

twelvebaskets

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CHRISTMAS 2C

2nd January 2022

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Centreing Prayer

In this new year, look around you or search around your house to find something new, perhaps something you've recently bought or been given, perhaps a winter flower that has just started to bud, or something that arrived in your house during the Christmas season.

If you can, hold this new thing. If you can't just picture it in your mind, and hold it there.

Lord, as we look upon that which is new, we hold the new year of 2022 in our hearts and minds too.

Living God, who is making all things new, help me to seize the opportunities this new year presents. Help me to start afresh, with a renewed energy and commitment to learning more about you and your call on my life.

Gracious God, may I commit to more than meaningless resolutions, and enter into new and deeper relationship with you, transforming my life in the process.

Lord of all things, help me to be inspired once again by stories from the Bible, by music, by prayer, by reflection and in conversation.

In Jesus name I pray,

Amen.¹

You may now wish to say The Lord's Prayer in a version most familiar or comfortable to you.

Hymn:

277 STF – My song is love unknown - [YouTube](#)

Readings: [John 1:10-18](#)

Responding to the readings

In the famous passage from John 1 that is our reading for today, we read that the 'word' that is Jesus the Christ becomes 'flesh'. This is the miracle of Christmas, but it's also an invitation to you today. How do the 'words' about what we believe and what we claim to believe affect our lives and the way we live? How do you take the words you stand by, and put them into action?

In this Christmas season, and as we celebrate the New Year of 2022 dawning around us, can you and your community also be a people of justice, a people seeking a better kind of world.

¹ Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

The Vine resources, which you are using today, are pleased to partner with two organisations – the Joint Public Issues Team and All We Can – who both play their part in helping the church respond to issues of injustice.

If you have not come across them before, or would like to find out more, please do look up their website details or get in touch with them to see how you can support. Perhaps you can give financially, perhaps you can pray, perhaps you can join a campaign or learn more about an issue.

Find out more at jointpublicissues.org.uk and allwecan.org.uk or look them both up on social media.

What are the causes and injustices that most motivate you to action?

What, in the news or in your local community makes you most angry? Is that a way you might be being called into action or a response?

What, in your life and your story gives you hope and gives you energy? Is that a way you might be being called into action.

Over the last year, The Vine at Home resources have regularly asked the question – ‘what are you called to’? As we enter into a new year, we want to continue that conversation. We’d love to hear from you as your sense of calling (your ‘vocation’ as it’s sometimes called) is developing. Get in touch at thevine@twelvebaskets.co.uk to tell us some of your story.

In 2022, you are invited to think about the role you can play in seeking a just and fair world. In the Vine at Home over the coming weeks, we will be exploring together how you – and how each of us in this community of people worshiping from home and connecting around the UK and the world – can respond to God’s call on our lives and how the stories from the Bible help to shape how we interact with the world around us.

You are also invited to join a community of regular prayer, and the Vine at Home resources will feature prayers you may wish to say, or ideas for prayer and meditation time that you may wish to use, throughout the week.

Let us pray,

God of Justice, forgive us when our Christmases become more about what we can get than what we can give.

Forgive us when our Christmas stories eclipse the Christ child from the centre.

Forgive us when we indulge our Christmas lunch with little thought for those who are going hungry.

Forgive us when our Christmas trees are dressed more extravagantly than our poor neighbours.

In all the ways our Christmas celebrations miss your heart for your world, forgive us.

[Pause]

As we go into this Christmas period, loving God, we know the remarkable nature of your forgiveness, evidenced in your commitment to living alongside us, suffering with us, becoming human – an extraordinary gift indeed.

Amen.

Blessing

As I have come to the manger-side, in my mind's eye, and met with the Christ child,
Now, I return to all the things this day needs from me... I head out into a new year,
Amongst all the uncertainty of what 2022 will hold,
God of grace, travel with me, as I seek to share something of the Christ who lives
within each one of us.

Amen.²

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

Monday, January 3rd

- On the 10th day of Christmas, you might like to pray for everyone making a new start this new year. Those who have just started a new job or life phase, those starting a new family, or beginning a life after saying goodbye to someone they love.

Lord, in the newness of this year, help us to be people who embrace new challenges and opportunities. Come Lord Jesus. Amen.

Tuesday January 4th

- You might like to pray a prayer of thanksgiving. Take 5 minutes to write down all the things you are grateful for right now. Some of them might be tiny, some of them might be huge. Stick the list somewhere you can see it, and keep saying little prayers of 'thanks', every time you pass the list, or your eye falls on it again.

Wednesday January 5th

- Today is the last day of the traditional 'twelve days of Christmas'. As this season comes to an end, spend some time today thinking about 'endings'. What has come to an end during 2021 that you need to say goodbye to, to let go of?

What new journeys might be about to start at the beginning of this new year? Spend some time quietly reflecting on these two questions. Make a list if it helps you. Draw some pictures or do some doodling if you prefer.

You could pray this prayer:

Lord, here, at the end of the Christmas season, help me to say goodbye.

Lord, here at the beginning of a new year, help me to begin afresh.

Amen.

² Additional prayers by Tim Baker

Thursday January 6th

- The Feast of Epiphany
Today is the day when Christians around the world celebrate the journey and arrival of the Magi, the 'wise men' from the Christmas story.
Today you could pray for all people who are 'on a journey', particularly those who have been forced to flee their homes and are living as refugees or internally displaced people. Pray for organisations and churches seeking to work with them, to support those most in need.

Friday January 7th

- Pray for people affected by homelessness, those who are rough sleeping on the streets, but also the 'hidden majority' of homeless people who are sofa-surfing or in unstable housing situations.
- Pray for organisations working to support people with their housing, perhaps you are aware of some that are working locally to you.
- As you pray, listen for any promptings or invitation from God for you to do something in response. Are you able to make a donation, to volunteer sometime, to sign up to support a campaign on better housing policies in the UK?

Saturday January 8th

- If you can, go on a prayer walk. Or ask someone to help you make a journey around your neighbourhood – just the few houses near you would be fine, or go on a longer trip if you'd like to take in a whole estate or community.
- As you travel past each house, pray for the people who live there – just in your mind, or under your breath. Hold their situations, whether you know them or not, in your heart.