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ORDINARY 11B

13th June 2021

A short act of worship for use in peoples homes

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Call to worship

In this moment we pause to meet with God:
The God who welcomes us regardless of time and place,
The God who encourages us to learn and love,
The God who challenges us to change and grow.

In this moment we pause to meet with God.
To get ready, to praise, to contemplate the global community we are a part of and to
recognise the joy we have in every encounter with the one, who by their grace,
blesses us.

In this moment we pause to meet with God.

Amen.¹

Hymn:

330 STF – Joy to the world - [YouTube](#)

Readings

Let us continue in praise and prayer alongside the psalmists of old. Giving thanks.
Noticing the world around us. Recognising the blessings we receive.

Psalm 92 1-4 & 12-15 – The Passion Translation – [Click for the reading](#)

And now the gospel reading: Mark 4 26-34 – Contemporary English Version - [Click for the reading](#)

Prayer through Song – Speak O Lord - STF 161 – [YouTube](#)

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of Your Holy Word
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All Your purposes for Your glory

Teach us Lord, full obedience
Holy reverence, true humility
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority
Words of pow'r that can never fail
Let their truth prevail over unbelief

¹ Call to Worship written by Jane Bingham

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time
That will echo down through eternity
And by grace we'll stand on Your promises
And by faith we'll walk as You walk with us
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.

Let us now say the Lord's Prayer

Reflections on the reading

[Today's reflection comes from Jane Bingham – if you'd like to read or use the full reflection, contact us at thevine@twelvebaskets.co.uk to find out about a circuit subscription.]

I love this quote from Renee Swope the Christian writer and commentator from the USA. She says this: "The lens you look through will determine what you see."

For me one of the joys of studying scripture is that strange duality of the assurance and familiarity it brings, mixed together with the ever changing possibility that God has something new to say if only we take a risk to look afresh, and today we look afresh at that famous parable of the mustard seed...

Let's take a moment of silence and imagine ourselves as that mustard plant.

[Silence]

What kind of plant are we?

Are we one that nourishes and sustains others through the fruit we bear and the shelter we offer?

Are we the kind of plant that infiltrates other gardens and wild spaces making a rich carpet of green?

Are we the kind of plant that chokes and takes over?

Are we one that grows so huge it goes to seed and is only in fact fit to provide shelter for vultures?

[Silence]

After you leave this space you might want to sit with these questions for a moment longer. You might want to make a note and keep them in your pocket so when you are out and about on a walk, sitting in the garden or on the bus you can have a think with God about them. You might already have heard a new answer and now have a plan to make a change or reinforce an idea.

Whatever you do try, with God's help, to see it a bit differently and take time to work out what to do next.²

Prayers of intercession

God of wondrous things,

We thank you for the variety of peoples and species that dwell on our planet.
For all the languages we hear, the customs we see and the faiths we encounter.
We pray your blessing on this richly diverse world and ask you to help us.

In particular help us to better consider how you would have us show your love to each person made in your image and to know how to act in support when they are faced with having to live with or flee from war or famine.

[Pause]

God of tiny ideas,

Help us to pay attention to even the smallest things happening around us.
Keep us alert to injustice even when it seems insignificant, because it isn't to those close to it, and help us to stand for what is right.
Help us to watch out for the new idea and the risk taker who might be planting seeds that we are called to water.
Watch over the ideas generators and the fledgling projects and pour out your spirit on them so that they can grow and bear fruit.

God of expansive thinking,

We thank you for those using their skills and intellect for the good of humanity.

Those focussed on issues of climate change and ideas around renewable energy or recycling. Those forging ahead with thinking and experimentation on new vaccines to combat diseases like malaria and HIV/Aids. Futurologists who seek to understand what will happen to our world over the coming years and are ready to embrace technology and efficient use of the world's resources for the good of everyone. Specialist economists who seek to prove that there is enough for everyone to prosper not just the wealthy few. Help us not to be frightened of the new but embrace the richness of life you offer and "step up" to play our part so that the world is safe for generations to come.

[Pause]

God of revelation and all things beyond our understanding,

Make us a ready for anything,

Keep us on our toes ready to join in the divine dance with you,

Ready to bathe in the grace that you shower down on us and ready to look for the next thing to be revealed.

Amen.³

² Reflection written by Jane Bingham

³ Prayers of intercession written by Jane Bingham

Hymn: 158 STF – Lord you sometimes speak in wonders - [YouTube](#)

Blessing

Go from this place awash with God's grace offered to you through story and song.
Share that grace so that others might learn how special it is.

Embody God's radical grace and strive to make the world a better place.

Do not cease until all are wrapped in the love of God and are able to flourish and grow.

Do not cease until the Kingdom of God is realised as she would want it to be

Amen.⁴

⁴ Additional prayers by Jane Bingham