

twelvebaskets

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ORDINARY 25C

18th September 2022

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

Lord Jesus Christ,
Accepting your open invitation, we come into your presence and lay down our baggage.

We don't even have to unpack, for all of it is known to you:

The pain we have felt
The pain we have caused
The difficult conversations
Our regrets
Our fears
The hopes we daren't speak aloud

We give you thanks, for you offer to share the load,
In the peace of this moment, may we hear your words of forgiveness, feel your comforting arms around us, and simply know you are near

Accepting us as we are
Loving us as we are
Holding us
Giving us a place of safety, just to *be*,

Gently challenging us to keep moving forwards, strengthened by your spirit.

Lord Jesus Christ, we love you

Amen.¹

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

Hymn:

404 STF – God's spirit is in my heart - [YouTube](#)

Readings: 1 Timothy 2:1-7 – [Click for reading](#)

Response to the readings

Today's passage from 1 Timothy is written to a new community of faith, who are just starting to get themselves established. Paul is writing to them through his friend Timothy, and spends lots of the letter sharing with them good practices for a community of believers. He talks to them about leadership, and service, godliness, teaching, caring for the vulnerable and avoiding false teaching. But right at the start, the very first thing Paul calls the community to do is learn to pray.

What does this look like for you today? What does your prayer-life look like?

¹ Opening prayers written by Emma Dobson

How do you pray?
What helps you know what to pray about?
How do you deal with the uncertainty of unanswered prayer?

When we pray for injustice to be resolved, how often do we encounter our part in both perpetuating and resolving it? It can be scary to confront our role in the challenges we pray for, because in doing so they become not only God's challenges to fix but we play our part in them too. Now, we are not only called to pray for change, but to enact it. Our calling as disciples of Christ to be God's hands and feet on earth becomes very real. As we pray intercession, we are called to recognise our power to intervene, to step in and be part of solutions.

Our prayers are not just lists of problems or a burden of heavy responsibility. They are an invitation, to join with God in lament at the brokenness of the world, to encounter our complicity and to be empowered by God's offer of forgiveness and compassion to play our part in restoration.

Why not write out a list or draw up a diagram of people, places and situations you'd like to pray for this week, then come back to it throughout the week as part of the 'prayer pointers' outlined below.²

Blessing

Heal me, heavenly Father,
And show me how to be a person of healing and wholeness and peace in your world.
Here I go, fill me, by your Spirit, Lord.
Amen.³

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

Monday 19th September

- *(You could use the list you created as part of the response to the readings to help shape these prayers).*
Loving God, I pray for those close to me – those in my own family or friendship circle – who I know are in pain this day. Those suffering from grief, illness, loss, mental ill health or another source of pain and difficulty. You know their challenges, and are with them in their sufferings.
- Comforting God, who walks alongside those in pain, come, by your Spirit. Amen.

² Based on a reflection written for The Vine by the Joint Public Issues Team – find out more here: <https://jpit.uk/>

³ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Tuesday 20th September

- God of all blessings,
Thank you for the gift of food to eat,
For the flavours and the smells,
The energy and enjoyment I can get from the food I eat.
- I'm sorry for all the times I've taken for granted the food on my plate, the ingredients in my fridge, the ready meals in my freezer.
And for all the other blessings I have received that I often overlook or forget to be thankful for. Amen.

Wednesday 21st September

- *(You could use the list you created as part of the response to the readings to help shape these prayers).*
- God of all grace, I pray for those who are far afield – people I don't know and situations I can't pretend to fully understand. I pray for those affected by war and famine and drought, for those living in pain and disease.
Come, Prince of Peace, and bring hope in a broken world.
Amen.

Thursday 22nd September

- This day, your prayers could be for our planet and the world we live in.
This day, may you say sorry for all the ways you hurt and pollute the Earth.
- This day, you could use your times of prayer to reconnect with nature and to commit again to climate action, climate campaigning and climate justice.
- For resources and ideas to support your prayers - visit allwecan.org.uk/climate or the Joint Public Issues website

Friday 23rd September

- *(You could use the list you created as part of the response to the readings to help shape these prayers).*
- Loving God, today I pray for relationships – for the people I know and their relationship to me, and the people I know whose relationships are strained and under pressure.
In the midst of division and doubt, come, God of love, God of healing, God of hope.
Amen.

Saturday 24th September

- *(You could use the list you created as part of the response to the readings to help shape these prayers).*
Living God, as we head into this weekend, I pray for all the people and situations that have been on my mind this week. The stories known to me personally and the ones I've picked up on the news and from elsewhere.
- I pray that I may know what it is that I am called to do as part of the response, and how I can enable and equip others to respond too.
- Show me what is mine to do, Lord God. Amen.