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ORDINARY 30A

25th October 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 familiar

Readings: Matthew 22:34-46 – [Click for reading](#)

Responding to the reading

This gospel reading tells us about two very different encounters.

First, Jesus is asked which commandment is the greatest. Then, having answered, he turns the question back on his questioners and asks them something they cannot easily answer. At the centre of it all is a deceptively simple word: love.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” And then Jesus immediately adds another: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

It is difficult to imagine a more radical way of simplifying the Christian life. We can make faith incredibly complicated. We can argue about doctrine, worship, morality, biblical interpretation, church structures, politics and theology. We can spend enormous amounts of energy deciding who is right and who is wrong.

And yet Jesus brings us back to something remarkably straightforward: love God. love your neighbour.

This doesn't mean we have to agree with our neighbours, approve of everything our neighbours do, nor does it mean love only the neighbours who love you back. Rather, it is simply, love your neighbour.

That word "love" is important, because biblical love is not simply a warm feeling. It is a decision to seek the good of another person. It is compassion made practical. It is noticing who is hurting and refusing to walk past. It is standing alongside people whose dignity has been diminished.

This means that the greatest commandment is also a profoundly justice-shaped commandment. If I love my neighbour, I cannot be entirely indifferent to whether my neighbour is safe. If I love my neighbour, I cannot ignore poverty, racism, exploitation or exclusion simply because they are somebody else's problem. If I love my neighbour, I have to ask who is being pushed to the margins and why.

Love doesn't allow us to remain comfortably detached, and perhaps that is why the second half of this passage matters so much. Jesus asks the religious leaders a question about the Messiah, and they confidently give him an answer.

But then Jesus complicates their certainty. It is almost as though he is saying: You are very sure that you have God figured out. But are you sure?

There is a humility here that we might easily miss. Jesus does not seem particularly interested in giving us a complete theological system. Instead, he invites us into a relationship with God that is alive, questioning and continually growing. Perhaps one of the dangers of religion is that we can become more interested in possessing the truth than in being transformed by it.

We can become so certain that we have the right answers that we stop listening, and when that happens, love can quietly disappear from the centre.

We can be right, and still be unkind. We can defend truth, and still cause harm. We can uphold our principles, and still fail to see the person standing in front of us. Jesus offers another way. A faith measured not primarily by how confidently we can explain it, but by how faithfully we live it.

Does our theology make us more loving?

Does our worship make us more compassionate?

Does our faith make us more attentive to injustice?

Does our relationship with God make us more willing to stand alongside people who are excluded?

If not, perhaps we have somehow lost the plot.

Because the commandment isn't: get everything right. It is: love.

Love God with everything you have, and allow that love to overflow into the lives of other people. That includes the people who are easy to love. But it also includes the awkward neighbour, the difficult colleague, the person whose politics infuriate us, the stranger whose story we don't understand. And crucially, love does not mean accepting injustice.

Sometimes loving someone means challenging what is harming them. Love is not passive, it gets involved, perhaps we should too?

Love God. Love your neighbour. And then keep learning what that means.

- Who is my neighbour today, especially the person I might prefer not to notice?
- Where might my desire to be right be getting in the way of love?
- What injustice becomes harder to ignore if I really take "love your neighbour" seriously?
- What would love require of me this week?

May we have hearts open enough to love God deeply, minds humble enough to keep learning, and courage strong enough to let love become action. May our faith never become so concerned with being right that it forgets to be kind. And when we find ourselves unsure of the way forward, may we return to the heart of it all: Love God. Love your neighbour. And let that love change the world, one relationship at a time.

Amen.

Hymn:

465 STF – Guide me, O thou great Jehovah – [YouTube](#)

Blessing

May you go out from here, rising from this moment,
Inspired and uplifted to transform and change the world around you.
Go, with the love of God in your heart and the grace of God before you,
Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers For This Week

Monday 26th October

- Today is the beginning of the October half term holiday in many parts of the UK. As this shift in rhythm and patterns for many families and communities happens...it might be a good time for you to review your own rhythms of prayer, reflection, meditation and action.
- How can you spend more time focussing on the things God is calling you to do, in these final few weeks of 2026?

Tuesday 27th October

- Breathe in slowly. As you do so, picture that you are breathing in God's love for you, your local community and for the wider world.
- Now breathe out slowly. As you do so, imagine sending that love back out into the world.
- Repeat this at least 5 times.

Wednesday 28th October

- God of all grace, thank you for all you are doing in my life and in the world around me. Today, help me to notice your presence, and give thanks. Amen.

Thursday 29th October

- God of all grace, I take a moment to pray for all the stories in the news today.
- Holding before you leaders, nations, conflicts, disasters, and those working for a better world.
- Come, Prince of Peace, come Lord of Light, Amen.

Friday 30th October

- As you prepare food today to provide sustenance for your body, reflect on the sustenance God's love for you provides for your heart, mind and soul too. Thank God for this love and channel this into your food preparation. Eat it slowly and steadily, reflecting on this too.

Saturday 31st October

- Today is All Hallows Eve, or 'Halloween', a time when many people don costumes or decorate houses with traditional 'scary' symbols, reflecting the traditional belief that tonight was the night before All Souls day, and therefore a night that belonged to forces of evil.
- Whilst some of these traditions are unhelpful and, at worst, dangerous, Halloween also brings people together in many communities – as children and families knock on doors and neighbours talk in the street.
- As Halloween happens in your community, you might like to pray for a light to shine in the darkness, of your own life, of the lives of those around you, of the whole community.