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CHRISTMAS 2A

4th January 2026

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

God of new beginnings,
as I enter this new year,
show me how to take moments of quiet to look back, to reflect, to learn.

As I think about the year just gone, I recognise: life is never perfect, life can be challenging.

In 2025, there have been those moments of joy and difficulties. Difficulties that perhaps I have had no control over, or perhaps things that I could have done differently.

In a quiet moment, you are invited to bring the more difficult things forward in your prayers: allow yourself to have some time of recognition and honesty where you look at the things you could have done differently. The ways in which you could've reacted differently, in actions, words and thoughts.

Know that you are loved and accepted, just as you are, even as you challenge yourself to follow God's call on your life.

As you pray, you may also wish to acknowledge and celebrate the positives of the last year, not taking things for granted but remembering to thank God and to thank those who have helped you this year, in your joys and those positive moments.

As you step into this new year, ask God to help you remember that this is a year of possibilities, a year when there will be highs and lows.

May you see each day as a new beginning a new opportunity.

Help me to be brave enough to live life boldly, O God, going forward bringing salt and light to your world and accepting the gift of salt and light from those with whom I share my life.

Amen.

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

Readings: John 1:10-18 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the readings

As the new year begins and the sparkle of Christmas starts to fade, John's Gospel invites us back to the heart of the mystery we've been celebrating: that God became flesh, took on human life, and chose to dwell right here with us – in all our mess, beauty, pain, and possibility.

John's words are poetic and profound. Unlike Matthew and Luke, who give us shepherds and stars, John gives us the cosmic picture: the Word that was with God from the beginning now walks among us. But then comes the tension: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him."

Even then, love was overlooked. Even then, truth was resisted.

And yet, grace still came. Not as reward for our recognition, but as a gift. Freely, fully.
“From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”

For those of us who value a faith that is inclusive, thoughtful, and grounded in justice, this passage reminds us that discipleship is not about escaping the world—it’s about engaging it with the same love and vulnerability that God showed in Christ.

The Word became flesh – not to dominate, but to dwell. Not to condemn, but to invite. Not to hover above the world, but to live within it – to be one of us, with us, for us.

As we begin a new calendar year, many of us are longing for clarity, for energy, for purpose. But maybe what we most need is grace. The kind that reminds us we are not alone. The kind that grounds us in love when things are uncertain. The kind that sends us out not to impress, but to serve.

So today, take a moment to ask:

What does it mean for me to receive “grace upon grace” at the start of this year?

How might I live in a way that makes that grace visible, in my relationships, my activism, my prayers, my presence?

Where is God still choosing to dwell in my life, in my community, in the world, and how can I meet God there?

The Word has become flesh. God is not distant. Christ is not a past event, but a present reality, still speaking, still shining, still walking among us.

May we begin this year grounded in grace, bold in love, and ready to embody the truth that God is here, with us, and in us. Always.

Hymn / Song:

208 STF – Let earth and heaven combine - [YouTube](#)

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Blessing

Go from here, into the new year, with the Spirit ahead of you, The Christ beside you and the Creator all around you.

May you see the opportunities to bring light, life and peace into God’s world today and all this week,

Go in peace,

Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers For This Week

Monday 5th January

Morning comes slowly,
The last of twelve:
Her sleepy-head rising from
The long-dark of winter-night.
She is watchful, cautious, but bright -
Promising much to come.

Peace comes slowly too,
In politics, public houses,
In Gaza, and in me.

As the colours drift from darkness
To light,
As blue emerges from orange then pink:
Is it possible that love could come through
That barbed wire fence?

Tuesday 6th January

- You might like to read or listen to T.S. Eliot's The Journey of the Magi today: <https://poetryarchive.org/poem/journey-magi/>
- How does this poem sit with you today? How does thinking about the Epiphany story affect how you feel about your journey into 2026?
- Pray about your reflections and invite God to travel with you.

Wednesday 7th January

- Opening the curtains, blinds or shutters:
- Take time to pray for the world and in particular those who live and work in your community. The shopkeepers, restaurants and bars. For service providers, hairdressers, beauticians and the Post Office. For health providers like the Doctors and Chemist.

Thursday 8th January

- Looking in the mirror— Ask God to reveal to you what part you should play in their plan. What are your special gifts and graces? What in particular might you do today that would show God's love to others?

Friday 9th January

- Using the kettle, oven or microwave— Pray for those who are struggling to make ends meet and for whom food and drink are not easy to come by. For those people where starvation is the norm. Consider what you might do to be part of Gods plan to ensure all can flourish.

Saturday 10th January

- Sit outside (or open a window) and listen.
 - o What can you hear?
 - o What do you notice?
- Listen for 5 minutes, breathing deeply and steadily as you do so. Allow all that you hear to simply be there.
- As part of God's world, we are deeply connected to creation and to one another. Consider how you are part of the world you hear around you.