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## EPIPHANY 3A

25th January 2026

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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## Opening Prayers

God is everywhere  
In this space and all spaces  
In this time and all times.

God is waiting to meet you and is ready to welcome you  
Just as it has been for all eternity

So be still.

*Pause*

Get ready to notice the spirit working  
Through words on the page  
Through sounds around you  
Through familiar and unfamiliar smells  
Through all that you see when you look up from what you are reading  
Through the touch of your hands as you hold them together to pray.

So be still.

*Pause*

If you feel able speak aloud the following words.

God of all time and space I notice you here.

I am ready.

Amen

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

**Reading:** Matthew 4:12-23 – [Click for reading](#)

## Responding to the reading

Jesus begins his ministry not in a palace or a temple, but in a fishing village on the edge of empire.

Matthew tells us that Jesus, upon hearing of John the Baptist's arrest, withdraws to Galilee, to the region of "Zebulun and Naphtali": a place historically marked by oppression and obscurity.

But Matthew sees something more: he sees this move as the fulfilment of Isaiah's promise, "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light."

From the beginning, Jesus' ministry is rooted not in power or prestige, but in places that hurt, and people who are overlooked.

And it's there, on the shore, that he calls his first disciples.

He sees Simon and Andrew casting nets, and he says, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." He sees James and John, mending theirs. He calls them too. And all four leave their nets immediately and follow.

No application process. No prerequisites. Just a call and a response.

For those of us navigating discipleship in a complex, modern world, this passage reminds us of some core truths:

- Discipleship begins where you are. Jesus doesn't wait for the disciples to become theologians or moral heroes. He meets them at work, in the midst of their ordinary lives. The invitation to follow isn't about having it all together—it's about being willing to walk a new path.
- The call is communal. Jesus doesn't just call individuals, he forms a community. Discipleship is not a solo journey. It's something we do together, learning, stumbling, supporting, forgiving, growing.
- The call will change your priorities. The disciples leave their nets, not necessarily because fishing is bad, but because something deeper is pulling them forward. The life of faith often means loosening our grip on what's familiar in order to make space for what is liberating.

And notice: Jesus doesn't say what the journey will look like. He doesn't promise comfort or clarity. What he offers is relationship: "Follow me."

For open-minded Christians who value inclusion, justice, and spiritual curiosity, this passage challenges us to consider:

- Where am I being called to "drop my nets"?
- What comfortable patterns or roles might I be asked to leave behind?
- How is Jesus still calling me toward deeper healing, justice, and love?

Discipleship, at its core, is not about certainty, it's about courage. It's about hearing the call and stepping out anyway, trusting that the light we've seen is worth following.

May we hear Christ's call again today, and may we have the heart to respond with our lives.

### **Hymn/Song:**

255 STF – The Kingdom of God is justice and joy – [YouTube](#)

### **Blessing**

May the Light of Christ  
go before you to guide your steps,  
behind you to give you courage,  
beside you to befriend you,  
and within you to warm your heart.  
And may the blessing of God, Creator, Christ, and Spirit,  
rest upon you and remain with you,  
today and always.  
Amen.

# Prayers and Prayer Pointers For This Week

## Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January

- Take a moment to notice your feet, and the ground they are placed on. One of the ancient names for God is 'the ground of being'. Think about this little phrase as you notice your own grounded-ness. Is it helpful?
- Pray about the thoughts and reflections you have during this time.

## Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January

- O Lord my God,  
Take the hours, minutes and seconds of this my day,  
Transform my actions, reflections and thoughts,  
Into opportunities to discover, uncover and share your grace,  
In Jesus' name I pray,  
Amen.

## Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January

- Whenever you wash your hands today, think about Pontius Pilate and the moment in the Passion narrative when he washes his hands of his responsibility over Jesus' sentencing and eventual crucifixion.
- What areas of your life or of the common life you share with those around you are you avoiding / hiding from / washing away? How could you change that this week?

## Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January

- Take a moment today to sit in pure stillness. To turn off all the background noise and be present to all that God is doing in your life.
- Notice what happens, or simply accept the gift of stillness and mediation, which is a blessing to our mental health and wellbeing.

## Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January

- Say a prayer of thanks today – perhaps for something you don't often notice is a gift, for a talent you don't often get to use, for something you use so often you've got used to it being part of your life, for someone you find precious.

## Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January

- Loving God, thank you for the world around me and help me to celebrate those around me – to notice the gifts and skills of those who I see regularly, and to acknowledge the good things I have.
- Show me how to follow in your way, this weekend, and into the next month, I pray. Amen.