

Easter 2026

Stockbridge
Church

BRIDGE

STOCKBRIDGE CHURCH MAGAZINE

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

admin@stockbridgechurch.org.uk



Our Mission Statement

Being aware of the love of God in our lives, we, the congregation of Stockbridge Parish Church, as part of the world church seek to meet together in worship; to demonstrate faith in God in our everyday lives; to reach out to others, showing God's love and compassion; and to raise awareness of matters of justice locally and globally.

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The church office is open Monday – Friday, 10am - 3:30pm.

This edition's cover art comes from a drawing in the office with no name attached. We would love to know if you have any clue to its origins!

‘A Most Important Question’

Rev John Munro

In the 1950s, the eminent philosopher C.E.M. Joad was asked the question, ‘What historical person would you like to interview and what would you like to ask?’ Straight away he said that he would like to speak to Jesus of Nazareth and put to him what he considered to be the most important question in the world - ‘Did you or did you not rise from the dead?’

As a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsay, once said - “For the first Christians, the good news about Jesus without the story of his resurrection from the dead, is not merely a gospel without its final chapter - it is not a gospel at all.” In other words, if Jesus had not been raised from the dead at Easter, then what we have is not a ‘good news’ story, but the worst possible news for both the Church and the world. It would mean that the powerful and destructive forces of this world had triumphed on the day we call Good Friday, the day Jesus was put to death. It would also mean as the apostle Paul reminds us in his letter to the church at Corinth, in the words “If Christ has not been raised from death, then we have nothing to preach, and you have nothing to believe.” (1 Corinthians 15.14)

Interestingly, Paul, whose letters pre-date the four gospels, attempts to establish the importance of the resurrection of

Jesus from the dead as a basis for Christian faith by listing actual appearances of Christ to his followers and friends after his death, and last of all to him, as someone whose birth was 'abnormal' in the sense that up until this point Paul, unlike the other witnesses, had never seen Christ 'in the flesh.'

In the case of Peter, the first of the other witnesses who are listed (1 Corinthians 15), there is an important story about Peter right at the end in John's Gospel where the writer says that after the events in Jerusalem surrounding Christ's death by crucifixion, Peter and some others of his disciple-followers are inclined to turn back from following Jesus and instead return to their home in Galilee and to the life they had lived before Jesus had invited them to join him in his journey as his followers and friends. There, beside the Sea of Galilee, Peter and Jesus meet once more and what a meeting it turns out to be! Peter who at the time of Jesus' arrest in Jerusalem, a death sentence to follow, when asked if he was one of those who followed Jesus, says three times categorically that he was not. Now, Jesus having caught up with him back in Galilee, Peter feels rather apprehensive. Remarkably, Jesus does not raise the matter of Peter's denial, as any one of us might have done, and instead asks Peter if he is still Christ's 'friend'? And Peter replies, "You know everything, you know that I love you." (John 21.17)

And now we come to the significance of this appearance of the risen Christ to Peter. Having denied all knowledge of him at the time when Jesus needed the support of his

followers and friends the most, now Peter needs Christ to forgive him for his cowardice, and once more bring structure and meaning to his life. But how was that possible when he knew without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus had been crucified, and in the words of the Apostle's Creed, was 'dead and buried'? It was only possible because Jesus had in some deep and meaningful way been raised from the dead and appeared to Peter granting him the forgiveness that was his to offer and Peter's to accept! The words, "Peter, I forgive you!" are not to be found in the story told by John simply because they are in a word 'unnecessary'. Peter understands that he is forgiven when Jesus - "the Good Shepherd" - tells him that he is still needed by him and that he must 'feed his sheep', a reference to the pastoral ministry that Peter was to exercise through the Church for all time to come.

And so, let us not too quickly ditch the idea of the resurrection as some people today may want to do. And, yes, the resurrection is a powerful metaphor for the triumph of good over evil, but for many people that will not be enough in a world where science and technology combine and suggest that such a thing is *simply* not possible in any literal sense. But for those who have spent their lives as Christ's followers and friends in the light of his new and resurrected life, we cling stubbornly to the living hope that Christ is alive. For those who find such a thing 'unlikely,' let us not forget that, as always, the proof of the pudding is always in the eating.

Presbytery News

Princes St Easter Play

The 2026 play will take place on Saturday 4th April 2026, in West Princes Street Gardens at 2pm produced by Cutting Edge Theatre.

This year's production is a new play exploring Jesus and disability – how did he respond to disabled people then and what can we learn from him today? As such, they will be welcoming INSPIRE participants.

INSPIRE is a programme specifically designed for disabled people to enjoy equal access to theatre as participants, audience members and professionals. They currently run drama classes for learning/disabled people from aged 8+ in Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy and Aberdeen.

Church Membership

Helen Cowan, a former member of the Dean Parish Church and latterly a member of Stockbridge Church, passed away on 27th February 2026 at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, aged 90. Her funeral will be at Warriston Cloister Chapel at 1:30pm on 24th March. Our thoughts and prayers are with her two sons, John and Kenneth, their family, and friends.

Community News

Updates and news from our congregation



A visit from local MP

Regular hirers and refugee charity Care4Calais recently received a visit from local MP Tracy Gilbert (Edinburgh North and Leith). The visit went very well and while the group managed to defeat her at Uno, she was particularly skilled in Connect4!

The group meets regularly to provide social support for refugees as part of a larger charitable initiative including direct aid, access to legal support, aid campsites, and first aid support. You can find out more via care4calais.org.

Baptisms

On February 8th, we welcomed the friends and family of Heather Ramsey and Matthew Hannay for the baptism of their son Fergus. Pictured here with the Rev John Munro.



We are also welcoming Grace Smith on 22nd March and Helena Mary Audrey MacKenzie on 29th March, together with their families, for their baptisms.

Reaching Across Borders

A glimpse into the humanitarian work of Nigel Osborne and Clea Friend of Stockbridge Music Hub

The work Nigel and Clea have undertaken over the years is incredibly expansive – covering numerous countries, and even more communities. Much of it has grown quietly, sustained by the generosity of individuals and communities - including friends here at Stockbridge. Two projects in particular feel especially close to the concerns of the church: one rooted in the lands we so often hold in our prayers, and the other shaped by the long, steady commitment of people from Edinburgh.



The Beqaa Children's Project

The Beqaa Children's Project began in 2014 as a musical and therapeutic initiative for Syrian refugee children living in the

camps of Lebanon's Beqaa Valley. Initially supported by SAWA for Development (a Lebanese NGO), the project offered creative, educational activities to children who had experienced profound disruption and trauma. In 2018, as SAWA underwent major changes, the work moved to Edinburgh Direct Aid International, allowing the team to focus on the communities of Aarsal and to help establish a children's festival in Baalbek.

The project grew steadily, culminating in the creation of the Children's Orchestra of the Levant (the first of its kind) giving some of the region's most disadvantaged young people the chance to learn and perform music together. However, the political upheavals and conflicts of autumn 2024 led to the departure of almost all Syrian families from Aarsal, leaving behind vulnerable Lebanese, Palestinian, and other communities.

In response, the team launched an emergency programme based around their safer hubs in Jounieh and Zahle. Seven professional musicians and therapists now support a core group of 1,500 children, reaching many more across the region. The annual cost of sustaining the work is around £50,000.



Children of the Balkans Camps

The Children of the Balkans Camps were founded 30 years ago by volunteers from Edinburgh University, originally offering respite to children affected by the conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Over time, the camps evolved into supportive spaces for children with a wide range of special needs, while also providing training opportunities for local practitioners. Each year, two week-long camps take place - one in Croatia and one in Bosnia - and although earlier camps welcomed up to 60 children, rising costs now limit participation to around 25.

Despite these challenges, the camps continue to provide creativity, companionship, and a nurturing environment for children who benefit greatly from focused support. The team is now developing new partnerships to strengthen the work further, including collaborations with the Veruda Day Rehabilitation Centre, the University of Sarajevo's Theatre

Department outreach programme, the Vladimir Nazor Special School, and the Christine Witcutt day programme.

Financial pressures remain significant. In Bosnia, accommodation alone costs £50 per child per night, bringing the total for a week-long camp to around £9,000 once transport is included. Although accommodation in Croatia is donated, rising local costs mean volunteers often subsidise their own involvement. Any contribution helps ensure these long-standing camps can continue their vital work.

How does it link back to Stockbridge?

Both projects have endured because people cared enough to act. Some of that support has come from right here in Edinburgh, including individuals connected to the Music Hub and the church. The teams involved remain deeply grateful.

Reports from the most recent Beqaa Festival and the latest Balkans camps are available for anyone who would like to learn more or explore ways to support the work.

A Thank You from Fresh Start

Following our contribution of £250 to Fresh Start, we received the following message:

On behalf of everyone at Fresh Start, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Stockbridge Parish Church for your generous donation of £250. Your support is deeply appreciated and will go a long way in helping us continue our work with individuals and families affected by homelessness.

The funds raised will directly support our essential services, including providing Starter Packs for those moving into new homes and running our Community Pantry, which helps tackle food poverty. Your kindness will make a tangible difference to many people across Edinburgh, offering them a fresh start with dignity, hope, and opportunity.

Please pass on our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the donation. It's through efforts like these that we can continue to make a lasting impact together.

We continue to collect for Fresh Start at the back of the church to create new home packs – this includes dishes and cutlery, cleaning items, pots, pans, bed linen, towels, small household electrical items, and long-lasting food products.

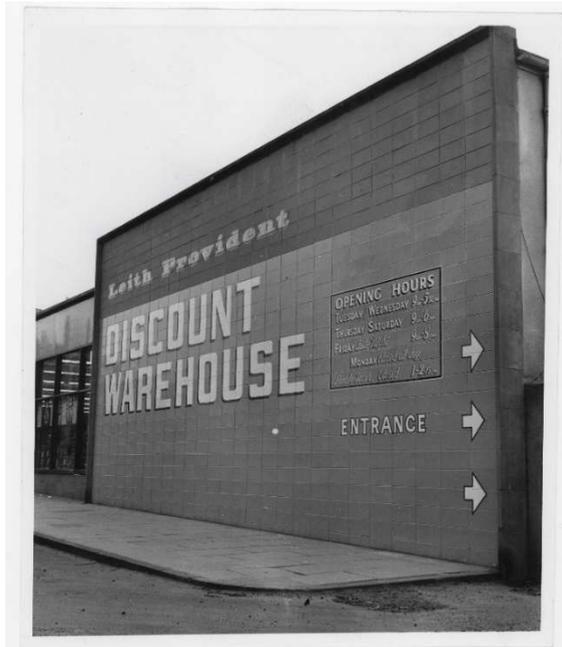


Days Gone By

A talk on Edinburgh and Leith's two Co-operatives.

When Russell of the Living Memory Association came to the church ahead of his talk to the Celebrating Age Project (CAP) to check out the space and tech, it was immediately clear how enthusiastic and knowledgeable he was on his subject – and this shone through in his presentation 'Away for the Messages'. The talk focused on Edinburgh and Leith's two co-operatives, 'The St Cuthbert's Association' and 'The Leith Provident' and covered a people's history of the two places.

If you would like to learn about these stories, you can find them on [the Living Memories website](#). The podcasts share vivid accounts of life in Edinburgh — from being “fed, clad and buried” by the Co-op long before Tesco’s famous “stack ’em high, sell ’em cheap” era, to the days when saying “aye” instead of “yes” could earn you the belt at school, and tales of pilfering pick-n-mix from Woolworths!



The Wee Museum of Memory based at Ocean Terminal in Leith supports lived experience, and is currently looking for donations of objects from the **1970s onwards**, and **especially from the 80s and 90s**. They are specifically looking for **domestic items**, anything to do with **personal grooming and fashion**, objects reflecting **changing technologies**, **children's toys and educational** material and **work-related** artefacts. Paper based donations will be scanned and added to their digital archives – meaning you get to keep your photos while contributing to the charity.

You can contact them on comhist@googlemail.com, or by phoning or texting 07714 783 726.

Blast from the Past!

Can you help us identify these photos?

We recently unearthed an assortment of old photos in the church office, and would appreciate any help identifying people, dates and events. A few are below to get you started!

If you have any information or think you can otherwise help - please let us know via admin@stockbridgechurch.org.uk



Before the day went wrong

13th March 2026 was the 30th anniversary of the tragic events at Dunblane Primary School.

16 pupils and one teacher were killed in the incident, with 15 more being injured before the perpetrator turned his weapon on himself. The scale of the attack led to two new Firearms Acts, which prohibited the private ownership of most handguns in Great Britain.



Teacher Gwen Mayor and her pupils, 1996

Our Treasurer and Joint Session Clerk, Kerr McLaren, penned the following poem after the massacre – entitled “Before the day went wrong”:

Joy and laughter, dance and sway
No thought but happy carefree play
Our hopes and dreams within them lay
Before the day went wrong

We treasured all they had to give
Our love unbounded theirs to have
To them our future did belong
Before the day went wrong

Then anger came and banished light
Confused and scattered in its might
Insensitive to their delight
Before the day went wrong

And silence roared its unbelief
While anguish screamed aloud
That innocence had been so hurt
On the day that went so wrong

Oh that we had been aware
Or had some sense of dark despair

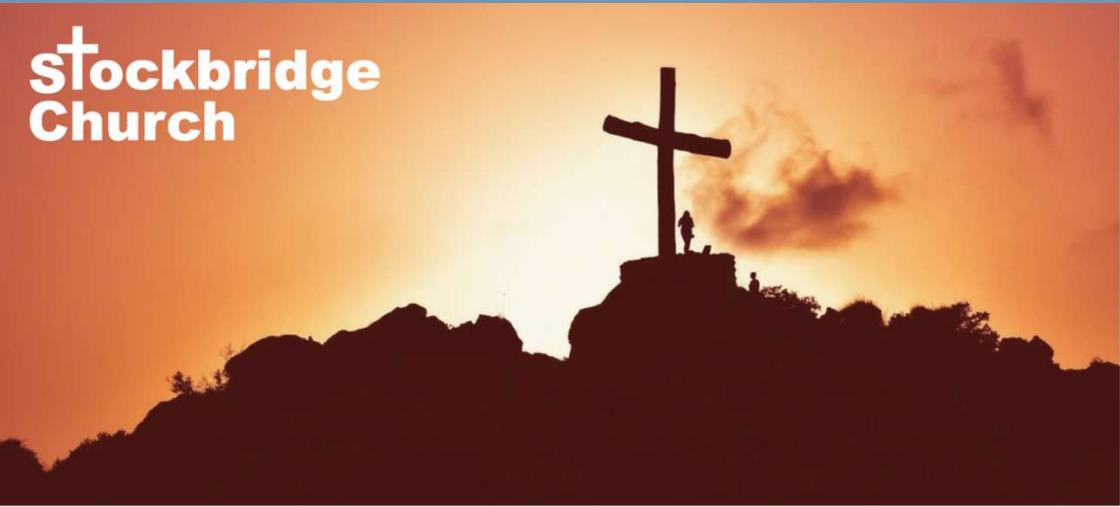
To save those smiles we saw too rare
Before the day went wrong

They're playing now as once before
In glory's realm they fly and soar
In joy and peace with Him who cared
Before and since the day went wrong

And if in hope there too we reach
Then joy and laughter we shall know
We'll share again the love we knew
Before the day went wrong

No bitterness, nor anger's sting
Divide us from the love they are
That love we had, simple and pure
Before the day went wrong

So let us dedicate our hearts
To love and peace, to hope and joy
That they might know our love endures, as once
Before the day went wrong



Easter Services

Palm Sunday Service

29th March, 11am

Labyrinth Open

31st March 2pm - 5pm

1st April 4pm - 7pm

2nd April 2pm - 5pm

Walk of Witness

3rd April, 11:15am

Good Friday Service

3rd April, 7pm

Easter Day Service

5th April, 11am



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7b Saxe Coburg St



@StockbridgeChurch



Easter Labyrinth

The Labyrinth will be set up again in Holy Week in the Church. This is a chance to have some quiet time and walk at your own pace with Jesus on his journey towards the Cross.

It will be open at the following times:

31st March 2pm - 5pm

1st April 4pm - 7pm

2nd April 2pm - 5pm

We hope you are able to walk the Labyrinth for some peace prayer and reflection.



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7b Saxe Coburg St



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Stockbridge Music Hub Events

The next couple of months brings a host of varied events from the Music Hub – from Glasgow-based piano trio Atelier Ensemble, to a recreation of the iconic Köln concert (a memorial concert for the 111th anniversary of the Armenian genocide), accordionist Sandy Brechin famous for his lightning-fast playing and hilarity on-stage, and folk musician Sarah McQuaid.

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

TMI Friday presents

Atelier Ensemble



music by Dvorak, Piazzolla and more

Friday 3rd April
1pm

Voluntary donations welcomed
Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg St, EH3 5BN

Amati www.musichub.uk

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

Culture Club presents

Paul Harrison: The Köln Concert Revisited



Saturday 18th April
6pm

Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg St, EH3 5BN

Amati Tickets via www.musichub.uk

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

24 APRIL



VIOLIN
GINA MCCORMACK
PIANO
MARIANNA ABRAHAMYAN

CANDLELIGHT

DEDICATED TO THE
111th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT
OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

STOCKBRIDGE CHURCH
7b SAXE COBURG ST
EDINBURGH EH3 5BN

TICKETS VIA
musichub.uk

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

TMI Friday presents

Sandy Brechin



Friday 1st May 1pm

Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg, EH3 5BN
voluntary donations welcome

www.musichub.uk Amati

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

Culture Club presents

Sarah McQuaid



Saturday 9th May
6pm

Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg St,
Edinburgh, EH3 5BN

Tickets via www.musichub.uk

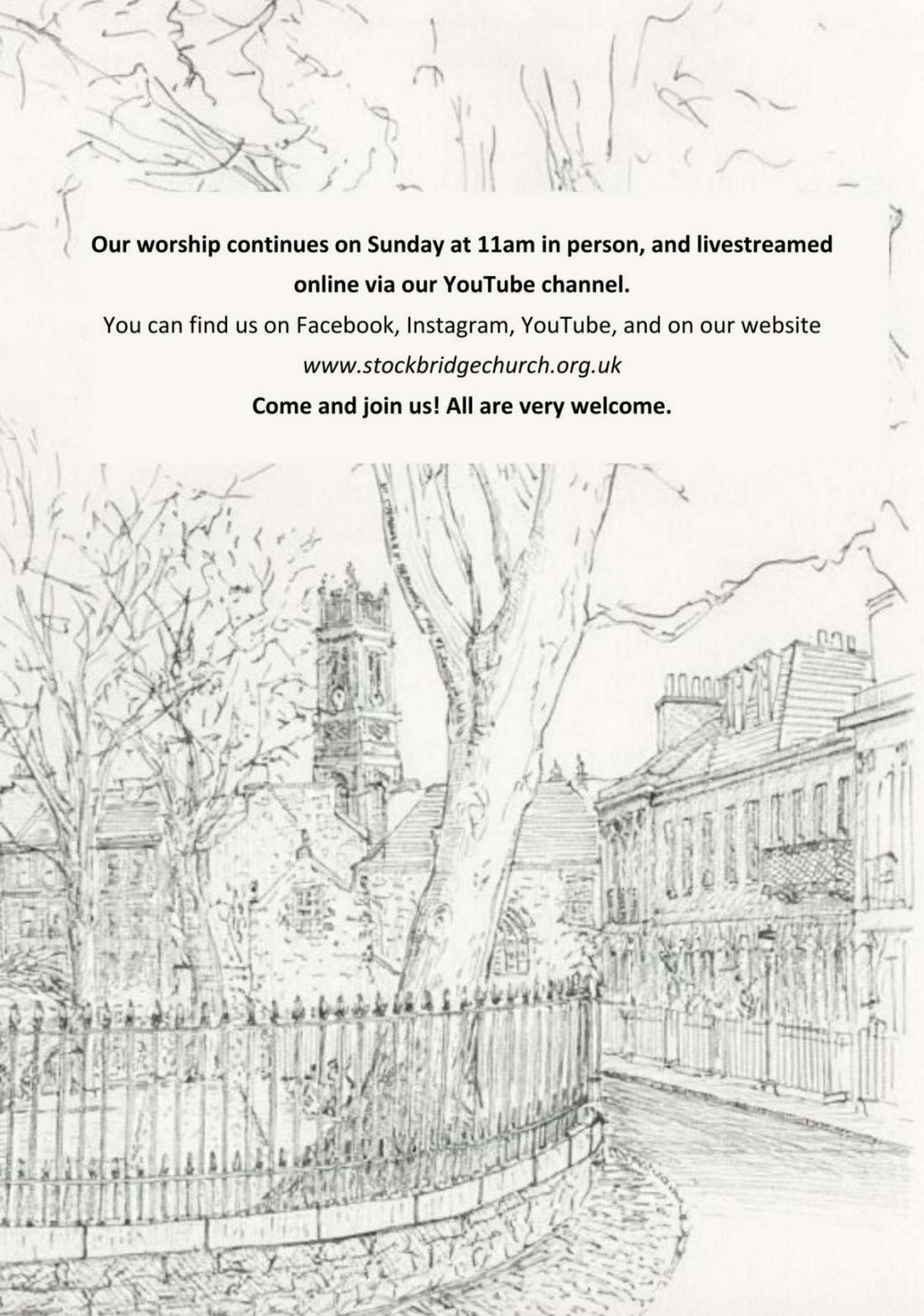
More information on the Music Hub can be found online via their website - musichub.uk

Prayer for the Middle East

**From Rt Rev Rosie Frew, Moderator of the General
Assembly of the Church of Scotland.**

Loving God
We come before you in
sorrow
For once again we are a
world affected by war
So many lives disrupted
So much destruction
So much needless loss
So much fear and
uncertainty
So much grief and pain
Forgive our inability to live at
peace
We pray for peace and unity
Not just the cessation of
hostilities
And the laying down of the
weapons of war
But the costly, just peace
that transforms hearts,
structures, and lives
We pray for those in power
For wisdom and courage for
world leaders
A willingness to negotiate
For blessed are the
peacemakers

We pray for one another
That we would be true to
Christ
Who calls us to be
peacemakers
Who calls us to pursue
justice
Who calls us to love both
neighbour and enemy
We pray for safety and
security
For residents and visitors
across the Middle East
For our church staff and
students in the Holy Land
We pray for comfort and
compassion
For all those who are grieving
For all those who are afraid
Blessed are the
peacemakers,
for they will be called
children of God.
In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.



**Our worship continues on Sunday at 11am in person, and livestreamed
online via our YouTube channel.**

You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and on our website
www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

Come and join us! All are very welcome.