

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Exodus 14:19–31

Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b–11, 20–21

Romans 14:1–12

Matthew 18:21–35

**SELECTED READING AND THEME**

Romans 14:1–12 and Matthew 18:21–35

You be the judge.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Let us come to worship.

**We come in grace and with renewed hope.**

God embraces us in love,

**and offers forgiveness to all.**

So, we shall sing the praises of God.

**Forever and forever.**

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Holy and merciful God,

Come amongst your people in the power of your Spirit,

that we might know the joy of your presence

and rest in your mercy.

Create amongst us a community of acceptance and love,

so that in all things we resemble Christ's goodness.

Enable us to set aside anything that might harm another.

Set your love at the centre of our life together.

Amen.

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Forgiving God,

We are taught to forgive seventy times seven,  
so great a number that surely our forgiveness  
must be endless.

Yet we cling to grievances and past wrongs,  
condemning our enemies and closing them out of our lives.

Forgive us, we pray.

Forgive our harness of heart born of arrogance and pride.

Forgive our inability to see our own shortcomings, we pray,  
and reshape us according to your good will and purpose.

Help us to take paths of grace in our relationships with others,  
building bridges of understanding and compassion.

Have mercy on us, we pray. Amen.

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Love, forgiveness, salvation and hope  
are the ways of Christ.

God is infinitely more willing to forgive than we can imagine.

So we celebrate this truth:

**Our sins are forgiven – thanks be to God!**

## **PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING**

All thanks and praise be yours, loving saviour.

In the morning, you come with fresh hope to start our day.

The dawn reminds us that we have a fresh start every day  
by your grace.

You sustain us and guide us in your paths of righteousness,  
granting hope in the midst of despair,

joy in the midst of sadness,

love in the midst of hate.

You are pure goodness.

You are our true north.

You are our alpha and omega.

We praise you. We adore you. We give you thanks.

All glory and honour belong to you. Amen.

## **DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT**

The reading from Matthew 18 contains two very hard thoughts. The first is to be able to forgive ‘seventy times seven’. That is virtually saying, always forgive! At the end of the passage, we read of the consequences if we do not forgive. Could this be true? Read Matthew 18:34–35. What are you thinking Jesus? Certainly, you can’t mean to apply that to me? Does forgiving others really matter that much to God? In their wonderful book, *The Book of Forgiving*, Desmond and Mpho Tutu write, ‘We would like to share with you two simple truths: There is nothing that cannot be forgiven. There is no one undeserving of forgiveness.’ It is a challenging word, but then, so is the Gospel.

## **OFFERTORY SENTENCE**

May our giving be a sign of hope in a troubled world.  
In our discipleship may we be the means of reconciling love.

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Gracious God, you give without measure and love without restraint.  
Let these, our gifts and the gift of our lives be signs of salvation and  
a source of true justice. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

## **PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

Loving God,  
How sorely our world needs your healing.  
So many people live in despair.  
So many children live with hunger and violence.  
So many people lose hope of finding a better way.  
Only by the power and presence of your Spirit  
can justice, fairness and equity be found.  
We pray that love will open the hearts of those who have much  
to share with those who have little.  
We pray that peace will reign where violence destroys.  
We pray that forgiveness will lead to understanding,  
understanding to compassion, and compassion to new life.  
This day, we lift before you all who seek a better life:  
refugees and asylum seekers; criminals and prisoners;  
those who seek healing and those who despair.  
Let your realm break in to bring forgiveness, restoration  
and new life.  
In the name of the Christ. **Amen.**

## **COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING**

Christ invites us to a new way of living,  
the way of forgiveness,  
the way of compassion,  
the way of restored relationships  
and the way of new life for all.

Go, restored and renewed in forgiveness.  
Go to walk the path Christ sets before you.  
Go in the freedom and the power of the Spirit.

And may the love of God sustain us;  
the grace of Christ enfold us;  
and the power of the Spirit sustain and guide us.  
**Amen.**

## **HYMNS**

### **Exodus 14:19–31**

Come, God's people, sing for joy	TiS.391 SA.26
Guide me, O my great Redeemer	TiS.569 AHB.478
Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us	TiS.580 AHB.492
Shalom to you now	TiS.778
Through the Red Sea brought at last	TiS.383 AHB/CS.622

### **Psalm 114**

All creatures of our God and King	TiS.100 AHB.3
Glorious things of you are spoken	TiS.446 AHB.374
<b>OR Exodus 15: 1b–11, 20–21</b>	
God of many names	TiS.180 SFGP.113
I will sing unto the Lord	SIS.412
Our God is an awesome God	See.418

### **Romans 14:1–12**

At the name of Jesus	TiS.231 AHB.170
God be in my head	TiS.549 AHB.456
In you is gladness	TiS.200 ATOK.364
Let him to whom we now belong	TiS.563 AHB.146
Lord Jesus, we belong to you	TiS.686 AT Everybody.292
Make me a captive, Lord	TiS.604 AHB.528

### **Matthew 18: 21–35**

Dear Father, Lord of humankind	TiS.598 AHB.(519)
Father eternal, Ruler of creation	AHB.540
Forgive our sins, as we forgive	TiS.625 AHB.564
Help us accept each other	TiS.648
Make me a channel of your peace	TiS.607 SA.66
O the deep, deep love of Jesus	TiS.232
We are marching in the light of God	TiS.666 ATOK.409