

# twelvebaskets

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## ORDINARY 14A

9th July 2023

A short act of worship and daily devotions

A Free resource funded by donations from Individuals, churches and **twelvebaskets**.

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

**Hymn:**

18 STF – Be still and know that I am God - [YouTube](#)

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**Opening Prayers**

Jesus calls us, here to meet him.

God of all beginnings,

In the first moments of creation, amongst big bangs, creative sparks and a divine word spoken, you were there.

At the very end, you will be there, our God.

When meaningfulness collapses, life ends, universes fade and creation stops creating, you will be there, our God.

We praise you, God of the beginnings and God of the endings.

God of the first breath, and God of the last.

God of the labour pains and God of the dying moments.

We praise you, God of all time, in this moment, this time.

Come amongst us, spirit of the living God.

For my prayer of confession today, I am pausing for a moment to reflect on some of the ways in which I have not been my best self, ways in which I have let myself and others down.

*If it helps you to write, or draw, as you reflect, then by all means do that. Just be still for a moment, and reflect on the places where you are not living up to your true potential.*

*When you are ready, say these words:*

Living God, I want to be better, I want to be my best, for you and for your world.

Move within me, transform me, change me.

Challenge and inspire me, by your Spirit, to fulfil your desires for my life.

May I be a reservoir of your love, overflowing out into a world in need.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

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

**Readings:** Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30 – [Click for reading](#)

## Response to the reading

From the very beginning of the Bible, from the creation myth that starts of the Genesis story, we have this rhythm of productivity and rest. Of sabbath. But, so often, we get distracted from this rhythm, drawn away, distracted.

In the reading, Jesus invites us to 'come to him all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest'. Is that you today?

Jesus and John were both men working tirelessly for the Kingdom even though the way their roles looked were very different. But, the 'tirelessness' is a challenge to us here. Is 'working tirelessly for the kingdom' really what we want to model? How do we practice the principles of Genesis and have a sabbath tradition?

There is another side to Jesus' message where he is calling out those who have spoken harshly of himself and John, he is highlighting the judgements that we all pour out on others unfairly and thoughtlessly.

What prejudice have you carried and what judgements have you made of another person recently?

Jesus says his yoke is easy and his burden is light: viewing ourselves and others through a Christ-like lens of love may not appear simple but if we can find away to look at the world with love, perhaps we can feel something of this easiness, this lightness.

How do you 'view yourself'? Are you able to see Christ's love for you?

*[Spend a few moments reflecting on these questions. You might like to share your responses with someone you trust, perhaps someone else who is using these resources. Listen to their answers too. How are you shaped by the conversation?]*

## Responding in song

*You might like to listen to some or all of these songs, or others that help you feel restful.*

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

421 STF – Empty, broken, here I stand - [YouTube](#)

Look up – an original worship song by Matt Beckingham - [YouTube](#)

## Responding in action

Walter Brueggemann has written a little book called 'Sabbath as Resistance'. If you found the themes of today's reflections helpful and want to find out more, you could look it up in a Christian bookshop or online.

This week, how can you practice rhythms of sabbath, of rest, of refusing to be a part of the systems and structures that are defined by productivity and 'wealth generation', if only for a moment.

As you do that, listen for the ways that you are tuning into God.

## **Blessing**

Go and enter into the flow of love that is at work in the universe.

Go and discover that God is out there, moving, transforming, touching lives and all creation.

Go and encounter the Spirit of God.

Amen.

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## **Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week**

### **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July**

- What message do you think God has for your community? How could you best find out?
- If appropriate / helpful, you might like to go on a prayer walk through your village, town or part of the city you live in. As you walk, pray for each street, each house, each shop, each business.
- If you can't do that, why not look it up on a map and trace your finger over each corner, picturing the places you can visualise as you move your finger.
- As you pray, spend time being still too. What is God saying?

### **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

- God of all grace,  
Thank you that I have received so many blessings.  
In the stillness of this moment, I whisper some prayers of thank you, for little things that sometimes go unnoticed or forgotten:  
...  
- Thank you God. Amen.

### **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

- Think about how God is at work in the lives of everyone. You can see God shining out from all people. Remember this with the next person you speak to, and give thanks for the glimpses of God you see in them.

### **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July**

- On this day in 1985, The Live Aid benefit concert took place in London and Philadelphia.
- Nearly 40 years later, we recognise that some of the approaches we've taken to tackling poverty around the world have caused as much damage as done good, reinforcing harmful stereotypes and preventing people from thriving.
- Today we pray for all those working in aid and development, especially those working to change the narrative and put communities in the driving seat of change.

### **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July**

- Today is the International Day of Non-Binary People, which has been marked since 2012. On this day we acknowledge the challenges people who identify as non-binary face, and this day was chosen because it is the exact mid-point between International Men's and International Women's Day.
- God who is beyond gender and who heals us from all our divisions, help us to build a world in which all can be accepted and find their home, in your love. Amen.

### **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July**

- Think about the fruits of the Spirit – [Click for Bible reading.](#)
- Pick one of them that you don't feel you are very good at, or that needs some intentional work. Spend some time praying about this, and then practice it for a whole day in all you do.