

Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's

Welcome to this Family service
Led by Revd Natasha Brady



Come! It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to give praises to his name.

A call to worship

As we come together today,
let us be mindful of our words and actions
and the impact they have on those around us.
Let us seek God's wisdom and love
to guide us in all that we seek to do,
today and in days to come.
Amen.

Song

Indescribable

From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea
Creations revealing Your majesty
From the colours of fall to the fragrance of spring
Every creature unique in the song that it sings
All exclaiming

Indescribable, uncontainable
You placed the stars in the sky
And You know them by name
You are amazing, God

All powerful, untameable
Awestruck we fall to our knees
As we humbly proclaim
You are amazing, God

Who has told every lightning bolt where it should go
Or seen heavenly storehouses laden with snow
Who imagined the sun and gives source to its light
Yet, conceals it to bring us the coolness of night
None can fathom

Indescribable, uncontainable
You placed the stars in the sky
And You know them by name
You are amazing, God

All powerful, untameable
Awestruck we fall to our knees
As we humbly proclaim
You are amazing, God

You are amazing, God. You are amazing, God

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You placed the stars in the sky
And You know them by name
You are amazing God

All powerful, untameable
Awestruck we fall to our knees
As we humbly proclaim
You are amazing God

Indescribable, uncontainable
You placed the stars in the sky
And You know them by name
You are amazing, God

Incomparable, unchangeable
You see the depths of my heart
And You love me the same
You are amazing, God. You are amazing, God

Led by Brittany Hurlbert, Tim Packer and Catriona Inglis for evening worship in lockdown at St Nic's, Durham, 21 Feb 2021 Words and music by Jesse Reeves and Laura Story © 2004 Laura Stories, sixsteps Music, worshiptogether.com songs. Used with kind permission.

Confession

A short time of silence

**Almighty God,
long-suffering and of great goodness:
I confess to you,
I confess with my whole heart
my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,
my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking;
the hurts I have done to others,
and the good I have left undone.
O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;
and raise me to newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Assurance of forgiveness

May the God of love
bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Reading Mark 6.14-29 read to us by Kate Holliday

14 King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, 'John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.'
15 Others said, 'He is Elijah.'
And still others claimed, 'He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago.'
16 But when Herod heard this, he said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!'

17 For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. 18 For John had been saying to Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.' 19 So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, 20 because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

21 Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. 22 When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, 'Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you.' 23 And he promised her with an oath, 'Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom.'

24 She went out and said to her mother, 'What shall I ask for?'

'The head of John the Baptist,' she answered.

25 At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: 'I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a dish.'

26 The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. 27 So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, 28 and brought back his head on a dish. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. 29 On hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Sermon. Natasha is opening God's Word for us today

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.
We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Song

How Deep The Father's Love For Us

How deep the Father's love for us?
How vast beyond all measure?
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

How great the pain of searing loss?
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection

Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

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I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Intercessions prepared by John Wheatley

Response: In you O Lord ~ **do we put our trust**

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.

Collect

Creator God you made us in your image: may we discern you in all that we see, and serve you in all that we do; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Song In Christ Alone

In Christ Alone

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless Babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live,

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From a life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Could ever pluck me from His hand
'Til He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I stand

No power of hell, no scheme of man
Could ever pluck me from His hand
'Til He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I stand

Songwriters: Keith Getty / Stuart Townend In Christ Alone lyrics © Thank You Music Ltd. This performance by Martin Smith, Lou and Nathan Fellingham, used with permission from Glowworkstv.com by Martin Smith

Final Prayer

**Eternal God, giver of love and power,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world
to preach the gospel of his kingdom:
confirm us in this mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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 & Thursday
10am – 1pm, other days please email [office@stokepoges-
church.org](mailto:office@stokepoges-church.org) or phone 01753 642331.



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The practice of power

Mark 6.14-29

John the Baptist is arrested for telling King Herod some home truths about his behaviour. He is not afraid to 'speak truth to power'. John pays the price for this with his life because of a rash promise the king had made to his stepdaughter.

Now read **Mark 6.14-29** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

The passage is set in a society that had a strong culture of honour and shame. Saving face was a powerful factor in those times. To have gone back on his promise publicly made to his stepdaughter, Herod would have lost the respect of his court and subjects. He knew they were watching to see how he would act. He is clearly torn as he makes his decision, because he believes John to be a good and sincere man. Nevertheless, in the end he valued his reputation above a man's life.



Ask yourself: How do we make sure that God has a say in our key decisions?

Research

Look through newspapers and magazines, or browse the internet, for images of people who have power and influence in our world, and over our lives – e.g. world leaders, activists, celebrities and advertisers/influencers. Make a collage of the images, or write the people's names, placing them under three headings according to how their influence is perceived: positive, negative or both. Children could think closer to home – e.g. parents, friends, teachers – and draw pictures of them (however, be aware that this may open up sensitive topics such as bullying). What influence do we have over others and how might that be perceived?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for the opportunities you give us to be an influence for good in our world. Help us to encourage one another to do that little bit of good where we are. Inspire us to dream big dreams, and help us to make the world a better place. Amen.

A DAYTIME MITYAD A REFLECTION

As you walk, drive, take a trip by bus or train, or just while watching TV, identify sources of power and influence – for example, you might pass the council offices, see an advertising poster, recognise a church building. Pray for all who exercise power over others, that they may use it wisely and for the good of all.

WATCH



Watch a video clip of Martin Luther King Jr delivering his 'I have a dream' speech.

youtu.be/3vDWWy4CMhE

Next Sunday, 18 July, is Black Leaders Awareness Day which encourages the next generation of leaders from this community. Consider the paradox that Martin Luther King was denied power in his lifetime and made himself vulnerable to the point of death; and yet he continues to have great influence today. We often feel powerless in the face of difficult situations, but we do not know how important our words and actions might later prove to be. One thing is certain: if we say and do nothing, we will achieve nothing! Archbishop Desmond Tutu once said, 'Do your little bit of good where you are, it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world'.

Dream.

How did watching the video make you feel (see WATCH above)? Martin Luther King was inspired to act by the hopes and dreams he cherished. Can you dare to dream? On your own, or with others, think about your hopes and dreams for the future. Are they personal or shared? Local or worldwide in scope? Can you think of practical ways in which you might begin to make these dreams come true?