

FREE TO DUPLICATE AND DISTRIBUTE



ORDINARY 14A

5th July 2020

A short act of worship for use in peoples homes while churches are closed.

A Free resource part funded by



as well as donations from Individuals, churches and **twelvebaskets**.

If you would like to help fund this resources [click here](#).

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

Call to worship

I bring myself to worship.

On this Lord's day, I am connected to people everywhere, bringing themselves to worship.

We are joined together, by the Spirit. Amen.¹

Opening Prayers

Romans 7:18: "for I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out."

God of Grace

We come before you today with good intentions,

Longing to please you.

We come before you today leaving the messiness of our weeks behind,

Setting aside the things we often prioritise over you.

We come before you today with thankful hearts;

Grateful for your grace that is poured out not just for the best bits of ourselves,

But also for the bits we feel ashamed of.

We come before you today knowing that you change us,

Even if it is scary and unknown and beyond our comprehension, we open ourselves up for transformation.

We come before you today:

take our good intentions,

take the messiness of our lives,

take our best bits

take our worst bits,

take our willingness to be changed,

take us as individuals

take us as a community

and weave it all into the fabric of your kingdom.

May your words of grace, that our sins are forgiven speak to us this day. Take us, use us, change us, Lord.

Open our hearts in worship, so that we might see more of You. Amen.²

We say the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: StF 94 – To God be the glory, great things he has done - [YouTube](#)

¹ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Lucy Zwolinska

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

Reflections on the readings

Matthew 11:16-19 comes just after Jesus is teaching the crowd about the important and prophetic role that John played as the messenger coming before Jesus. In this passage he scolds the generation, comparing them to brattish children wanting their own way. He highlights the differences in the ways John and Jesus have lived out their faith, their calling, their role. John fasting from food and drink and lived a very simple life mostly away from large cities and towns, Jesus on the other hand was always eating and drinking with so called sinners. Both were dealt with harshly – one called a demon and one a glutton and a drunk.

Both of these men were working tirelessly for the Kingdom but the way their roles looked were very different. I find this encouraging as the way I live my life may look very different to how you live yours but both are valued and important. Both have the potential to bring great goodness into the world and build the kingdom of God.

Where are your actions bringing about the kingdom of God even if it is in small ways?

[Spend a few moments reflecting on this. Find someone to share your responses with, and ask them about their answer to the question].

Of course we must not forget the other side of 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.

Later in Matthew 11, Jesus reminds us to be like him 'gentle and lowly in heart', here I would draw a link, if we are gentle and lowly in heart we are not pouring immediate judgements on those who live in a way that we find difficult to understand. We certainly aren't calling them a demon or a glutton!

Jesus says that his Father has hidden things from the wise and revealed them to little children. A second reference to children – this time far more favourable. Jesus seems to be suggesting that while we should not be like children constantly wanting their own way we have much to learn from them in other ways. Children are honest and open when dealing with new people and new situations. Their immediate reaction is not dismissal of others' behaviour as strange or sinful but an intrigue and a desire for understanding. They have not been hardened by inherited prejudice or by previous situations that have left them hurt and angry. As adults we all carry these things with us but the challenge is to be able to see past them and remember we are ultimately called to love.

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

[Spend a few moments reflecting on this. Find someone to share your responses with, and ask them about their answer to the question].

Jesus says his yoke is easy and his burden is light, a beautiful and often quoted section of Matthew 11. Looking at it in this context perhaps Jesus is saying that we should worry less about the way the world views our lives and our achievements but focus on whether they are Kingdom-shaped. Also, it is an easier yoke to carry to be open and honest than twisted with prejudice and judgements of others. Viewing ourselves and others through a Christ-like lens of love may not appear simple but if we do it is easy and light.

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

[Spend a few moments reflecting on this. Find someone to share your responses with, and ask them about their answer to the question].

Let us pray.

Lord, we bring ourselves today. Just as we are.

Help us to see your love, shining through us.

Help us to have a child-like eagerness to know you more, and share your love in the world.

May we live as your children: gentle, and lowly in heart.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.³

Prayers of intercession

Living God, we come before you in this time of prayer.

We do not always understand the power of prayer, and feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the task – the desire to speak to you openly and honestly about ourselves, our world, our faith.

As we pray Lord, we ask you to move us beyond our doubts and our uncertainties.

Move us by your Spirit.

Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief.

In this time of prayer, O God, we bring you a world in need, a world in pain, a world seeking for hope, for joy, for peace.

We hold up all those affected by the Coronavirus:

all working on the front-line to support those most in need;

all those enabling our lives to continue to function;

all those working in hospitals and health centres around the world;

all those seeking a vaccine and at the fore-front of research.

³ Reflection written by Anna Bland

We bring to you all those whose lives have been made worse by this virus:
those who have lost loved ones;
those who are living with symptoms;
those living in fear;
those in situations, countries or environments that make it impossible to self-isolate or feel safe.

We bring you all the concerns and fears in our world that have been ignored, overlooked or moved lower-down the priority list because of global attention on the pandemic:
those without a home;
those living in poverty;
those living with other diseases or health conditions.

We pray for all those seeking a better world.

May we work together, in Jesus' name, to bring about a better world.
May I find my place, my calling, and know the Spirit moving through me.

By the power of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.⁴

Hymn: Singing the Faith 563 - O Jesus, I have promised - [YouTube](#)

Blessing

Present and holy God, come and meet with us today.
Transform us into tools for your grace, your peace, your love.

Build your kingdom here, we pray. Amen.⁵

⁴ Prayers of intercession written by Tim Baker

⁵ Additional prayers by Tim Baker