

twelvebaskets

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ORDINARY 15A

12th July 2026

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

As you sit here in this space you call your own ready to meet the living God remember...

You are connected to people of faith worshipping in different ways and places.

You are part of a community of saints that have worshipped for generations.

You are joined with others across the world choosing to do the same.

Here in this special space where God has been for all time you are free to worship,

So, take a moment and give thanks in the quiet places of your heart,

For all you have
All you are
And all you might be.

Pause

If you feel able speak the following,

All I have, all I am and all I might be I offer to you as I worship – today and always.

Amen.

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

Reading: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

Jesus tells a story about a farmer scattering seed. Some falls on the path. Some on rocky ground. Some among thorns. Some on good soil, where it grows and flourishes beyond expectation.

It's tempting to hear this parable as a test: What kind of soil am I? Am I getting it right? Am I fertile enough? Productive enough? Faithful enough?

But perhaps there is another way of hearing this story.

Notice how extravagantly the sower scatters the seed. There is no careful measuring, no checking first whether the ground deserves it. The seed falls everywhere: on the receptive and the resistant, on the prepared and the unprepared.

This is what grace looks like.

God's love is not rationed out to those who have earned it. The seeds of hope, compassion, truth, and transformation are scattered widely and generously. Again and again, God keeps sowing.

At the same time, Jesus invites us to pay attention to the conditions of our own hearts and lives. There are times when we become like the path: worn down by life, unable to receive anything new. There are times when our enthusiasm springs up quickly but struggles to survive when life becomes difficult.

There are times when the worries of the world, the demands of work, fear about the future, or the pursuit of success choke out what matters most. And there are times when we become good soil, not because we are perfect, but because we have made space for grace to take root.

The encouraging thing is that soil changes: a hard path can be softened, rocky ground can be cleared, thorns can be cut back. This parable is not about labelling people as permanently fruitful or permanently lost. It is about recognising that spiritual growth is a lifelong process.

This passage invites us to resist a culture obsessed with instant results. Seeds grow slowly. Justice unfolds gradually. Compassion deepens over time.

Faith is often less about dramatic moments and more about the daily work of tending the garden of our lives.

So today, you might like to reflect on these questions:

- What kind of soil does your heart most resemble at this point in your life?
- What "thorns" might be crowding out joy, peace, or compassion?
- What practices might help you become more open to the seeds God is continually planting?

And perhaps most importantly, remember this: the sower never stops sowing. Even when we feel distracted. Even when we feel weary. Even when we think we've missed our chance.

God continues to scatter grace with astonishing generosity.

May you trust that seeds of love are being planted within you, may you find the courage to tend them with patience, and may your life bear fruit that brings healing, justice, and hope to the world.

Hymn / Song:

123 STF – Come, you thankful people, come – [YouTube](#)

463 STF – Deep in the shadows of the past – [YouTube](#)

Blessing

If you need to be comforted this week, may you find the Spirit of God to hold you.
If you need to be encouraged, inspired and challenged, then may you hear the words of the Christ inviting you to be uncomfortable, in the service of the Kingdom.
May you know the Creator God close by, accepting you, just as you are, we pray
Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers For This Week

Monday 13th July

- On this day in 1985, the Live Aid Concert took place in several cities around the world. Whilst well intentioned, and a source of a great deal of money being raised for good causes, time and reflection has demonstrated that there are better, less problematic ways of talking about Africa, poverty and social justice.
- Today, you might like to pray for all involved in humanitarian aid and tackling poverty around the world. May they find a way to do so that does not cause damage or repeat narratives of racism and white supremacy.

Tuesday 14th July

- Today is International Non-Binary People's Day. Today, let your prayers be for inclusion, justice and rights for all people, especially those who are prejudiced against because of their gender or current gender alignment.

Wednesday 15th July

- Notice your words today.
- Are they kind? Are they necessary? Are they true?
- God of gentle speech, help my words to heal more than they harm. Amen.

Thursday 16th July

- Pray today for those who feel lonely.
- You might like to think of someone who lives alone, is recently bereaved, or feels disconnected.
- If appropriate, consider reaching out to them.

Friday 17th July

- On this day in 1936, the Spanish Civil War broke out, with an armed rebellion against the newly elected Popular Front (a left-wing political party).
- Today, there are four major civil wars going on (in Syria, Myanmar, Sudan, Ethiopia), with over 30 other significant internal armed conflicts around the world. You might like to pray for those involved, and for all who have the means and the opportunity to work for peace.

Saturday 18th July

- Today, pray for creation and for your own relationship with the natural world.
- You might take a short walk, look out of a window, or touch a plant and give thanks.
- Creator God, make me a better guardian of your earth. Amen.