

How can you choose life, and life in all its fullness?

How are you discerning what it is that God might be inviting you to do? Is there something that energises you, something you get particularly angry about and want to see changed, something that gives you life? Listen to the divine ways of prompting you into following your calling.

Leave some space today to pray about this.

Hymn:

239 STF – Sent by the Lord am I - [YouTube](#)

Blessing

Let me rise from this space, hearing words of encouragement from the Creator,
Let me rise from this space, inspired to follow in the ways of the Christ,
Let me rise from this space, transformed by the power of the Spirit,
Travel with me, triune God, that I may come to know you more each day.

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

Monday 16th January

- In the midst of winter, imagine all the bulbs and seeds sitting in the ground, held and protected by the soil, preparing for the spring. Imagine the way that God is holding and protecting you.
- Now, ask God for the things you need to flourish and bloom in the future.

Tuesday 17th January

- Look around you. Can you see an item that somebody else once gave you as a gift? Or something that once belonged to another person?
- Pray for that person now, giving thanks for them, and asking that they know God's presence with them today, wherever they are.

Wednesday 18th January

- Place your hand on your shoulders and think of all the burdens you feel you're carrying. Pray that God might help lighten your load. Roll your shoulders a few times and sit quietly after you've said Amen.

Thursday 19th January

- Pick up a book or magazine that's near to you. Open it randomly. Randomly pick one word from the page you're on. Write the word down. For each letter of the word, think of a person you know whose name begins with that letter. Pray for them one by one.

Friday 20th January

- Put an empty chair next to you. Sit down in another chair. Imagine Jesus is sitting with you in the empty one. He speaks your name. Tell him about what's on your heart. Listen for what he says to you.

Saturday 21st January

- Look back over the last year of your life. Where do you notice God's goodness? Where do you remember feeling God's presence? Give thanks for those times.