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## EPIPHANY 5A

8th February 2026

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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## Opening Prayers

Hush. Be still.

Rest in this House of God. You are welcome here.

Hush. Be still.

Come with all you are, the bitter and broken bits, the shining and shimmering parts, the questions and the doubts, the convictions and the certainties.

Hush. Be still.

Bow your knees in quiet humility (you might like to physically do this, or simply imagine it). As you, find a way to confess and know your own imperfection. As you pray, listen to God's wisdom for new ways of being.

Hush. Be still.

Open your heart to the generous grace of God. Reach out your hands to those who are marginalised, those who are hungry, the naked, the rejected. Know yourself to be loved.

And now, raise your voice! Sing the praises of God! As you move through this time of prayer, may you know this as a time of worship. We praise you, O God!

Loving God, bless this precious time. God is good, Amen!

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

**Readings:** Matthew 5:13-20 – [Click for reading](#)

## Responding to the reading

In this part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus continues to shape a radical vision for what it means to live as his followers. And he does it with two simple metaphors: salt and light.

"You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world."

Not you should be, or you could be: but you are.

Jesus speaks not to religious elites or political leaders, but to ordinary people: the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful: people longing for justice and peace. And he tells them that they matter. That their lives have flavour, radiance, meaning.

Salt is small but powerful. It preserves, enhances, transforms. It brings out the best in what's already there. But it only works when it's present, mixed in, engaged.

Light doesn't exist for its own sake; it's there to help others see. It illuminates truth. It offers safety, clarity, warmth. But it only works when it's not hidden.

This passage is a beautiful reminder that faith isn't a private possession, it's a lived expression. It's something that should ripple out into the world, not to dominate, but to reveal love, goodness, and hope.

Then Jesus takes it further: “I have not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to fulfil them.” His vision of righteousness isn’t about rigid rule-keeping, it’s about depth, integrity, and alignment with the heart of God. It’s about going beyond surface-level religion to embody justice, compassion, and mercy in everyday life.

This isn’t about being perfect. It’s about being real. Being present. Letting our lives speak (quietly, clearly, consistently) of the love that holds us and the grace that moves through us.

So today, take a moment to reflect:

- Where is your life already shining light, perhaps more than you realise?
- What might it look like to “stay salty”, to preserve the truth, to enhance the good, to add flavour to the world around you?
- What does righteousness look like when it's rooted not in fear or legalism, but in love?

You are the salt. You are the light. Not someday, today.

Not once you’ve got it all figured out, but right now, as you are.

May we live this truth boldly and gently, bringing light and flavour to a world in deep need of both.

### **Responding in music:**

255 STF – The kingdom of God is justice and joy - [YouTube](#)

As you listen to this hymn, sing along, or read the words in the hymnbook, you might like to think about what a kingdom of justice and joy would look like in your community, in your house, in your life.

### **Responding in prayer**

Lord, in the dank dreariness of winter, I long for warmth and light.

In the challenge and confusion, I turn to you.

Today, I pray for the powerful and the influential, that they may be servants of the common good.

In a world of deep fakes and deceptions,

I seek your truth, your light, your will for me, for us, your people.

Help me to be truly holy, set apart for you in service to others.

Enable me to speak out for peace and champion those who are victims of aggressors.

Lord, in a world of plenty,

where the rich can gorge on the good things,

where some go on diets whilst others stare starvation in the face,

when, even in our own area, there are those who must choose between eating or heating,

bless the endeavours of relief charities worldwide and those of our local food banks and food pantries.

Help me know how best to share.

Inspire me to welcome newcomers and those who relocate to this community, and whom I encounter in my life.

Christ our Light

Make us salt and light for others, so that your Kingdom may come.

Amen.

### **Final hymn/song:**

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

### **Blessing**

God of all grace,

As you go from this space, may you also go with God's grace in your heart,

May you know the love of God in your midst,

And may you be inspired by the Spirit, moving through the world, ahead of you, lighting the way,

Amen.

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## **Prayers and Prayer Pointers For This Week**

### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February**

- On this day in 1987, civil unrest broke out across areas of Palestine, including Gaza and the West Bank. It was one of many periods of violence over the last 80 years, which continue today.
- Today, may your prayers be for lasting peace, for resolution, for safety for all people involved in the conflict and even – somehow – for the miracle of reconciliation.
- Come, Lord Jesus.

### **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February**

- Light a candle. Sit and watch the flame and think about the following question prompt: *How does the flame move?*
  - o If it is moving a lot, reflect on ways in which God has moved you in your life.
  - o If it is very still, reflect on ways in which God has been a constant for you in a life of ongoing changes.

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February**

- Today is marked by the UN as the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, and our prayers could be of celebration and thanksgiving for greater equity in the workplace and in opportunities for people of all genders.
- Equally, you may wish to pray for all who do not feel the benefit of the ongoing battle for equality, and for sectors, individual companies and whole areas of our world where people don't feel fairly treated.
- Come, God of justice, saviour to all.

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February**

- Today is the birthday of Charles Darwin, and is regularly marked as a day to celebrate his contribution to modern thinking. It might seem an odd day to mark in our prayers, given Darwin's conflict with (and rejection by) the church of his day... but perhaps is it as an opportunity for us all to think pray and reflect about grace.
- Who are the people whose current thinking challenges us, feels outside our experience, or makes us feel uncomfortable?
- How do we discern whether God is working through these people, expanding our horizons and testing our prejudices?

### **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February**

- Think of someone you know that is in need or would benefit from some help.
- Commit to a small act of kindness for them today.
- As you carry this out, give thanks to God for them and pray for them.

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February**

- Today is the traditional day for marking the Feast of St Valentine, a Christian martyr, though it has become popularised and commercialised as 'Valentine's Day', a celebration of love in general.
- Is there someone who might find today difficult – someone who is grieving a loved one, or who might be feeling especially lonely today. Hold them in your prayers. If it is appropriate, you might like to make contact with them, just to let them know you were thinking about them.