

# twelvebaskets

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## ORDINARY 24A

17th September 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>

## Opening / Centering Prayers

*[Hold a moment or two of silence]*

When all around is noisy and busy, help me in this moment to be still with you.

*Silence*

When my mind is chaotic and full of wondering, help me in this moment to be sure of you.

*Silence*

When my soul is troubled, help me in this moment to be calmed by you.

*Silence*

If you feel able speak these words aloud:

**Still, calm and sure I come to worship you.**

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

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

**Reading:** Matthew 18:21-35 – [Click for reading](#)

## Responding in song

Spend a few minutes listening to one or more of these songs. You might like to join in singing if you know them, or find a friend or two to sing along with...

545 STF – Be thou my vision – [YouTube](#)

24 STF – Come, now is the time to worship – [YouTube](#)

345 STF – And can it be - [YouTube](#)

## Responding to the reading

Take a moment to reflect on the first verse of Charles Wesley's *And Can It Be*. Read it out loud together. What phrases jump out for you?

*“And can it be, that I should gain,  
an interest in the Saviour's blood?  
Died he for me, who caused his pain?  
For me, who him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! How can it be  
That thou, my God, shouldst die for me?”*

In these opening words, Charles Wesley tries to express his deep and heartfelt feelings about having a living relationship with God, made real to him through a knowledge and acceptance of Jesus' death and resurrection.

He writes in questions, almost disbelieving that he could be in this situation. I can imagine him sitting at his writing desk, pondering, and in simple terms, saying out loud “Who – me? You died for – me?”

The result of this reflection is an outpouring of praise throughout the hymn, as Wesley tries to explain his understanding of what Jesus has done for him.

In Methodist services, the part of the hymn sung with the most gusto is the end of verse four:

*“My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.”*

As you reflect on these words, I wonder what they could mean for you, and for our world today?

Peter’s original question to Jesus, which provokes the telling of his parable, is about forgiveness. Jesus tells Peter quite sternly in the end that forgiveness is non-negotiable in Christian life. It is not always easy but it is necessary. Or, as theologian Tom Wright puts it: *“If you’re still counting how many times you’ve forgiven someone, you’re not really forgiving them at all, but simply postponing revenge. Seventy times seven’ is a typical bit of Jesus’ teaching. What he means, of course, is ‘don’t even think about counting; just do it.’”*

An idea for further action: Find out about the work of the Forgiveness Project, an organisation which shares modern stories of forgiveness in order to promote hope, empathy and understanding.

Why not have a look at their website: [www.theforgivenessproject.com](http://www.theforgivenessproject.com).<sup>1</sup>

## **Responding in prayer**

Spend a moment in quiet thinking about forgiveness. What does this word trigger for you?

A time you could have offered forgiveness, but didn’t?

A time you wish you had been forgiven?

Someone you still need to forgive today? Or you hope might be able to forgive you?

In the stillness, pray about the issues and the people you think about. Pray for God’s forgiveness, knowing that it is already offered – freely. If it helps to write down some names and situations, or to draw or paint while you pray, take this opportunity.

“Let your good spirit watch over us, O Lord, your love every rule in our heart and your mercy and forgiveness ever keep us in body, mind and soul”.

Amen.

## **Blessing**

As you go from this place,

Go with the fire of the Holy Spirit in your hearts.

Go out to see a world where your justice burns, brighter than ever.

Go and be an agent of peace, grace and love,

In the name of the Creator, the Christ and the Spirit,

Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a reflection written by Mandy Briggs

## Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

### Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September

- Place your hands flat against a wall and push. Pray thanksgivings that God has strength enough for our weakness.

### Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September

- Read this poem “blessing and rest” by Malcolm Guite. Consider the blessings you have received today. Give thanks for them. <https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/tag/sabbath>

### Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September

- Find a ribbon or a piece of string. Tie a knot in it and think of a person you know who needs prayer.
- Tie two more knots praying for two more people. Put the string somewhere you’ll notice it throughout the day where it’ll remind you to pray for the three people.

### Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September

- Draw around the shape of your hand. Write on it the things that you’re carrying that feel like burdens. Offer them to God in prayer, remembering that God carries your burdens with you.

### Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

- God my father and my mother,  
God my sibling and my friend,  
God my strength in times of trouble,  
Come close to me today, that I may see a glimpse of your glory in the everyday business of my life.  
Show me how to share your love, in Jesus’ name,  
Amen.

### Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

- Listen to ‘make me a channel of your peace’ <https://youtu.be/5kD66ibmCOE> and as you listen, ask God to show you how to bring peace in your life and community.