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EPIPHANY 6C

16th February 2025

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

Light of the world –

Like a fire blazing in a stone hearth,
remind me today of the dazzling strength and power of your love.

Like a camping stove providing warmth and food for weary travellers,
remind me today of the rest and sustenance provided for me, and all around me, by your spirit.

Like a torch beam lighting the path,
remind me today of your ongoing guidance towards what is good and true when I am unsure of the way.

Like a lone candle flickering on a table,
remind me that only one little flame of hope is needed to expel the darkness.

And like the stars in the sky,
remind me that it is sometimes only in total darkness that I am able to see the magnitude of your presence.

Light of the world be with me today - meeting me exactly as I am, as I worship in this moment.

Amen.

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

Reading: Luke 6:17-26 – [Click for reading](#)

Hymn / song:

504 STF – May the mind of Christ my Saviour - [YouTube](#)

Responding to the reading

The more familiar version of the Beatitudes, which feature in today's gospel passage in Luke, comes from the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew's Gospel. In Matthew, there are eight Beatitudes, and that is the list that people generally go to when they think of these blessings. But our set passage today considers the gritty, and in many ways more demanding aspects of God's blessings.

They are probably taken from the same source but adapted by the Gospel writers to enhance the overall aspect of Jesus' ministry which they are focussing on. In this version, each of us is challenged to rethink our values and invited to experience God's grace in the midst of often paradoxical circumstances.

Jesus speaks to a diverse crowd, offering words of comfort and warning. He proclaims blessings upon those who are poor, hungry, weeping, and persecuted, suggesting that their current suffering will be transformed into joy and reward in God's kingdom. Conversely, he

issues woes to those who are rich, full, laughing, and popular, indicating that these conditions might lead to complacency and distance from the deeper needs of the soul. How might Jesus' words shift your perspective on your own struggles or successes? Consider how God's grace might be at work in the areas of your life that seem lacking and in the areas that are abundant.

The blessings pronounced by Jesus are not on those who have found life easy but on those who face significant challenges. This juxtaposition can be uncomfortable but it reveals the nature of God's grace: it often appears most profoundly in our moments of need or discomfort. God's kingdom promises a reversal of fortunes where the last will be first, and the first, last.

The woes remind us to be wary of finding our contentment solely in material wealth, temporary pleasures, or human approval. These can distract us from the radical call of the Gospel to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. As followers of Christ, we are invited not just to hear Jesus's words but to live them out, to embody a discipleship that prioritises the values of God over those espoused by the world.

Consider how you might live out the Beatitudes in your daily life. What does it mean to be merciful, to be a peacemaker, or to hunger and thirst for righteousness in your community? How can embracing these attitudes challenge the status quo and demonstrate the radical grace of God?

Jesus's teaching in this passage calls us to authentic discipleship, one that embraces both the blessings and the challenges of living according to the values of the kingdom of God. It invites us to find our true happiness and purpose not in the transient and often misleading measures of the world but in the eternal and grace-filled promises of God.

As you reflect on this passage, let the Beatitudes reshape your understanding of what it means to be blessed. May this reflection deepen your commitment to pursuing a life that reflects the grace, compassion, and upside-down values of the kingdom of God, knowing that in God's economy, the challenges you face may indeed be your greatest blessings.

Blessing

Come with me, says the Lord, inviting you out from your places of comfort, laziness and prejudice.

Come with me, take a risk, share love, create peace, generate hope.

Come with me, my Spirit is already there, ahead of you.

Come, for I am with you always, says the Lord.

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers

Monday 17th February

- Go outdoors and find something natural: a stone, leaf, flower, or something else. Consider the ways God has made this thing and then reflect on how you too are wonderfully made by God. What does this mean to you?

Tuesday 18th February

- Open your Bible at the Psalms and read one as a prayer to God. What resonates with you? Consider in what ways these old words feel new to you and offer them to God

Wednesday 19th February

- Come, Holy God, into the difficult and painful parts of my life, my story. Come, shine your light of love, healing and hope into the places I experience as difficult, painful, hateful and desperate. Come, by your grace, I pray. Amen.

Thursday 20th February

- Look up a hymn or worship song on YouTube or in a hymn book and sit and listen or read the words aloud: don't do anything else while you listen. Let your mind, body and soul tune into God through the music in prayer.

Friday 21st February

- Think about how God is at work in the lives of everyone. You can see God shining out from all people. Remember this with the next person you speak to, and give thanks for the glimpses of God you see in them.

Saturday 22nd February

- Today, you could share your prayers for those involved in education and teaching – give thanks for their wisdom, grace and energy, pray for courage and generosity as they teach you, or those close to you.