

twelvebaskets

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CHRISTMAS 1C

29th December 2024

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening prayers

He has been, born in the night!
He is here, amongst us.
He has come to change and transform us.
God is here, the miracle of Christmas.

Be still for a moment. *[Pause]*

Lord God,
You are at work in the busyness and stillness of life.

You are present in each moment of my days,
You do not forget me.

I am here to worship you,
I am here to listen to you,
I am here, just as I am,
Come into this space, in peace, and love,
Motivate, challenge and inspire me to travel with you this week.

Amen.

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

Readings: Luke 2:41-52 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the readings

Today we might ask ourselves whether we might have lost sight of Jesus in this post-Christmas week.

If you were to read Luke's Gospel to the end, you'd be reminded of the grace of God that always forgives, always loves, always redeems even in - especially in - the human propensity to get it wrong, again and again. So even if you feel like you have lost sight of Jesus, God is still waiting for you, patiently asking "Why were you searching for me?".

Because by God's spirit, we don't have to go searching, we can just remember to invite God in; Jesus was Immanuel, God is with us. And God is still with us today.

When Mary and Joseph can't find Jesus amongst their party, they go back to Jerusalem to find him. I think there's something for us in that; they look for Jesus in the place they last saw him.

If encountering God feels a bit tricky at the moment, especially in this Christmas-period, perhaps you could follow Mary's example, and seek to encounter Jesus where you last found him. What are the habits, routines, memories and community you can draw on to help you in the next step of your discipleship?

Whatever your journey of faith, this time of year is about Jesus, son of God, who is just waiting to be found and encountered by each one of us.

A few questions for private reflection:

1. Did your Christmas plans run smoothly this year (so far)? Did you forget anything or did anything go wrong?
2. Do you think it is easy to lose sight of Jesus this time of year? How can you actively avoid this?
3. When did you last encounter Jesus / feel God's presence?

Responding in music

Use one or more of these songs / hymns to help you respond to the reflection questions above. You might like to sing along, to reflect quietly as you listen to the music, or to doodle some thoughts and responses.

- Love Shone Down (I had a dream) – [YouTube](#)
- 202 STF – Hark! The herald-angels sing – [YouTube](#)
- 190 STF – Angels, from the realms of glory – [YouTube](#)

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Responding in prayer

This season is a season of thank yous.

Thank you letters and phone calls,
FaceTimes and video messages.

Amidst the wrapping paper, the tags and the gift receipts, I take a moment to thank you for your gifts to me Lord God, and recommit myself to you.

Fill me up so that I might be a peacekeeper, a prophet and justice seeker, using all that I have been given for the blessing of others.

In Jesus' holy name I pray.

Amen.

Blessing

You are part of a community of incarnation – of new life.

You are part of the story of the God who comes,
Who lives and walks and loves and sleeps and eats amongst us.

Go out into the world, and tell them of the hope of the Christ, the hope of the God who comes and keeps on coming.

God is with us. God is with you. Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers

Monday 30th December

- Today, look for opportunities to celebrate life. No matter what your story at the moment, and the challenges you and yours are carrying, our invitation to you today is to celebrate the small things, the sunrise, a snowdrop, the taste of something delicious, a hug from a friend. Let us give thanks.

Tuesday 31st December

- Today is Old Year's Night, an opportunity to reflect, to let go, to hold stillness. Come, into the midst of this day, O God, that I may know what I need to let go of, what I can leave in 2024, and what I need to take with me into the new year.
- Show me what is mine to do, O God. Amen.

Wednesday 1st January 2025

- A new leaf, a fresh start, a clean slate.
- Rather than worry about resolutions and the pressure that so often comes with this time of year, why not spend today celebrating newness, and the opportunity it presents.
- Thank you God, for this new day. Amen.

Thursday 2nd January

- And be still.
- No words today, just an invitation into stillness. Take as long as you dare, and sit with the stillness. Pray about anything that comes up as you reflect.

Friday 3rd January

- God of healing and comfort,
Today my prayers are for all who are grieving and feeling the pain of loss. This season is often associated with memories of people who have died, or who are no longer in our lives. In the quiet, in the pain, in the tears, may all living with grief know something of your love, your presence, your healing.
- Comfort, O comfort your people, says your God. Amen.

Saturday 4th January

- Sit for a moment and see who comes into your mind. Notice that this might be a prompt to pray for them, or even make contact if that's appropriate. Which relationships do you need to strengthen and invest in, today?