

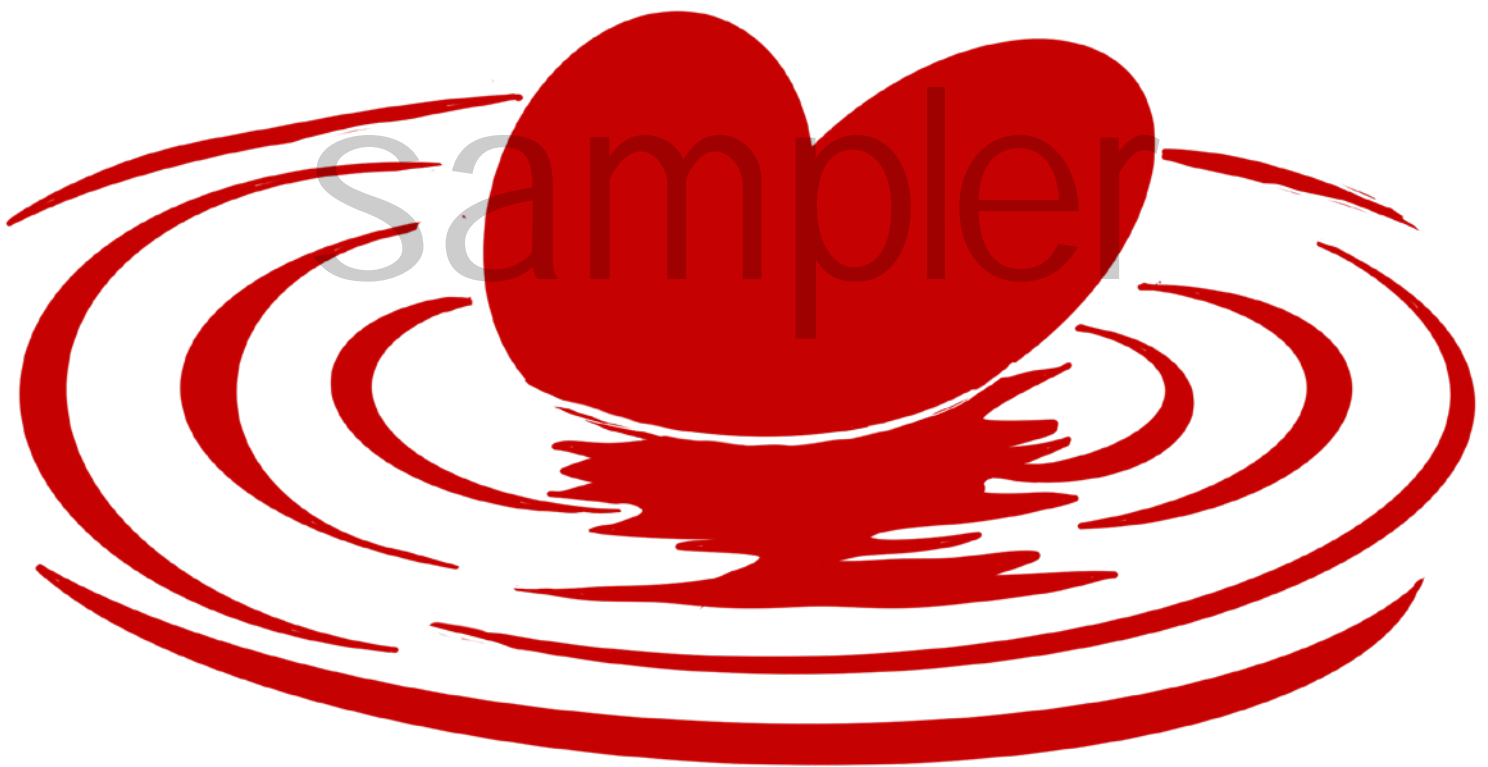
# spill the beans

worship and learning resources for all ages

issue 59

trinity to pentecost 13

31 may to 23 august 2026



# introduction

Welcome to the third issue in a two year series comprising eight issues of Spill the Beans through which we are embarking on a journey through the texts written by Saint Luke: both his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.

## Lukan Lectionary

While working through our previous Word and World Lectionary cycle the Spill the Beans Resource Team was already working on the next steps and had long discussed the possibility of focussing for a year on one Gospel. There was not, amongst us, a great desire at this stage to return to one of the other lectionaries like the RCL or Narrative, so we started initially to work on a way to cover all of the text of Luke's Gospel.

As we completed that work it seemed natural to continue on with Luke's second book as these are two parts of one larger work. While seeking to include every verse of each book during the year we did need to do some work in order to also meaningfully mark the main seasons, so we have split how we approach the text into sections. This is particularly noticeable, of course, when journeying through the Gospel as we take a season to travel the Road to Golgotha before then taking a long season on the Ministry of Jesus. We hope that this makes some logical sense.

We keep the format for the layout of the issues as we have used in past years, which we hope encourages the development of intergenerational worship.

See [pages 4-6](#) for the details of this new lectionary so that you can plan ahead.

## Intergenerational Worship

Spill the Beans has always been rooted in the power of story telling. Story binds generations together. In that shared bond of story lies the creative space for building relationships between generations. Using different ways to engage with the story recognises the variety amongst us all: some learn by listening, others by doing, others by creating. All are valuable and a part of our shared worship of God.

We are encouraging you to experiment as we will be doing with ways to worship intergenerationally in an authentic and inclusive manner. To that end we are still providing a rich variety of resources but grouped by how they help us **'tell the story'**, **'explore the story'**, and **'live the story'**. Mix and match, rewrite, contextualise for your own setting, try something different, and have fun with it! Please do give us feedback.

There are many resources online to help think more deeply about intergenerational worship. A simple but very helpful summary is provided by the Methodist Church, copied below.

### Intergenerational worship IS about:

- **building relationships**—offering a key time for people to get to know each other better and build a sense of connection;
- **a time of worship and learning that is offered in a simplified and participatory way**—simple does not mean shallow; rather it enables everyone to contribute and receive in a meaningful and appropriate way;
- **providing an inclusive experience and a sense of belonging**—helping everyone of all abilities to feel part of the body of Christ, whatever their experience;
- **being a bridge**—not only between ages but also for those who are exploring what being part of a church means. This relaxed service style can provide a comfortable place for some to discover more about Christianity;
- **encouragement, nurture and inclusiveness**—it is a means by which faith can grow and, in turn, inform life-making or life-changing decisions;
- **exploring vocation**—an opportunity to discover and develop gifts and calling.

### Intergenerational worship is NOT about:

- limiting the richness of resources used;
- oversimplifying the message or adding a children's talk into the 'usual' service;
- unstructured and chaotic worship;
- children having token responsibilities for roles and participation;
- limiting potential to explore faith and discipleship together;
- nuclear families exclusively worshipping together.

## Information

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Sleepless Nights Publications

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# the team

If you would like to find out how you could be part of the team, please contact either Roddy or Peter (see previous page).

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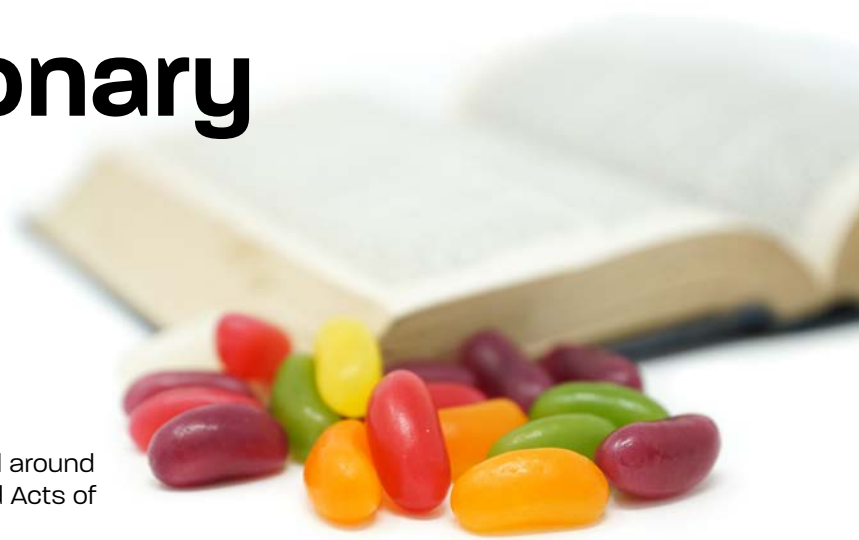
## Key to Abbreviations

In the worship ideas section the following abbreviations may be used to indicate different sources of worship music:

- ATAS All the Assembly Songs You'll Ever Need
- CG Common Ground
- CH4 Church Hymnary, 4th Edition
- GTG Glory To God: The Presbyterian Hymnal
- GWA God Welcomes All (Supplement to CH4)
- JP Junior Praise
- MP Complete Mission Praise
- SGP Songs of God's People
- STF Singing The Faith
- WGP Wild Goose Publications



# lukan lectionary



## Journeying With The Doctor

**W**elcome to our new lectionary based around the texts of Saint Luke's Gospel and Acts of the Apostles.

It is not possible just to work our way through the gospel chronologically, as there are inevitably some diversions at different points in the year to align with the liturgical calendar. So we have tried to approach this a little differently with some major themes that we will explore: the beginning birth narrative, the road to Golgotha, Holy Week and the Passion, and finally Jesus' life and ministry. We are going to be reading every verse of the gospel during the year.

For the Acts of the Apostles, Luke's sequel, we have tried to follow chronologically the events as Luke records them

as much as possible. Again, we will be reading every verse of Acts over the course of the year.

You can find the complete plan for both years in the following table.

Come join us on this journey with the good Doctor Luke.

Date	Liturgical	Primary Text	Support Text	Notes
<b>LUKAN LECTIONARY YEAR 1: THE GOSPEL OF LUKE</b>				
<b>The Beginning</b>				
30 Nov 25	Advent 1	Luke 1:1-4	Joshua 22:4-6	The Setup; The Lord's Commandment
7 Dec 25	Advent 2	Luke 1:5-38	Isaiah 9:2-7	Births foretold; People walking in darkness
14 Dec 25	Advent 3	Luke 1:39-56	Psalms 146	The Magnificat; Praise for God's help
21 Dec 25	Advent 4	Luke 1:57-80	Isaiah 40:1-9	John the Baptist's birth; God's people are comforted
25 Dec 25	Christmas Day	Luke 2:1-20	Micah 5:2-5	Jesus' birth; Ruler from Bethlehem
28 Dec 25	Christmas 1	Luke 2:21-40	1 Samuel 1:19-28	Jesus presented; Samuel's dedication
4 Jan 26	Christmas 2	Luke 2:41-52	1 Samuel 2:18-21	Jesus as a boy; Samuel growing up in God's presence
<b>The Road To Golgotha</b>				
11 Jan 26	Epiphany 1	Luke 19:45-20:8	Proverbs 26:4-5	Jesus back in the Temple; Fools and folly
18 Jan 26	Epiphany 2	Luke 17:22-37	Genesis 19:15-29	Jesus foretells death/resurrection; Sodom & Gomorrah
25 Jan 26	Epiphany 3	Luke 6:1-11; 13:10-17	Exodus 34:21	Jesus breaking Sabbath taboos; Sabbath renewal
1 Feb 26	Epiphany 4	Luke 11:14-23	Acts 28:23-28	Jesus causing division; Paul preaching in Rome
8 Feb 26	Epiphany 5	Luke 11:29-54	Jonah 3:1-10	Signs from Jonah with Jesus' critique; Nineveh conversion
15 Feb 26	Transfiguration	Luke 9:21-36, 43b-45	Exodus 34:29-35	Jesus foretells and transfiguration; Moses beams
22 Feb 26	Lent 1	Luke 12:49-56	Micah 7:1-7	Households divided and repentance; People corrupted
1 Mar 26	Lent 2	Luke 15:1-10	Ezekiel 34:11-16	Parables of the shepherd/woman; The true shepherd
8 Mar 26	Lent 3	Luke 18:31-34	Luke 13:1-9; 21:29-33	Third foretelling of death/resurrection; On fig trees
15 Mar 26	Lent 4	Luke 20:9-19	Isaiah 5:1-7	Parable of the vineyard; Song of the unfruitful vineyard
22 Mar 26	Lent 5	Luke 20:20-26	Acts 17:1-9	Taxes and authority; Uproar in Thessalonica
29 Mar 26	Palms/Passion	Luke 19:28-44	Zechariah 9:8-12	Entrance to Jerusalem; A coming ruler
<b>The Passion (Holy Week)</b>				
30 Mar 26	Monday	Luke 20:27-21:4	Deuteronomy 25:5-10	Questions about resurrection and widow's mite; Levirate marriage
31 Mar 26	Tuesday	Luke 21:5-28	Revelation 6:1-17	Mini-apocalypse; The seven seals
1 Apr 26	Wednesday	Luke 21:34-22:6	John 7:45-53	Be on your guard and Judas' plans; Plotting amongst elites
2 Apr 26	Maundy Thursday	Luke 22:7-30(31-46)	Deuteronomy 16:1-8	Preparation of Passover, institution, disputes; Passover legislated
3 Apr 26	Good Friday	Luke 22:47-23:49	Psalms 31:3-5, 9-14	Arrest, execution; Prayer for deliverance
4 Apr 26	Holy Saturday	Luke 23:50-56	2 Chronicles 16:13-14	Burial of Jesus; Example of burial (Asa)
5 Apr 26	Easter Day	Luke 24:1-12	Psalms 126	At the tomb; Song of joy
12 Apr 26	Easter 2	Luke 24:13-35	1 Corinthians 10:12-17	Road to Emmaus; Partake of the one bread

Note that the double-lined breaks in the table delineate between issues.

Date	Liturgical	Primary Text	Support Text	Notes
<b>The Ministry Of Jesus</b>				
19 Apr 26	Easter 3	Luke 3:1-22(23-38)	Isaiah 42:1-9	John with Jesus' baptism; The Servant and light to the nations
26 Apr 26	Easter 4	Luke 4:1-15	Deuteronomy 8:1-6	Jesus' temptation; Lessons from 40 years in the wilderness
3 May 26	Easter 5	Luke 4:14-30	1 Kings 17:8-16	Jesus preaching in the synagogue; Elijah and widow of Zarephath
10 May 26	Easter 6	Luke 4:31-44	2 Corinthians 5:11-15	Jesus healing and teaching; Ministry of reconciliation
17 May 26	Easter 7	Luke 5:1-11,27-28; 6:12-17	Acts 6:1-7	Jesus calling disciples; The community leadership grows
24 May 26	Pentecost	Luke 5:12-16	Acts 2:1-11	Jesus heals a leper; Pentecost spirit visits
31 May 26	Pentecost 1 (Trinity)	Luke 5:17-26	Leviticus 24:10-16	Healing of paralysed man; An example of blasphemy punished
7 Jun 26	Pentecost 2	Luke 5:29-39	Isaiah 58:3-9a	Fasting / old and new; On true fasting
14 Jun 26	Pentecost 3	Luke 6:17-31	Psalms 63	Blessings and woes; Comfort in God's presence
21 Jun 26	Pentecost 4	Luke 6:27-42	Acts 9:9-20	Do not judge / speck and plank; Saul/Paul transformed
28 Jun 26	Pentecost 5	Luke 6:43-49	James 1:2-11,22-25	Good/bad fruit/foundations; Poverty and riches, be a doer
5 Jul 26	Pentecost 6	Luke 7:1-23	Acts 10:1-35	Healing of centurion, raising of widow's son; Peter and centurion
12 Jul 26	Pentecost 7	Luke 7:24-50; 8:1-4	Exodus 30:17-21	Jesus deals with question, anointing; The bronze basin
19 Jul 26	Pentecost 8	Luke 8:4-21	Galatians 5:22-26	Parable of sower and explanation; Fruit of the Spirit
26 Jul 26	Pentecost 9	Luke 8:22-56	Psalms 107:23-32	Commanding the waters / healings; The Lord's control over chaos
2 Aug 26	Pentecost 10	Luke 9:1-20	Numbers 11:21-23	Jesus teaching and feeding multitude; Moses doubts God's power
9 Aug 26	Pentecost 11	Luke 9:37-50	1 Thessalonians 4:1-12	Faithless and perverse generation; A life pleasing to God
16 Aug 26	Pentecost 12	Luke 9:51-10:24	Ecclesiastes 4:9-12	Jesus sets face to Jerusalem, mission of 70; Pairing up
23 Aug 26	Pentecost 13	Luke 10:25-42	Leviticus 19:11-18	Parable of Good Samaritan and Mary & Martha; Moral holiness
30 Aug 26	Pentecost 14	Luke 11:1-13,24-28,33-36	Philippians 4:4-8	Jesus praying, admired, do not hide your light; Exhortations
6 Sep 26	Pentecost 15	Luke 12:1-34	1 Corinthians 5:6-8	Crowds trampling to hear Jesus; On yeast
13 Sep 26	Pentecost 16	Luke 12:35-48,57-59	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Watchfulness and preparation; Prepared for the day of the Lord
20 Sep 26	Pentecost 17	Luke 13:10-35	Acts 8:14-24	Healing and words about the Kingdom; Buying your way to blessing
27 Sep 26	Pentecost 18	Luke 14:1-24	Proverbs 25:6-7	Healing, parables of humility; Do not put yourself forward
4 Oct 26	Pentecost 19	Luke 14:25-35	Colossians 4:2-6	Cost of discipleship; Let your speech be gracious
11 Oct 26	Pentecost 20	Luke 15:11-16:13	Genesis 27:30-38	Parable of prodigal / dishonest manager; Esau's lost blessing
18 Oct 26	Pentecost 21	Luke 16:14-31	Psalms 19	Rich man and Lazarus, the Law and the Kingdom; Perfect Law
25 Oct 26	Pentecost 22	Luke 17:1-21	Leviticus 13:45-46	Sayings, cleansing of lepers, coming Kingdom; Unclean
1 Nov 26	Pentecost 23	Luke 18:1-30	Hebrews 13:1-8	Unjust judge, persistent widow, rich young ruler; Contentment
8 Nov 26	Pentecost 24	Luke 18:35-19:10	Numbers 5:5-7	Blind beggar, Zacchaeus; Restitution
15 Nov 26	Pentecost 25	Luke 19:11-27	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Parable of the ten pounds; Servants and stewards
22 Nov 26	Reign of Christ	Luke 24:36-53	1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Jesus' commission of disciples; The good news flows on
<b>LUKAN LECTIONARY YEAR 2: THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES</b>				
<b>Introduction</b>				
29 Nov 26	Advent 1	Acts 1:1-14	Isaiah 64:1-9	The promise of the Holy Spirit/Ascension; Prayer of penitence
6 Dec 26	Advent 2	Acts 1:15-26	2 Peter 3:8-16a	Matthias chosen to replace Judas; Promise of the Lord's coming
<b>In Jerusalem</b>				
13 Dec 26	Advent 3	Acts 2:12-21	Luke 1:46-55	Peter addressing the crowd; Mary's song of praise
20 Dec 26	Advent 4	Acts 2:22-36	Matthew 1:1-17	Peter's sermon continues; The genealogy of Jesus
25 Dec 26	Christmas Day	Acts 2:37-39	Matthew 1:18-25 and/or Luke 2:1-20	Peter's sermon closes; The birth of Jesus
27 Dec 26	Christmas 1	Acts 2:40-42	Galatians 3:23-29	The first converts; Children of God through faith
3 Jan 27	Christmas 2	Acts 2:43-47	Matthew 2:1-15	Life among the believers; The visit of the Magi
10 Jan 27	Epiphany 1	Acts 3:1-11	Matthew 9:1-8	Peter heals a crippled beggar; Jesus heals a paralytic
17 Jan 27	Epiphany 2	Acts 3:12-26	Matthew 3:1-17	Peter speaks in Solomon's Portico; John the Baptist's proclamation
24 Jan 27	Epiphany 3	Acts 4:1-22	Matthew 4:1-11	Peter and John before the Council; Testing of Jesus
31 Jan 27	Epiphany 4	Acts 4:23-37	Hebrews 10:19-25	The believers pray for boldness; A call to perseverance
7 Feb 27	Transfiguration	Acts 5:12-16	Mark 9:2-13	The apostles heal many; The Transfiguration



Date	Liturgical	Primary Text	Support Text	Notes
<b>LUKAN LECTIONARY YEAR 2: THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (continued)</b>				
14 Feb 27	Lent 1	Acts 5:1-11	Micah 6:6-8	Ananias and Sapphira; What God requires
21 Feb 27	Lent 2	Acts 5:17-33	John 11:45-53	The Apostles are persecuted; The plot to kill Jesus
28 Feb 27	Lent 3	Acts 5:33-42	Psalms 37:1-11	Gamaliel's intervention; Exhortation to patience and trust
7 Mar 27	Lent 4	Acts 6:1-7	Psalms 37:12-27	Seven chosen to serve; Comparisons between righteous & wicked
14 Mar 27	Lent 5	Acts 6:8-15	Psalms 37:28-40	The arrest of Stephen; On justice
21 Mar 27	Palms/Passion	Acts 7:1-16	Mark 11:1-11	Stephen begins to address the Council; Jesus' entry to Jerusalem
22 Mar 27	Holy Week Monday	Acts 7:17-29	Psalms 24:1-2	Stephen speaks about Moses; The earth is the Lord's
23 Mar 27	Holy Week Tuesday	Acts 7:30-34	Psalms 24:1-4	Theophany on the mountain; Who shall ascend?
24 Mar 27	Holy Week Wed	Acts 7:35-43	Psalms 24:1-6	God uses Moses; Blessing from the Lord
25 Mar 27	Maundy Thursday	Acts 7:44-53	Psalms 24:1-8	Stephen challenges those who oppose God; Lift up your heads
26 Mar 27	Good Friday	Acts 7:54-8:1	Psalms 24:1-10	The stoning of Stephen; Who is this King of glory?
27 Mar 27	Holy Saturday	Acts 8:2-3	Mark 15:42-47	The burial of Stephen and Saul's violence; The burial of Jesus
28 Mar 27	Easter Day	Acts 9:32-42	Mark 16:1-8	Healing and raising from death by Peter; The resurrection of Jesus
<b>In Judea And Samaria</b>				
4 Apr 27	Easter 2	Acts 8:4-25	Mark 16:9-13	Philip preaches in Samaria; Jesus' appearances
11 Apr 27	Easter 3	Acts 8:25-40	2 Timothy 3:10-17	Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch; Paul's charge to Timothy
18 Apr 27	Easter 4	Acts 9:1-19a	2 Kings 5:1-14	The conversion of Saul; The healing of Naaman
25 Apr 27	Easter 5	Acts 9:19b-31	Matthew 13:54-58	Saul's new ministry begins; The rejection of Jesus in Nazareth
2 May 27	Easter 6	Acts 9:43-10:33	Leviticus 11:1-12	Peter and Cornelius; Clean and unclean foods
9 May 27	Easter 7	Acts 10:34-43	Romans 2:6-11	Gentiles hear the Good News; God shows no partiality
16 May 27	Pentecost	Acts 2:1-13	Acts 10:44-48	The coming of the Holy Spirit; Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit
23 May 27	Pentecost 1 (Trinity)	Acts 11:1-18	1 Corinthians 1:10-17	Peter's report to the Church in Jerusalem; Divisions in the Church
30 May 27	Pentecost 2	Acts 11:19-12:5	Deuteronomy 11:18-21	The Church in Antioch, James killed, Peter imprisoned; The Shema
6 Jun 27	Pentecost 3	Acts 12:6-13:3	Revelation 3:19b-22	Peter delivered from prison; I am standing at the door, knocking
<b>The Missionary Journeys</b>				
13 Jun 27	Pentecost 4	Acts 13:4-52	1 Samuel 8	Preaching in Cyprus, Paul and Barnabas in Antioch; Israel demands a king
20 Jun 27	Pentecost 5	Acts 14:1-28	Daniel 2:24-29	In Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and back to Antioch; Daniel's dream interpretation
27 Jun 27	Pentecost 6	Acts 15:1-35	Galatians 2:15-21	The Council at Jerusalem; Jews and Gentiles saved by faith
4 Jul 27	Pentecost 7	Acts 15:36-16:10	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Paul and Barnabas separate, Timothy joins Paul and Silas; The Thessalonians faith and example
11 Jul 27	Pentecost 8	Acts 16:11-40	Isaiah 61:1-3	Conversion of Lydia, Paul and Silas in prison; Good news of deliverance
18 Jul 27	Pentecost 9	Acts 17:1-15	1 Thessalonians 2:13-16	Uproar in Thessalonica; Giving thanks for the Thessalonian believers
25 Jul 27	Pentecost 10	Acts 17:16-34	2 Corinthians 4:1-6	Paul in Athens; We do not lose heart
1 Aug 27	Pentecost 11	Acts 18:1-23	1 Corinthians 2:1-5	Paul in Corinth; Proclaiming Christ crucified
8 Aug 27	Pentecost 12	Acts 18:24-19:20	Jeremiah 33:6-9	Ministry of Apollos, Paul in Ephesus; Healing after punishment
15 Aug 27	Pentecost 13	Acts 19:21-41	Proverbs 29:8,22,25-26	The riot in Ephesus; Wisdom sayings
22 Aug 27	Pentecost 14	Acts 20:1-16	Daniel 12:1-3	Paul visits Macedonia and Greece, sleepy Eutychus; Awakening to eternal life
29 Aug 27	Pentecost 15	Acts 20:17-38	Ezekiel 34:23-31	Paul speaks to the Ephesian elders; The one shepherd
<b>Paul's Witness Spreads To Rome</b>				
5 Sep 27	Pentecost 16	Acts 21:1-26	Galatians 2:1-5	Paul's journey to Jerusalem, visit with James; Paul and the disciples
12 Sep 27	Pentecost 17	Acts 21:27-22:5	John 18:1-11	Paul arrested in the Temple, defends himself; Betrayal of Jesus
19 Sep 27	Pentecost 18	Acts 22:6-29	John 18:28-38	Paul continues his defense, pulls the Roman citizen card; Jesus before Pilate
26 Sep 27	Pentecost 19	Acts 22:30-23:22	Mark 12:18-27	Paul before the Council, plots to kill Paul; Sadducees try to catch out Jesus
3 Oct 27	Pentecost 20	Acts 23:23-35	Joshua 1:1-9	Paul sent to Felix the Governor; God's commission to Joshua
10 Oct 27	Pentecost 21	Acts 24:1-27	1 Timothy 1:1-7	Paul before Felix at Caesarea; Warning against false teachers
17 Oct 27	Pentecost 22	Acts 25:1-22	John 18:12-14,19-24	Paul appears to the Emperor, Festus consults King Agrippa; Jesus before the High Priest
24 Oct 27	Pentecost 23	Acts 25:23-27	John 18:38-40	Paul brought before King Agrippa; Jesus sentenced to death
31 Oct 27	Pentecost 24	Acts 26:1-32	Luke 21:12-15	Paul defends himself before Agrippa, tries to convert the king; Persecutions of the faithful
7 Nov 27	Pentecost 25	Acts 27:1-44	Jonah 1:1-17	Paul sails for Rome, stormy seas and shipwreck; Jonah tries to flee
14 Nov 27	Pentecost 26	Acts 28:1-10	Psalms 91:11-16	Paul on Malta; God's protection
21 Nov 27	Reign of Christ	Acts 28:11-31	Isaiah 6:6-13	Paul in Rome; Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

# incredible things

## Pentecost 1 (Trinity)

Sunday 31 May 2026

## Lukan Lectionary Year 1

### The Gospel of Luke

The Ministry of Jesus

## Scripture

Luke 5:17-26

Leviticus 24:10-16

*tell the story*

## Bible Notes

**A** Christian charity that focuses on people with disabilities, seeking to value all equally, ensuring that they fully belong and are able to contribute their gifts and skills named itself 'Through The Roof'. It is an inspired choice of name stemming from this week's dramatic story from Luke's gospel. It is an event that is paralleled in Mark's gospel, albeit with a wee twist that reveals Luke's own roots in the Greco-Roman world and the audience to whom he wrote: there is no mud and straw roof to dig through in Luke's story, instead we have 'civilised' tiles to remove from the roof!

There are a couple of firsts in this scene. In Luke's account this is the first time we are formally introduced to the groups known as the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law (in other gospels they are described as the Scribes), who will become increasingly opposed to Jesus' activity. They have travelled to see what all the fuss is about, some coming all the way from Jerusalem itself. The word about what Jesus has been doing is spreading.

It is worth keeping in mind who these two groups were. The Pharisees were what we might call a lay organisation today. They were a faction within Judaism that had a focus on renewal within the faith, and saw that renewal in terms of personal piety and a strong adherence to the Torah, to the Law. You would think that there might be some strong crossover with what John

the Baptist and Jesus were also preaching and teaching, as they also spoke of repentance and of renewal. However, the big difference lay in the approaches. Whereas the Pharisees tended towards exclusivity, Jesus tended towards inclusivity.



*"Through the Roof" by Adora (ProjectMadeNew)*

The teachers of the Law, theologians and lawyers, were the group who interpreted the Law by which people were to live so there would be an understandable link between these two groups and their vision for people and society. It also makes clear why this event is a perfect introduction to them and the growing resistance, anger and vitriol they will direct towards Jesus in the years to come.

Within the context of that time there was a strong understanding that sickness and sinfulness were linked, and the background understanding of blessing/curse: notably that to be rich was to be good was to be healthy. It is tempting to see this in modern terms as part of a causation/correlation fallacy, but we should not

be too hasty. Frequently people ask themselves today 'what did I do to deserve this?' when faced with a major medical diagnosis. That thought is not far from the ancient understanding that sickness is a result of sinful action.

The Bible itself is a real mix, both supporting this worldview (see Psalm 1's 'the way of the wicked will perish') and challenging it as Jesus himself does with his

blessings upon the poor and woes upon the wealthy.

Which brings us to the event itself and the wonderful image of friends seeking the best for the paralysed man, whatever their reasoning might have been it is clear that their relationship with the man trumped all else and they wanted to see something good and positive as an outcome for him.

Having lowered the man through the roof their work is done and the situation is left in Jesus' hands. Two things happen. The man is healed and the man is forgiven. These both take place. Is there in Jesus' mind a holistic understanding of the person? He breaks down the false barriers between body, mind and soul, and sees the whole person and wants the best for that person. Jesus does what he knows that person needs, bringing physical and psychological healing. It is all one act of healing and restoration.

Yet, the Pharisees and teachers of the Law focus on only one aspect of Jesus' action, the one that treads on their own territory: the forgiveness of sins. There is some hypocrisy under the surface here. While they cry that only God can forgive sin, it is good to remember that the teachers of the Law also presided over a process by which forgiveness of sin could legally, and for a fee, take place. There is a conflict of interest at work here as they try to stop Jesus from freely offering forgiveness of sin (something, you will recall, that Jesus encourages his disciples to go on to do in the future).

Jesus' authority is at stake here and his response and actions to the questioning of that authority reveal to the audience and to his interrogators that he has the upper hand. Note that he does not go as far as to declare himself as God, though the charge of blasphemy is clearly on the minds of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. Rather, Jesus draws on the ancient phrase Son of Man. This is the other first in this passage. It is the first time that Son of Man is used. It is a deliberately ambiguous phrase but one that links Jesus to all humanity: he is the Human One. The title seeks to emphasise that Jesus is the one who relates to all people, to the poor and infirm, to the sick and the rejected, to all those who the powerful would dismiss as 'other'. Jesus invites them all to his new adventure, asking them to join him, to get up and walk, to start afresh. For many, these were incredible things to behold indeed.

## Story Retelling

### Sunshine Through The Roof

Andy: Ada, this is some story from Luke's Gospel today. The homeowner must have been raging when the folk knocked in his roof and lowered a bloke down on a stretcher to get Jesus to heal him.

Ada: You're no kidding, Andy! Imagine sitting quietly listening to Jesus and suddenly bits of plaster and tile start falling into your tea.

Andy: Exactly! First a bit of dust... then a chunk of plaster... the clink of tiles... then suddenly daylight where your roof used to be.

Ada: And four faces peering down saying, "Sorry about this... but we've got a friend who really needs help."

Andy: You have to admit, Ada, It shows some amount of determination. Those friends were not taking "no room at the inn" or in this case a house for an answer.

Ada: Andy, they showed real friendship. Carrying that poor friend all the way there and when they discovered the door was blocked they didn't give up. They simply thought, "Let's try the roof!"

Andy: I'm not sure our church insurance policy would cover that.

Ada: Probably not, but the important thing is what Jesus noticed first.

Andy: The hole in the roof? The sunshine flooding in?

Ada: No—their faith. The passage says that when Jesus saw their faith, he spoke to the man.

Andy: That always intrigues me. The man on the mat doesn't say a thing.

Ada: Exactly. Sometimes other people carry faith for us when we can't manage it ourselves.

Andy: Like when someone is ill or struggling, and their friends keep praying for them.

Ada: Yes. Faith can be a team effort.

Andy: But here's the surprising part. The man comes hoping to walk again... and Jesus says, "Your sins are forgiven."

Ada: That must have confused everyone in the room.

Andy: Especially the religious experts sitting there.

Ada: Oh, yes. They start whispering, "Who does this man think he is? Only God can forgive sins."

Andy: Which is actually a very good theological question.

Ada: And Jesus answers it in a very dramatic way.

Andy: By healing the man.

Ada: Just so. He says, “So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins...” and then tells the man to get up.

Andy: And the man stands up, rolls up his mat, and walks home.

Ada: Imagine the silence in that room for a moment.

Andy: Followed by amazement.

Ada: Luke says the people were filled with awe and said, “We have seen incredible things today.”

Andy: You know what strikes me?

Ada: What’s that?

Andy: The story isn’t just about healing. It’s about restoring a whole life.

Ada: Of course. Jesus deals with the deepest need first—forgiveness—and then the visible need.

Andy: And it all began because four friends refused to give up.

Ada: Which raises a question for us.

Andy: Go on, Ada.

Ada: Who are the people we might need to carry to Jesus? Maybe not on a stretcher, but through prayer, kindness, and support.

Andy: And are we willing to dig a hole through the roof if necessary?

Ada: Perhaps not literally!

Andy: Ha ha—the treasurer will be relieved.

Ada: But, spiritually speaking, maybe we should be just as determined to help people find their way to Christ.

Andy: So the lesson is: faith, forgiveness, friendship, and maybe a slightly damaged roof.

Ada: And a reminder that when Jesus is present, incredible things can still happen.

Andy: Even in an ordinary house.

Ada: Or an ordinary church.

Andy: Provided nobody starts dismantling the roof during the sermon.

Ada: We’d not forget that, though, Andy!

## Discussion Starters

We sometimes use the expression ‘and the roof/walls came tumbling down’. It may spring to mind when thinking about this week’s event in Luke’s gospel as plaster began to fall from the roof as the tiles were removed. Think together about experiences of seeing something torn down. Perhaps the extraordinary sight of a planned demolition (the vision of the old Red Road flats in Glasgow coming tumbling down comes to mind personally), or when a building is ravaged by fire leaving a roofless hulk, or in an earthquake situation.

- What were your feelings to see the building come tumbling down?
- Can you imagine what it would be like to experience a building being taken apart around you?
- What good came from the destruction you witnessed?

The phrase is not just used literally, of course, it is also used metaphorically to describe the feeling of everything changing around you. There is a moment when in a period of change that your whole perception shifts. Everything that had seemed indestructible—the belief systems, the worldview, the understanding of how things interrelate—all comes tumbling down. Some who call themselves ex-vangelical talk about this process of deconstructing their faith before reconstructing with a very different understanding of God’s working in the world.

- When have you experienced a shift in your understanding of something important (worldview, belief, political)?
- How did that experience feel and what prompted and/or sustained the change?
- Where do you see instances where the status quo needs to be challenged?

Read together Luke 5:17-26. You may want to do this in two different ways to help clarify that there are two things going on in this story. Some commentators reckon that the story as we have it may be a concatenation of two stories, one about a healing and one on the issue of forgiveness.

You may thus want to just read Luke 5:17-20a and then skip to 24b-27. This may be the original healing story. Then read the full version which includes the interlude on forgiveness.

- What struck you as most important in the two different ways the story was presented?
- What is your opinion of the different characters in the event (friends, paralysed man, Pharisees/teachers, Jesus)?
- In what ways do we still have a worldview that links our actions to our wellbeing/health?

- What was Jesus' greatest challenge to those witnessing his action?
- Thinking about the past year in your own life of faith, is there anything about which you could say, 'I have seen a strange thing today?'

Read together Leviticus 24:10-17 in which we find an example of the repercussions for blasphemy under the Torah: the man who had cursed God's name is taken outside the camp and judged by all the witnesses before everyone stoned him. The name of God was both precious, owned by God, but also in the public domain... vulnerable to being abused and violated.

- What else can you think of that is vulnerable to violation because it is made publicly available?
- How do you reflect on 'taking the name of the Lord in vain' in our current context?
- What would be Jesus' response in this situation?

# explore the story

## Engaging The Text

**You will need: a large bed sheet, scissors.**

Tell the story in your own words from the perspective of the man who has come down through the roof. Make it quite animated, a good piece of storytelling using the prop of the sheet for the blanket. At the end of the story lay the sheet out in a central place commenting that you do not need this blanket any more, you can walk home.

Pause here and ask:

- What needs to be healed in you?
- What one thing do you need to hand over to Jesus that might bring you new life?

Invite people to reflect on that and then come over to the blanket and make a cut or rip in it symbolising the hurt or burden or pain you have, and walk away from it, leaving it there in the blanket.

## Envelope House

**You will need: envelopes with V-shaped flap, felt tip pens, string, scissors, coloured paper in a variety of colours, glue sticks, pencils, sticky tape.**

Give each participant an envelope and ask them to place it on working surface with the V flap opened and the open side of the envelope facing. Each person should cut out some brick shapes using different colours of paper and then glue these to the outside of the envelope, on both sides, avoiding the flap. Each person should then cut out a rectangle of paper to represent the blanket and attach string to each corner. They should also draw and cut out a small figure that fits onto the blanket. They should attach the string to the outside of the flap with sticky tape, making sure that the string is long enough to allow the blanket to be lowered into the house when the flap is open.



Talk about the story. Discuss the determination of the friends to help the paralysed man and their trust in Jesus to help. Talk about ways we can help others.

## Box House

**You will need: cardboard boxes (shoebox size), scissors, sticky tape, glue sticks, pencils, scrap of paper, fabric and wool all in a variety of colours.**

Divide participants into groups of three or four and give each group a box. The boxes should be placed with the base facing away from you and one of sides on the working surface, doll's house style. Ask the participants to work together to decorate the inside of the box to make the scene from the story. They could stick coloured paper on the walls, make furniture for the house, make card figures each with a base so that they can be positioned inside the house. They should make four figures to stand on the roof and a hole in the roof with the paralysed man being lowered through the hole on a blanket and ropes, made from scrap fabric and wool

Talk about the story, using the scene in the boxes to help. Discuss how the four friends helped the man and how we can help our friends and show love to them.

## Speech Bubble Storyboard

**You will need: print out speech bubbles and thought clouds (cut out), felt tip pens, glue sticks, large sheets of coloured paper or frieze paper.**

Depending on the numbers participating, people could work together as a group or be divided into groups. Five or six people is an ideal number per group. Each group should be given a bundle of speech bubbles and thought clouds, some pens, glue stick and large sheet of paper. Ask the group to read the passage and to write words and thoughts of the different characters: Jesus, crowd members, disciples, friends, paralysed man, owner of house. Participants could be given a character and asked to write the words/thoughts of that person or they could discuss together what to write for each character. The speech bubbles and thought clouds should be glued onto the large sheet of paper.

Use the speech bubble/thought cloud storyboard to discuss the story. Talk about times people have been in the different 'roles' in their own lives.

## Carry Mat

**You will need: blanket, soft toy.**

Ask four children to take a corner of the blanket each and to carry the soft toy from one end of the room to the other. Repeat with a different group of children until everyone has had a turn.

Talk about the activity and talk about the story and the friends carrying the man through streets, through crowds, upstairs, and so on. Talk about the care the friends showed to the paralysed man and ways we can show care to others.

## Film Friends

**You will need: access to internet, laptop, access to a film.**

Ask people to think of examples of friendship from favourite films and discuss these. Examples will vary depending on the age range of the participants. You might be able to access some clips depending on your internet connection or it might be useful to have at least one appropriate example on disc which you can show if you have the facility.

Discuss the different kinds of friendships we experience and how we can be good friends to others.

## Friendship Journey

**You will need: frieze paper or lining paper, marker pens.**

Cut a length of frieze paper or lining paper and draw a winding path onto paper. Make one of these 'paths' for every four/five people. Divide people into groups and ask them to draw or write examples of acts of friendship they can think of from their own lives, either friendship shown to them or friendship they have shown to others, such as someone sending a card, giving a lift to someone who needed to get to a hospital appointment, going out for coffee.

Talk about the importance of friendship in the small and big things of life.



# live the story

## Call To Worship

We have arrived here  
by whatever means,  
some have hurred,  
some stumbled,  
some in pain  
holding onto doors,  
some through the roof,  
however we come here  
may we find the healing space we need  
of word  
and hope,  
companionship  
and grace.

Let us worship.

## Prayer Of Dedication

O Lord,  
giver of all good gifts,  
each given in good measure,  
more abundantly  
than we can possibly imagine,  
today we return a portion to you,  
in grateful thanksgiving.

We offer these gifts  
of ourselves and our earnings  
that we may meet the needs  
of those who ask of us,  
and of those unable to ask.  
Thy will be done.  
Amen.

## Prayer Of Adoration And Confession

Holy God,  
your gathered church,  
so varied and unique,  
comes from the festivities  
and celebration of Pentecost  
to a quieter Sunday this day.

On this Trinity Sunday,  
we marvel at the relationships  
within the Trinity.  
You model for us  
how to be in relationship  
with our neighbour,  
how to be a good friend  
at all times.

Grant us grace  
to be faithful witnesses  
to that relationship  
as we interact with others  
in our communities.

Together we are praying now,  
coming into your presence,  
as those who have come before us  
and those who will come after us,  
doing so together as a community,  
bound up with each other,  
and committed to one another's care.  
As you marvelled, Lord Jesus,  
at the friends who would not be deterred  
but carried their dear friend to you,  
so we carry each other  
and all that burdens us  
into your holy presence.

As you offered forgiveness  
to that paralysed man,

freeing him to start afresh,  
so we ask that you forgive us  
for all that stops us  
from being wholly what you would  
want us to be.

May we be the instruments  
you have chosen  
to bring your name before others  
in this community.

Give us grace  
to see your visions,  
hear your word,  
and share the Good News  
with those you place in our path.  
Amen.

## Prayers For Others And Ourselves

Loving Father,  
Precious Son,  
Holy Spirit,  
Three-in-One,  
we have so little understanding  
of the ways in which the persons interact,  
and so on this Trinity Sunday  
we marvel at the mysteries of faith.  
Triune God, we bring before you now  
prayers for our communities and our world.  
The natural world  
needs so much of our attention,  
it is groaning in its upheaval.

**We pray for peace.**

Conflicts throughout the world  
destroy not only man-made structures,  
but also harm the very life you created,  
and the world in all its beauty.

**We pray for peace.**

We bear witness to those stories  
that remind us that not all that is  
has to remain so forever,  
that change and transformation,  
renewal and healing,  
is never incredible for you.  
For situations around our world today  
where people have forgotten  
what it is to be a friend,  
may we see something wonderful happen.

**We pray for peace.**

Where your children  
hurting from illness: mental and physical,  
from discrimination in many different categories,  
and from cruelty related  
to selfishness and misinformation  
need transformation in their lives  
bring your presence  
in loving relationship.

**We pray for peace.**

We gather as your church,  
realising there are people in time zones  
all over the world gathering for worship.  
May we listen for your collective voice,  
and build up your church  
so that it reflects  
your will, wisdom and glory  
throughout this land and the world  
and may we actively  
work for peace in this world  
as we pray together in Jesus' name.  
Amen.

## Reflective Prayer

Good God,  
when is too much too much?

Is it too much  
to wonder whether  
what seems incredible  
might one day happen?

Is it too much  
to pray for peace  
in a world riven by hostility?

Is it too much  
to care for a friend  
who society has discarded?

Is it too much  
to interrupt you  
when you are speaking to us?

Is it too much  
to expect assistance  
when there is a queue  
outside the door?

Is it too much  
to carry my friend  
atop the roof?

Is it too much  
to rip away the tiles  
and find a way to you?

Is it too much  
to tear apart someone's home  
in the hope of healing?

When is too much too much?

May we learn, good God,  
that it is never too much  
when the work of your kingdom  
is afoot.  
Amen.

## Reflection

*The reference to 'Angels' is to the Robbie Williams song of that name, which the author pictures being signed using British Sign Language.*

### Letter To A Blasphemer

I am writing to you, my dear friend, how much you have hurt me. What's more you have hurt God so much more.

You have shared with me your life story. You said you lost everything in one year, yet you said you're used to it—you lost everything before so will lose everything again.

I realised why you did my Saviour's name abuse. You feel so angry with God and how the church of your past is antagonist to my Lord. You have made my God your enemy.

This God whom you blaspheme is not the God I would like to know. My God is the One whose love forgives, no matter what we say or do. My God knows the pain in your heart and cares for you.

You have signed 'Angels' which moved me, revealing what's in your heart and mind as you remembered your loved one who has passed on. Your heart must be so broken that you are 'loving angels instead'.

My heart is breaking in how you spurned my God's love for you.

What more can I say in words?  
What more can I do in actions?

If only you could see my hands clasped together in prayer whispering words of compassion by Jesus to wind their way around you.

My dear friend, God's heart bleeds for you.

## Sending

Be a friend to someone,  
be determined to help them,  
do not let things get in your way.

Do the things of Jesus,  
offer forgiveness, practice healing,  
and generate new life.

As we leave this place,  
go out like those faithful friends.

Go, ready to carry hope  
for someone who is weary.  
Go, ready to bring prayer  
for someone who cannot pray.  
Go, ready to open a way  
where there seems to be no way.  
And may you trust that when people  
are brought close to Christ,  
incredible things can still happen.

So go in peace,  
to love and serve the Lord,  
and to help others find their way to him.

## Praise/Hymns

'Are you the one,' they asked him online at  
[https://hymnary.org/text/  
are\\_you\\_the\\_one\\_they\\_asked\\_him](https://hymnary.org/text/are_you_the_one_they_asked_him)

Come and find rest in Christ GWA 193

Crimson whispers of the dawning GWA 192

Hark, the glad sound CH4 277 / MP 210

I stand amazed in the presence MP 296

Love, love, love Fischy Music

O Christ, the healer, we have come CH4 717 / STF 653

O Christ, we remember the things that you did online at  
[https://www.carolynshymns.com/  
o\\_christ\\_we\\_remember\\_the\\_things.html](https://www.carolynshymns.com/o_christ_we_remember_the_things.html)

O for a thousand tongues to sing CH4 352 / MP 496

O God of life, your healing touch online at  
[https://www.carolynshymns.com/  
o\\_god\\_of\\_life\\_your\\_healing\\_touch.html](https://www.carolynshymns.com/o_god_of_life_your_healing_touch.html)

Sing praise to God for friends online at  
[https://hymnary.org/text/  
sing\\_praise\\_to\\_god\\_for\\_friends\\_who\\_bring](https://hymnary.org/text/sing_praise_to_god_for_friends_who_bring)

That's what a friend is Fischy Music

What a friend we have in Jesus CH4 547 / MP 746

We cannot measure how you heal CH4 718 / STF 655

When Jesus the healer CH4 350

Your hands, O Lord, in days of old online at  
[https://hymnary.org/text/  
thine\\_arm\\_o\\_lord\\_in\\_days\\_of\\_old](https://hymnary.org/text/thine_arm_o_lord_in_days_of_old)

# sampler

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