

twelvebaskets

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EASTER 5C

18th May 2025

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening prayers

The light of your love is shining Lord,
Shining on me, as I turn aside for a moment this day.
Help me to hear your quiet invitation into a Kingdom of justice, joy and peace.

Pause

Like a beacon to a ship,
Like a smile from a friend,
Like a feast for the famished,
Like a path in a forest
So you are to me, O God of the journey.

Show me how to follow you this day.

Like a hen with her chickens
Like a father in a doorway
Like a mother at her son's side
Like a shepherd to a lost sheep
So you remain with me, O God of love.

Show me how to receive your love this day, I pray.

Amen.

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

Readings: John 13:31-35 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

This is a slightly strange reading for this time of year, as it feels like we've just 'done' the whole Easter thing, and now we are heading into a new season...spring is well underway and perhaps the first signs of summer are breaking through where you are.

Yet, for a moment, we return to the dinner table of The Last Supper and Jesus speaks some of his most powerful words. He is not preaching here, not making announcements from a mountaintop or before a crowd, but gathered around a dinner table with his closest friends, just after Judas has left to betray him. The moment is heavy with tension, and yet Jesus speaks of glory, of God's presence, and of love.

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."

This is not a suggestion or a sentiment—it's a commandment. And it's "new" not because love hadn't been commanded before, but because Jesus redefines its shape: "as I have loved you." This is love rooted in grace. A love that serves. A love that forgives. A love that embraces those who will fail you. A love that shows up, even when it costs everything.

For those of us on a journey of discipleship, this passage invites us to consider love not simply as a feeling, but as a daily practice—an intentional, grace-filled choice to act for the well-being of others. Not only those who are easy to love, but also those who test our patience or challenge our assumptions.

Jesus' commandment is deeply liberating. It doesn't ask us to have all the answers, to be perfect, or to believe a fixed set of ideas. It simply asks us to love as we have been loved. That's grace. Grace that says: you are enough. Grace that empowers you to reflect God's love outward. Grace that transforms not only individuals, but communities.

This call to love is especially urgent in a world fractured by division and fear. As disciples of Jesus, our credibility doesn't come from dogma, but from love lived out: in justice, in hospitality, in compassion.

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples." Not by how loudly we speak, but by how deeply we love.

So as you reflect today, ask yourself:

- Who in my life needs to see and feel love in action?
- How can I respond to others with the same grace that Jesus shows me?
- What might it look like to make love the foundation of my discipleship, every day?

This is our invitation and our challenge: to be people of radical, inclusive, grace-filled love. Not just in words, but in truth and action.

And by this, may the world see something of God.

Responding in music

258 STF – You are the vine, we are the branches - [YouTube](#)

Responding in prayer

Heavenly parent,
Creator of the whole universe,
Giver of light,
God who makes all things new, today I pray for new life.

Today, I pray for your creation, that you made and declared to be good,
that it may be restored and renewed,
and that I may care for it as you intended,
Creator, Re-creator God, hear my prayer.

Silence

God who heals and holds each and every one of us,
Today I pray for your peoples across the world,
that conflicts may end and relationships be restored,
and that a true, just and lasting peace may be sought,
Creator, Re-creator God, hear my prayer.

Silence

God who inspires and motivates each and every one of us,
By your healing, hopeful spirit,
Today I pray for your church, here in this place and around the world,

that divisions may be healed, strangers welcomed,
and that we may have boldness and courage to follow wherever you lead,
Creator, Re-creator God, hear my prayer.

Silence

Amen.

Blessing

God of all grace,
Help me to see that I have received from you,
That I am richly blessed, even amongst the many challenges I face.

By your Spirit Lord, may I head out into the world, knowing that all we have is gift,
And use those gifts to be a blessing to others,
Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers

Monday 19th May

- On this day in 1536, Ann Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII was executed, as part of a chapter of English history that many of us have studied at school, or watched TV programmes about, but which continues to effect the political and religious landscape in this country.
- Today, there are still many people whose lives are at risk because of the choices and whims of powerful, unchecked, selfish leaders. Join in prayer for all affected by tyranny, bullying and patriarchy.

Tuesday 20th May

- What can you see from where you are sitting / lying / standing, right now?
- As you look around, try to look with the eyes of God – what would God see? What elements of the view might need prayer?

Wednesday 21st May

- Why not use a simple mantra today – keep coming back to it throughout the day, as a way to ground your experience of living through your day as part of your journey of discipleship. You might like to write it down and keep it in your pocket so you keep feeling it, or say it aloud every time you stand up or sit down, or set an alarm on your phone to remind you of the mantra every hour...
- You could choose your own mantra that works for you, or use this one: 'Show me your way, O God,'

Thursday 22nd May

- Living, loving God, today I pray for all affected by illness and pain. Into the cloud of their situation, bring your healing, comforting light, I pray.
Amen.

Friday 23rd May

- On this day in 1998 the Good Friday Agreement was accepted in a referendum in Northern Ireland, with around 75% of the population voting 'yes'. This agreement was a major development in ending the 'Troubles' and bringing peace to Ireland.
- God of peace, today I pray for all places affected by conflict and war. May those in power learn the lessons of history and recognise that peace is the only way forward and is worth the cost. Bring ceasefire, lasting peace, healing and wholeness, I pray, O God. Amen.

Saturday 24th May

- Today is Aldersgate day, marking the anniversary of John Wesley's experience of having his 'heart strangely warmed' when he attended a meeting in Aldersgate, London in 1738.
- His personal response to this encounter with the Spirit transformed his life, revived Christianity in the UK, and led to the creation of the Methodist Church!
- Pay attention today – what small act of revival might God be inviting you to take, in your own life, in your community, in your church? What is God inviting you to get involved in? Pray about anything that comes up.