

**Welcome to our remotely delivered service. I hope you don't feel remote though. Keep in touch with people who need you.**

**We pay our respects to the traditional custodians who have been part of this land for uncountable generations.**

Today is a day to give thanks for God is good and God is love. God does not need to be served by human hands, but delights in our service to one another.

As we show love, so we are transformed by love.

God is the great creator of all that is, and delights in all the peoples of the world, for we are all God's offspring, made for love.

**Prayer** As we offer thanks and praise to God, Let us open our lives to God's goodness and love. May we be transformed in our living. Amen.

### [Rejoice, the Lord is King](#)

#### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Loving God, in you we find our home and from your love we learn what it is to love. Yet we confess that we do not always follow in your way. Call us back that we might take our place as your people.

We struggle to love as you love. Instead we prefer to live selfishly; to claim that we are at the centre of the universe; to disregard your call to care for the earth and to ignore the pain and suffering of our neighbours.

When we move far away from love call us back that we might take our place as your people.

We struggle to love as you love. Instead we prefer to live in fear – that we will never have enough; that we will never be secure; that we will never be complete. When we move far away from love call us back that we might take our place as your people. Amen.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE** Hear these words of assurance: God indeed calls us back to love. In God's great love for us, God has given us the gift of the Spirit that we might be transformed for love. **We are loved and forgiven, people of God's forming. Thanks be to God.**

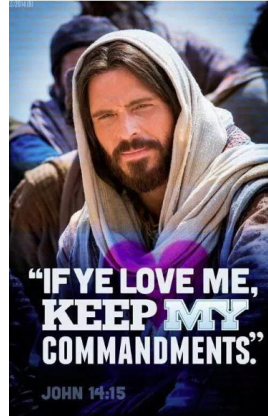
### [Love divine, all loves excelling](#)

#### **Children's activity**

Some kids [in this video](#) were talking about what they drew when they thought about God. Watch the video, listen to the reading from John 14 in the same video and then have a go at doing a drawing yourself. You might like to [send me](#) a picture of your drawing. You could make a video of your feelings like these kids did.

#### **DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT**

The gospel passage is one of those passages that looms large in Christian thinking and practice. Jesus says that to love him is to keep his commandments. This finally sheds some



light on what it might mean to love Jesus. It is not a feeling or an internal satisfaction; it is the keeping of his commandments. Of course, this in turn creates its own set of questions: Which commandments? Where do we find them? Keeping Jesus' commandments equates to loving one another (John 13:34), even unto death (15:13). To love one another as we have been loved is to maintain our love for Jesus. This is when the Spirit of truth and love enters into our lives. This teaching mirrors those found in the synoptic gospels about the Greatest Commandment: to love God and to love neighbour.

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

May we seek to be a blessing and offer hope to others. Generous God, receive what we offer and bless these and our efforts that they might be a blessing for all people. Amen.

John 14:15-21 Contemporary English Version (CEV)

Jesus said to his disciples:

If you love me, you will do as I command. Then I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you. The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don't see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you.

I won't leave you like orphans. I will come back to you. In a little while the people of this world won't be able to see me, but you will see me. And because I live, you will live. Then you will know that I am one with the Father. You will know that you are one with me, and I am one with you. If you love me, you will do what I have said, and my Father will love you. I will also love you and show you what I am like.

The other two New Testament readings are listed at the last page of this service

**A message from Steve – [It's all about love](#) is listed back at the blog**

### [Immortal, invisible, God only wise](#)

#### **PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

Loving God, we pray for your peace and love to reign over all the earth.

We pray for the whole creation:

for all animals, both wild and domestic;

for all plants, both rare and common;

for the oceans and waterways;

for the deserts plains and the mountain forests. Help us to care for the earth.

We pray for all people:

for babies and infants, just starting life;

for children of all ages as they go to school;

for young adults who are studying and starting new work;

for adults looking for meaningful careers and contributing to society;

for those who are retiring and seeking new opportunities;

for older adults who are moving into care and need medical attention;

for those who are dying this day –

that they might be welcomed into love's embrace. Help us to care for one another.

*For all that is good in life, thank you,  
For the love of family and friends, thank you,  
For the kindness of good neighbour and Samaritan stranger, thank you.  
May those who are vulnerable, hungry or homeless, experience support,  
May those who are sick, know healing,  
May those who are anxious or bereaved, sense comfort.  
Bless and guide political leaders and decision-makers, with wisdom,  
Bless and guide health workers and key workers, with strength and well-being,  
Bless and guide each one of us, as we adapt to a new way of living.  
And may the light shining from our windows, across road and lane, hill and valley, channel  
and isle, be reflected in our hearts and hands and hopes.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.  
Dale and David McGregor*

We pray for your love to reign in our lives to be woven into all we say and do.  
In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

[Where cross the crowded ways of life](#) [Lyrics](#)

#### COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

Go out to live in love to share life with all you meet to be bearers of God's care for the whole creation. Go in peace, in the name of our Creator, the Sustainer and our Redeemer. Amen.

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#### Acts 17:22-31 (CEV)

So Paul stood up in front of the council and said:  
People of Athens, I see that you are very religious. As I was going through your city and looking at the things you worship, I found an altar with the words, "To an Unknown God." You worship this God, but you don't really know him. So I want to tell you about him. This God made the world and everything in it. He is Lord of heaven and earth, and he doesn't live in temples built by human hands. He doesn't need help from anyone. He gives life, breath, and everything else to all people. From one person God made all nations who live on earth, and he decided when and where every nation would be.  
God has done all this, so that we will look for him and reach out and find him. He isn't far from any of us, and he gives us the power to live, to move, and to be who we are. "We are his children," just as some of your poets have said.  
Since we are God's children, we must not think that he is like an idol made out of gold or silver or stone. He isn't like anything that humans have thought up and made. In the past, God forgave all this because people did not know what they were doing. But now he says that everyone everywhere must turn to him. He has set a day when he will judge the world's people with fairness. And he has chosen the man Jesus to do the judging for him. God has given proof of this to all of us by raising Jesus from death.

#### 1 Peter 3:13-22 (CEV)

Can anyone really harm you for being eager to do good deeds? Even if you have to suffer for doing good things, God will bless you. So stop being afraid and don't worry about what people might do. Honour Christ and let him be the Lord of your life.

Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope. Give a kind and respectful answer and keep your conscience clear. This way you will make people ashamed for saying bad things about your good conduct as a follower of Christ. You are better off to obey God and suffer for doing right than to suffer for doing wrong.

Christ died once for our sins.

An innocent person died for those who are guilty.

Christ did this to bring you to God,

when his body was put to death

and his spirit was made alive.

Christ then preached to the spirits that were being kept in prison. They had disobeyed God while Noah was building the boat, but God had been patient with them. Eight people went into that boat and were brought safely through the flood.

Those flood waters were like baptism that now saves you. But baptism is more than just washing your body. It means turning to God with a clear conscience, because Jesus Christ was raised from death. Christ is now in heaven, where he sits at the right side of God. All angels, authorities, and powers are under his control.