

*FREE TO DUPLICATE AND DISTRIBUTE*



## ORDINARY 26C

28th September 2025

A short act of worship and daily devotions

A Free resource funded by donations from Individuals, churches and **twelvebaskets**.

If you would like to help fund this resources [click here](#).

For more information <https://theworshipcloud.com/terms/free-weekly-resource>

## Opening Prayers

Holy, precious and gracious God,  
Thank you for this day, and for this time of worship.

As I come to know more of your word, and your calling on my life,  
So help me to receive the grace and love that is waiting for me, all around me.

Living, loving God,  
I take this precious time away from the relentless pace of life:  
And I turn to you in worship.

Awesome, life-giving God,  
As I pause a moment, help me to turn away from the everyday stresses, frustrations and endless to-do lists,  
Help me to be present to you, and to take this time to sit in your presence, Lord, and just breathe,  
Just be.

In this moment, may I find peace and strength,  
May I find the comfort and love I need, in exactly the way I need it this day.  
Your love meets me where I am, calling my name and speaking a language I can understand.

Show me how to love with that same love, this and every day.

In Jesus' name I pray,  
Amen.

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

**Reading:** Luke 16:19-31 – [Click for reading](#)

## Responding to the readings

*"I don't like to commit myself about heaven and hell - you see, I have friends in both places."* Mark Twain

At first glance today's gospel passage is all about this thorny topic that Mark Twain tells us is worth avoiding – Heaven and Hell.

- Do you agree that it's a good topic to avoid?
- What are your thoughts about Heaven and Hell?

Whatever your views, the things that Jesus says in this passage are at the very least controversial. There are some angles here that are tough for some people to stomach, and for those denominations that insist that every word in the Bible is "true", it can be especially problematic, not least because of the inherent contradictions that are within this passage alone.

Let's stay with this thread for a moment and look at some of the aspects of these two eternal places which Jesus points out to his audience, and of course that audience most definitely includes us.

We are told about the deaths of a rich man, and a beggar called Lazarus who the rich man knew well as he resided at the rich man's place, and we are told about the massive difference between the lifestyles of both men.

In an immediate twist in the tale, we are told the rich man is languishing in the torment of Hell, while Lazarus is basking in the beauty and joy of Heaven, where he is enjoying the company and comfort of none other than Father Abraham himself.

We are told there is a "great chasm" between the realms, yet despite this, the rich man can call across to Abraham and talk to him, and they can all see each other.

One view of Heaven and Hell which it was most definitely at odds with was the views held by the Pharisees who Jesus was very much talking to and with during this exchange.

What if this story was merely a set up by Jesus designed to ensure he had the attention of those Pharisees by making sure he said something highly controversial in so as to be sure they were listening. I can imagine him thinking to himself: "Now I have got your attention..."

This struck right at the heart of all they believed. They thought, and taught, that if you had money and wealth this represented righteousness, and you could rely on the assurance you would be looked after when it was all over and you could relax in an eternal heavenly realm because you have behaved well and lived life correctly. The scenario Jesus told them about with these two men was a diametrically opposite viewpoint to the views that they held.

Having challenged their world view in this shocking way he taught about what I think was the real point of the story all along. The killer blow is at the end of the passage.

In the rich man's agony he started to show some compassion towards his other family members - his other five brothers – and was concerned no longer for himself but for their fate should they continue to live as they did. How could he get the message out to them before it was too late?

Once he knew his fate was supposedly eternally determined, he then wondered if Lazarus could somehow go from where he was (in Heaven?) and convey the warning message on his behalf.

The story is filled with crazy ideas and contradictions, presumably designed to disarm, until the final point is driven home. Abraham points out the simple truth that the rest of the world – including the five brothers – have all the information they need in the teachings of "Moses and the prophets" but for some reason they are not reading and understanding well enough.

So in desperation the man suggests they will certainly sit up and listen if Lazarus visits from them from beyond the grave...

And we all sit with the echoes and the irony of the fact that the Christian faith has strived to get people to listen to the teachings of Jesus Christ... who was "raised from the dead" as the story goes... for a couple of thousand years now...

The irony of Jesus telling everyone that the people won't listen to someone who is raised from the dead is palpable and chilling given what was about to unfold in the next little while in Jerusalem

But here is a truth. As we sit here today, we are all the “five brothers”. We are the object of the message in this story. Are we listening?

### **Hymn / Song**

696 STF – For the healing of the nations, Lord we pray with one accord – [YouTube](#)

### **Blessing**

May you go out today rich in kindness, generous in spirit, and full of God’s love.  
May you go out, aware that the Holy Spirit is already there, ahead of you, inviting you on,  
by your grace,  
Amen.

---

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

### **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September**

- Hold me Lord, in the dark times, hold me in the sunshine,  
Hold me as the daylight shifts and autumn settles in,  
Hold me in the ups and downs of everyday life.  
Amen.

### **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

- Today, I pray for my community: may this be a place where people are inspired and encouraged to act in ways that work towards our common flourishing, recognising our common purposes and reflecting God’s love into the world.
- God of the outcast, stranger, foreigner, hear my prayers for those you love.  
Amen.

### **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October**

- Lord God,  
Help me to hear your wisdom as I think about the tension in my close relationships.  
Help me celebrate those close relationships that are wholesome and loving. Help me know what next steps to take in all these differing scenarios. What can I do to heal and nurture?

### **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October**

- Lord God,  
Help you hear your wisdom as you look upon a planet in peril. We are sometimes overwhelmed by opinions and explanations about climate, geography and the future of our world. Help me listen for truth and common sense today and in the days to come.
- And help me to take responsibility for my own actions and choices within that.  
Amen.

### **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October**

- As I come to you this day, I open my hands that I may reach out – to serve, to comfort and to build community with all your people.
- Help me to truly know that I am part of something greater than myself.
- Give me the faith to know that I am not alone and that your love surrounds me, and all people, always.  
Amen.

### **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October**

- Find a moment today where you can appreciate nature – perhaps a view of your garden or a nearby tree, perhaps you can watch the stars come out at night or hear the birds singing in the morning.
- Thank God for the beauty of creation, and for the world just outside your door.