

Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's



Welcome to this Family service

Led by Revd Natasha

'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it'

Psalm 24.1

Welcome

<https://www.climateintercessors.org/10-prayers-for-cop26-1>

Opening Prayer

God of love,
you are so much more than anything we could ever imagine.
Abundant love flows from your very being.
We know your love is the greatest of all.
We bask now in that love, making our small offering in return.
We love you with all our heart, all our understanding,
and all our strength – and always will.
Amen.

Song

O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Chorus

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

Chorus

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!"

Chorus

Words: Stuart K. Hine (1899–1989); Music: Swedish folk melody, adapted by Stuart K. Hine

Confession

Natasha will read Mark 12.30-31 slowly and then we will pray ...

Lord God, we confess that we struggle to love others.
Sometimes we don't even recognise who our neighbour is,
never mind knowing how to love them.

Encourage us in your ways, O Lord.

We confess that we don't always realise
that to show love to others,
first we have to learn to love ourselves.
Sometimes we haven't a clue how to do that.
We may have an ideal in our head of what love is,
then get cross with ourselves when we fall short.

Encourage us in your ways, O Lord.

We confess that we have the idea that love is
this great dramatic gesture or action,
when sometimes it can be as small as a touch of a fingertip.

Encourage us in your ways, O Lord.

Amen.

Reading Mark 12.28-34 read to us by Margriet Wells

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, 'Of all the commandments, which is the most important?'

29 'The most important one,' answered Jesus, 'is this: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." 31 The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these.'

32 'Well said, teacher, the man replied. 'You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. 33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.'

34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, ' You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Sermon. Pat Hegarty is opening God's Word for us today

Affirmation of Faith

We say together in faith

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was and is and is to come.

We believe in God the Father, who created all things:
for by his will they were created and have their being.

We believe in God the Son, who was slain:
for with his blood he purchased us for God, from every tribe and language, from every people and nation.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
the Spirit and the Bride say 'Come!' Even so come Lord Jesus!
Amen

cf Revelation 4.8,11;5.9;22.17,20

Song

Beauty for brokenness

Hope for despair
Lord, in your suffering
This is our prayer
Bread for the children
Justice, joy, peace

Sunrise to sunset
Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives
Cures for their ills
Work for the craftsman
Trade for their skills
Land for the dispossessed
Rights for the weak
Voices to plead the cause
Of those who can't speak

Chorus

*God of the poor
Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts
Let tears fall like rain
Come, change our love
From a spark to a flame*

Refuge from cruel wars
Havens from fear
Cities for sanctuary
Freedoms to share
Peace to the killing-fields
Scorched earth to green
Christ for the bitterness
His cross for the pain

Chorus

Rest for the ravaged earth
Oceans and streams
Plundered and poisoned
Our future, our dreams
Lord, end our madness
Carelessness, greed
Make us content with
The things that we need

Chorus

Lighten our darkness
Breathe on this flame
Until your justice

Burns brightly again
Until the nations
Learn of your ways
Seek your salvation
And bring you their praise

Chorus (x 2)

Source: Musixmatch; Songwriters: Graham Kendrick - God of the Poor (Beauty for Brokenness) lyrics © Make Way Music

Intercessions

God of love, **may we love our world, each other and you.**

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 forever. Amen.

Collect

God of glory, touch our lips with the fire of your Spirit, that we with all creation may rejoice to sing your praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Song

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art.
Visit us with thy salvation;
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
into ev'ry troubled breast.
Let us all in thee inherit,
let us find the promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning;

Alpha and Omega be.
End of faith, as its beginning,
set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver,
let us all thy life receive.
Suddenly return, and never,
nevermore they temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;
true and spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise.

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1747; MUSIC: W. P. Rowlands (1860-1937); Performed by Worship Lyric Videos.

Blessing and Grace

May the word of God dwell in our hearts,
in our minds and in our actions,
every day of our lives.
And let us pray for one another, saying together:

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all, now, every day and evermore.
Amen.**

Thank you for joining us today.

Notices can be found on your [Friday Email](#), on our [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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



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Thank you for whatever you are able to give

Love is...

 **Mark 12.28-34**

After Jesus gets the better of the various factions who have tried to trick him on points of law, a scribe asks a more fundamental question: Which is the most important law? Jesus cites the words of the Jewish Shema (from Deuteronomy 6.4-5) as being the encapsulation of all the laws.

Now read **Mark 12.28-34** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

The scribe is reassured that Jesus gives the 'right' answer and echoes the importance of loving God and loving others. He recognises that these are the most important aspects of his faith. How might you complete the sentence, 'Love is...?'



On this wall in Montmartre, 'I love you' is written in 250 different languages. **Ask yourself:** How would you illustrate a commitment to love others?

DRAW



Since the 1970s there has been a continuous supply of 'Love is ...' cartoons published in a newspaper. The most well-known are about love between a couple. But love is bigger than that. Sketch some situations in which love makes a difference in everyday life, or in global issues.



It is hard to explain what 'love is' in words. We can't see it, but there are ways to show it. On a day of suitable weather this week, go for a walk in an open space, woodland or park. Breathe in the smells of autumn and enjoy the crunch of leaves. If possible, spend time gathering a natural bouquet from the autumn foliage, or collect coloured leaves to make a collage. Give your offering to someone who wasn't able to go on your walk, as a sign of love.

Love
NOT
LAW

If there was a law that stated that everyone should love eating tripe and sprouts, would that change how everyone felt about these foods? Many of us would be guilty of breaking that law and would feel justified in doing so. Yet a law against committing murder seems reasonable. On your own, or with others, look again at God's 10 laws given in Exodus 20 and at the two that Jesus gives in Mark 12. Do they cover every situation in today's world? Are there grey areas where the law is not the answer? Do we need love as well?



Listen to or read the day's headlines, the big stories and perhaps some more local news. In what ways is love shown in the event being reported? If the answer is not very positive, look at the events and characters involved in the story. What could have been different, if someone had chosen to act out of love for God or for others? Can you rewrite a headline to reflect how love would have made a difference to the outcome? In your own day, think about the decisions you make and the words you use, to see if you too can improve the day by adding a bit of love to it.

LOVE
GOD

On the last day of October there are events and 'celebrations' of Halloween. In its present form, it has become very commercialised and macabre. Our Christian faith is centred on life after death promised by the gift of resurrection through Jesus – that is something to be celebrated. Create a poster to go in your window tonight that focuses on light, life in this world and the next, the love of God. If you are expecting Trick or Treat visitors tonight, make up a small pack of treats, along with a simple card that expresses God's love.