

Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's



Led by Revd Natasha Brady

Welcome everyone

Notices can be found on your [Friday Email](#), on our [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). At the end of the service sheet, are your Roots at Home & Activity Sheets.

As we gather

Here we are, Creator God, Lord and Spirit,
standing before you, grounded on the earth,
our hands stretched high like a tree.
You fill us with amazement, wonderful God.
Amen.

Song Faith as small as a mustard seed.

Confession

Living God, from a mustard seed to a tree, from I to we,
In the mystery of the unseen, from brown field to green,
By faith and not by sight, by day and by night,
Forgiven and freed, through word and deed,

in you we grow.

As we sow and reap, as we laugh and weep,
May your kingdom come, Father, Spirit, Son,
as in you we grow.
Amen.

Growing Faith

Mark 4.26-34 read by Nigel Lowe

²⁶ He also said, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the soil produces corn – first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹ As soon as the corn is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.'

³⁰ Again he said, 'What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. ³² Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.'

³³ With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ³⁴ He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Listen & wonder ...



1. Now I wonder if the person who put the tiny seed in the ground has a name?
2. I wonder if the person was happy to see the birds coming?
3. I wonder if the birds have names?
4. I wonder if the person could take the shrub like a tree and push it all back down inside the seed?
5. I wonder where the seed was when it stopped growing?
6. I wonder what the tree could really be?
7. I wonder if you have ever come close to this kind of tree?

Let's talk ...

Listen as Natasha opens God's word.

Song Waiting here for you

Performed by Brittany Hurlbert, Tim Packer, Catriona Inglis. Mix and video by Tim Packer. Words and music by Chris Tomlin, Jesse Reeves and Martin Smith © 2011 sixsteps Music, Smith United, Thankyou Music, Vamos Publishing, worshiptogether.com songs

Prayer time

Eternal, ever-present God, visible and yet invisible, we bring our prayers for those we know and those unknown to us.

We seek to journey with you and with them, to support and uphold them with prayer and love.

For those who journey with illness and pain, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

For those searching for meaning and purpose, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

For those wanting to belong and yet seemingly always on the edge, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

For those who lack confidence in themselves, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

For those who have no faith, no vision for an eternal future, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

For those who live with lies, secrets and untruths, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

For those who live without the very basic foundations of life: without food and water and homes, **transform them by your grace, Lord.**

By praying for these, we know that we must walk and work hand in hand with you, to relieve their suffering and pain. We trust our prayers, our loving and our living, to your almighty and eternal presence.

Amen.

The 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 King of My Heart

Bethel Music, Steffany Gretzinger & Bethel Music

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

(Hold out your hands as if expecting a present)

And the love of God

(Put your hands on your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

(Hold hands)

Be with us all now and for ever. Amen

(Raise hands together on the word 'Amen' and shout loudly!)

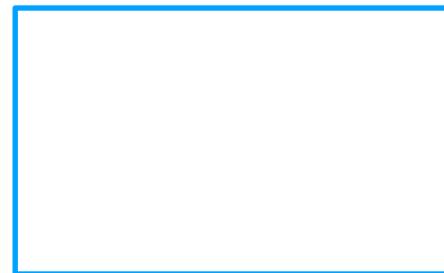
Thank you for joining us today.

Quick Note The Church office will be open Monday & Thursday 10am – 1pm, other days please email office@stokepogeschurch.org or phone 01753 642331.



Scan or click to donate

Thank you for whatever you are able to give



The growing adventure

Mark 4.26-34

Jesus tells two parables. He explains how seed is planted and then grows silently and unseen in the ground until it has grown enough to be harvested. His second story is about the tiny mustard seed and how although it is so small, it grows into a big tree.

Now read **Mark 4.26-34** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Jesus does not explain his parables. He leaves it to the listener to take their own meaning from them. In these parables, he is teaching about how something apparently insignificant can grow and be transformed.



Create a card for someone who might be feeling low. Inside write, 'No matter how small you feel, God has a plan for you', and stick a packet of seeds on the inside of the card.



Watch *One Cambodian Family Please for my Pleasure*, a 13-minute film based on the true story of Helena, who escaped persecution in communist Czechoslovakia to be resettled in North Dakota. The film is about her need, as a refugee who made it out of her bad situation, to help others in a similar position.

- <https://movingworlds.info/one-cambodian-family>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eV0dscI0_-g

This week is Refugee Week and Helena's story shows how the actions of one person can make a huge difference. Like the mustard seed in the Bible passage, this is only small but eventually makes a large impact.

LOOK

Be still and look at a picture of a mustard tree.
<https://brainsnorts.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/mustard.jpg>
 What does it say to you about God? What does it say to you about you?



Look at pictures of yourself and other members of your family when you were babies or young children. Talk/think about what you could do when you were the age you were in the photos. What could you do then? How does that compare with what you can do now? How did the change come about? What has helped you to grow? What helps us to grow spiritually?



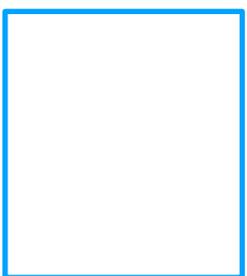

Find the smallest object that you can locate in your home. What is it? What is its purpose? Why does it need to be the size it is? What does it feel like to hold?

Now look for the biggest object you can find. Can you pick it up? Is it heavy? What is it for? Why does it need to be the size it is?

What objects are there in your home which help you to flourish?

Name _____

ROOTS Activity Sheet

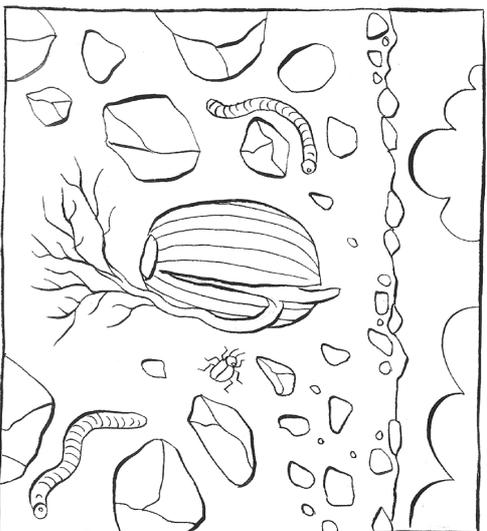


Mark 4.26-34

Jesus tells stories to explain about how God's Kingdom grows.



Solve the clues and add the answers to the crossword.



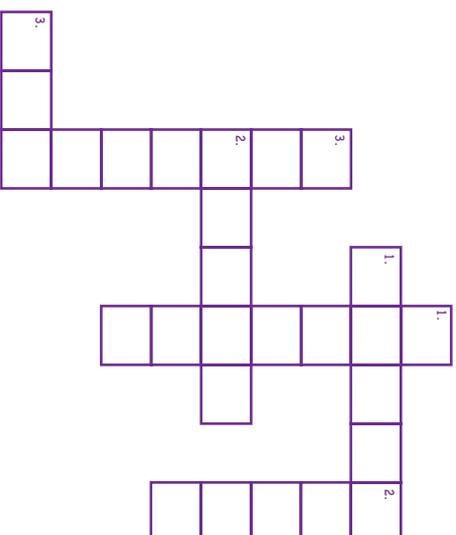
Even the smallest seed can become the most fruitful tree.



Add someone caring for a small bud in the second box and harvesting a piece of grain in the third box.



Write answers (down): 1. Kingdom 2. Story 3. Mustard (across): 1. Birds 2. Shade 3. God



Down:

1. The _____ of God is Jesus' theme.
2. A parable is another word for a _____.
3. What kind of seed does Jesus use as an example?

Across:

1. Who will build their nests in trees?
2. What will the branches create to keep nests cool?
3. Who creates, birds and seeds and trees?



Draw a line between each matching pair. What goes with what?

