

# twelvebaskets

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## ORDINARY 12B

23rd June 2024

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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## Opening Prayers

Hands open, hearts open, eyes open, Lord, I come.

*[Pause].*

Heads full of responsibilities and to-do lists, Lord I come.

*[Pause].*

Hearts full of worries, sorrows, hopes, fears, dreams and longing, Lord I come.

*[Pause].*

Just as I am, Lord I come.

Fill me anew with the beauty, power and wonder of your word,  
Strengthen me with the sure knowledge of your presence and companionship.

Lord, as I come, may I know myself forgiven, loved and set free,  
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:** Mark 4:35-41 – [Click for reading](#)

## Responding to the reading

How do you feel about this story of Jesus calming the storm?

What do you think *actually* happened on that day? A miracle? Divine intervention? A slightly eerie coincidence as Jesus calls out and the storm starts to calm down? A chain of events which unfolded more slowly than the story would have us believe? Disciples who were so wracked with fear and overwhelm that this is how they remember the day?

What about some of the other miracle stories we find in the Gospels – how do they make you feel? Do they bring insight or confusion? Do you find truth in the miracle itself, or in the various ways the people in the story react and process it?

The Bible is by no means a straightforward read. It's the kind of text that impacts us differently every time we read it. We notice different things, ask different questions and find that the words resonate with us in different ways, based on where we are in life at that time.

Miracle stories can be tough for us to understand. It's easy to be cynical, to wonder if the events really played out in the way the story suggests. I'm not sure how many of us can relate in any meaningful way to this kind of story, short of a situation involving a spooky coincidence. God may help some of us find parking spaces, or make it stop raining just as we're about to leave the flat, but many of us are still wondering when God will offer us the same gift.

What do we do with passages of the Bible that raise uncomfortable questions? It doesn't feel right just to ignore or disregard them. I think that the greatest insight comes from the wrestling, the wondering and the criticism. Amidst our questions and frustrations, green shoots of insight and hope can still come.

Whatever happened on that day, on the boat in the middle of the storm, the disciples saw *something* that had an impact on them. After this day, they believed a little more deeply that this man was capable of great and life-changing things. Our cynicism doesn't have to get in the way of that. Perhaps we can be more present, and look for the things in our lives that bring us closer to God's truth and hope...

### Hymn:

545 STF – Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart - [YouTube](#)

### Blessing

Go with courage, followers of the Christ.  
Go into a world crying out for love and hope.  
Go to spread peace.  
Go, and the Spirit of God goes before you.  
Amen.

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## Prayers and Prayer Pointers

### Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June

- Some church traditions mark today as the birth date of John the Baptist including, in some Easter Orthodox traditions, accompanying the feast day with an all-night vigil.
- John's ministry went on to play a vital role in preparing the way for Jesus but, like all of us, his life began small, born as a baby into a family who hoped he might make something of himself.
- Today, why not pray for the little tiny things that are happening in your life, community and church. At the moment, they may seem very small and insignificant. But perhaps they, too, have a role in shepherding the Kingdom of God a little closer?

### Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June

- Can you 'notice joy' today? Whatever your day holds, maybe it's lots of things that energise and excite you, or perhaps the complete opposite...
- Throughout the day, just look out for the little things that bring you joy – maybe a flower, a glimpse of the moon, the smile of a stranger, a delicious taste.
- When you notice these things, why not say a little prayer of thanks and give thanks for the glimpses of joy in your life.

### **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June**

- Go litter picking.
- Each bit of litter you pick up is working to bring God's Kingdom in that place.
- As you pick up the litter pray about what it might mean for God's will for this street, this community, this village / town / city to be done.

### **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June**

- 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.

### **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June**

- Take a moment to be peaceful. If you are able you may like to plant your feet on the floor and concentrate on your body being still (if this is hard then just sit quietly and comfortably). Notice how you feel and what you are thinking about and let those things float away giving thanks for each even if they are difficult feelings or thoughts.
- When you are ready, raise your hands open before you and give thanks for the moment you are in. Pause.
- Place your open hands on your lap and consider all that's happened this week and what you might want to lay down before God asking for help or offering thanks. Pause.
- Lift one hand high in the air and think about what you will offer of yourself as you worship today. Pause.
- Lower your hands and offer the following prayer:  
Loving God, I am here, help me to notice you here, with me in this moment.  
Amen.

### **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June**

- On this day in 2007, Apple released the first ever iPhone. 17 years later, the iPhone – and smartphones in general – have reached nearly every household or family in the UK. Even if you don't have one, I bet you know lots of people who do!
- Today, can you find space to step away from all the distractions of modern life and spend 10 mins, or an hour, or perhaps even longer, in quiet and stillness. No phone. No TV. No computer. Just stillness and space.
- Allow God to speak into the space.