

# Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's



**Sunday 6th December 2020**

Led by Revd Natasha & Jamie Brady

## Welcome to this All Age service

*"Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge."*

Please join in using the words in **bold**.

### Welcome & Lighting the Candle

( to the tune of *twinkle twinkle little star* )

Light the Advent candle two,  
John the Baptist brought good news.  
Told us all 'He's on his way',  
helped the world to change and pray.  
Light the Advent candle two,  
John the Baptist brought good news.  
**Amen.**

Sharing Good News ...



Song The Way (New Horizon)

Through every battle  
Through every heartbreak  
Through every circumstance  
I believe that You are my fortress  
You are my portion  
You are my hiding place  
I believe You are

The way the truth, the life  
and I believe You are  
the way, the truth, the life  
and I believe

Through every blessing  
Through every promise  
Through every breath I take  
I believe that You are provider  
You are protector  
You are the one I love  
I believe You are

The way the truth, the life  
I believe You are the way, the truth, the life  
I believe You are

It's a new horizon and I'm set on You  
And you meet me here today  
With mercies that are new  
All my fears and doubts  
They can all come too  
Because they can't stay long when I'm here with You

It's a new horizon and I'm set on You  
And you meet me here today  
With mercies that are new  
All my fears and doubts  
They can all come too  
Because they can't stay long when I believe you are

The way, the truth, the life  
I believe You are



The way, the truth, the life  
I believe You are

It's a new horizon and I'm set on You  
And you meet me here today  
With mercies that are new  
All my fears and doubts  
They can all come too  
Because they can't stay long when

I believe You are  
The way, the truth, the life  
I believe You are the way, the truth, the life  
I believe You are

*Songwriters: Pat Barrett / Ben Smith / Daniel Bashta  
Performed by Lindsey and David Mackie*

### Sandpaper Confession

We have looked at the rough,  
and judged it for not being smooth.  
We have looked at the valley,  
and thought it could not be raised.  
We have observed the mountain,  
believing it would be unscalable,  
and in so doing, we have become complacent.

**Forgive us, God,  
for our complacency and our judgements.  
Make us see with the eyes of a pilgrim,  
knowing that you who have called us on this way,  
will make a pathway before us.  
Amen.**

Reading: Mark 1.1-8

*Video: The preaching of John the Baptist - Mark 1.1-8 (CEV), WildBible by [cartoonbible.com](http://cartoonbible.com)*

**1** The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, **2** as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:



'I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way'

**3**

'a voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
"Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him."'

**4** And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptised by him in the River Jordan. **6** John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt round his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. **7** And this was his message: 'After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. **8** I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

### Exploring the word

The Symbol game ... take a look at the images on the screen. See if you can work out what each one means ... you have 60 seconds!

### Opening the word

a talk by Revd Natasha

### Affirming our faith

**Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he was buried;  
he was raised to life on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
afterwards he appeared to his followers,  
and to all the apostles: this we have received,  
and this we believe.  
Amen.**

cf 1 Corinthians 15. 3-7

Song

Echo

*Sung & Produced by Worship together Kids; Worship House Media 2020*

### Intercessions

Let us pray ...

Eternal God,

we pray for all who feel lost and afraid in a wilderness:  
those separated from their family or a long way from home;  
may they know the joy of reunion,  
and the touch of those they love.



We pray for those lost in the dangerous wilderness of addiction;  
may they know the joy of healing  
and the wonder of being loved.

We pray for those who have found beauty  
in the wilderness experience;  
those who found strength they didn't know they had –  
a closeness to you they didn't know they could experience.

We pray for one another, that when the wilderness  
threatens our faith and our security,  
we would find our safety, and our home,  
in Jesus – in whose name we pray. Amen.

#### Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever.  
Amen.**

#### Song

**Heart Sings Hallelujah**

*Written by Tony Wood, Hannah McClure, Paul McClure, Joel Taylor; video produced by Holy Spirit Music; Bethel Music Publishing.*

#### A final prayer

**May the urgency, the passion and the commitment of John the Baptist,  
be reflected in our life as we go from here to live and love and serve.  
In Jesus' name.  
Amen.**

**Thank you for joining us today. Keep safe  
and God Bless**



# Going Deeper

## Bible Notes

Based on Mark 1.1-8

One of the extraordinary things about this week's reading from Mark's Gospel is its urgency. Mark says, 'The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.' Then, with no reference to Jesus' nativity, we're off! Without a hint about Jesus' birth or lineage, we are straight into an account of John the baptiser.

He represents the last in a long line of prophets pointing towards the expected Messiah. Mark deploys words of Isaiah reiterating the sense of urgency. He wants to remind his readers that to point towards Christ (and to follow him) is an urgent matter. John prepares a 'highway' for the Lord – that is, a way that enables us to get where we need to be quickly.

The Romans famously made their highways in straight lines. It enabled them to prosecute war and build an empire more easily. But John's highway prepares us for God himself – in the person of Jesus Christ. Mark knows that no matter how prepared or unprepared we think we are for Christ, we need his presence and holiness urgently. The path we are invited to walk with him will be on holy ground. It will be the road less travelled. It will take us through dangerous wildernesses as well as places of seeming safety. However, rather than being a self-serving highway (such as those the Romans built for their Empire), the 'Way of God' calls us out of ourselves. Jesus is 'the Way'. Even when we feel very far from 'home', he leads us from exile into truth.

## Questions for reflection



- How far have you come this year?
- If these steps are 'the way home', where might they lead?
- How do these words make you feel?

## A personal prayer

Lord, my God, just as a single flame can light a whole room, may this single prayer bring light into the dark places of the world, hope in the despairing places, comfort in the suffering places, and beauty in the wild places.  
In Jesus' name, I pray. **Amen.**



Name .....

## Mark 1.1-8

Mark begins his Gospel with John the Baptist telling people to say sorry and change their ways to get ready for Jesus' coming.



## Family time

**Talk** Why do you think the people in the story wanted to change their ways?

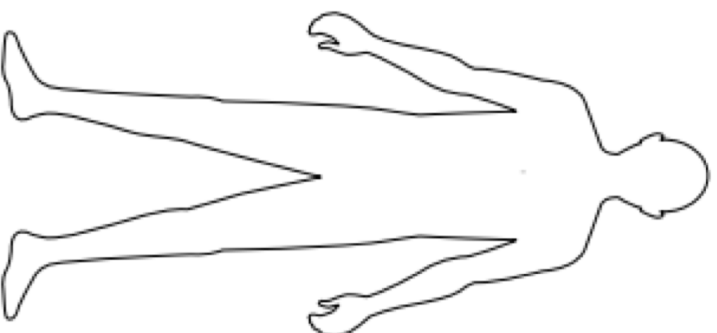
**Do** Make life a bit quieter. For five minutes gather everyone together to be quiet and think about the story. Then spend five minutes writing or drawing what you want to say to God.

**Pray** Tell each other some good news you have heard this week. Thank God for that good news and for the best good news, Jesus coming into our lives.

## Activity time



Draw what you think John would have looked like. Make sure you include his camel-hair and belt!



Unscramble the words and write them down correctly underneath to see what John the Baptist was telling people.

'dSoyneb ermo wpolefru  
nhta em si mgonci.'

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## ROOTS children's Sheet

6-12 December 2020



Pretend you are writing a letter or a message to someone about Jesus. How would you begin the 'good news'? What important words or phrases would you include?

Blank lined area for writing.



