

# Church Together

Jesus Said: 'I Am The True Vine ...'

31st May 2026

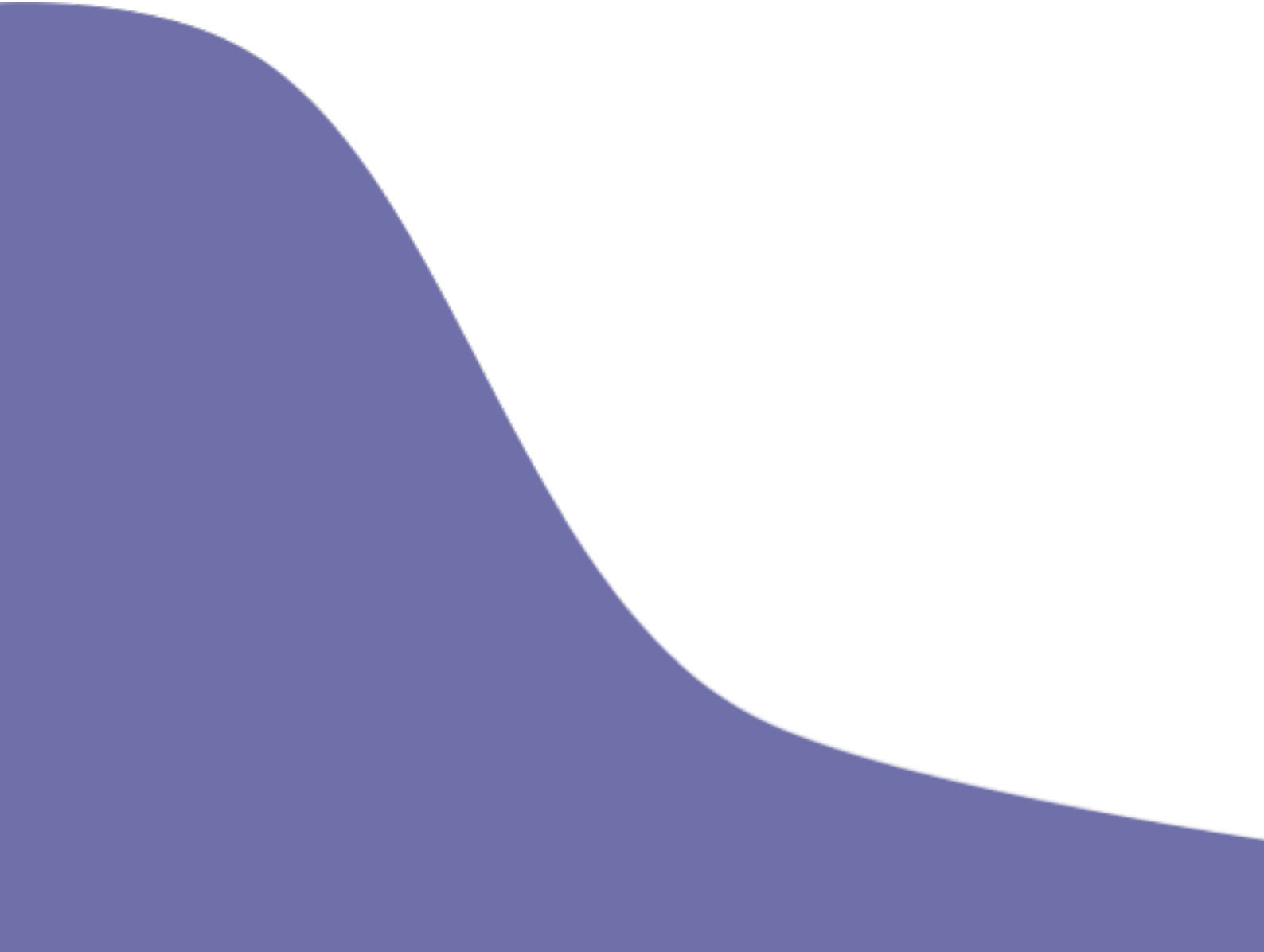


# Welcome

In today's Service we will be looking at: **John 15 v. 1 – 17**

The theme for our service today is: **Jesus Said: 'I Am The True Vine ...'**

We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for today's service and that you would be able to **Know That You Are Fully Grafted Into The Life Of Jesus And Belong To Him**



# Call To Worship

## **Psalm 42 v. 1 - 6 NLT**

As the deer pants for streams of water,

So I long for you, O God.

I thirst for God, the living God.

When can I come and stand before him?

Day and night, I have only tears for food,

While my enemies continually taunt me, saying,

'Where is this God of yours'?

My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be:

I walked among the crowds of worshippers,

Leading a great procession to the house of God,

Singing for joy and giving thanks -

It was the sound of a great celebration!

Why am I so discouraged? Why so sad?

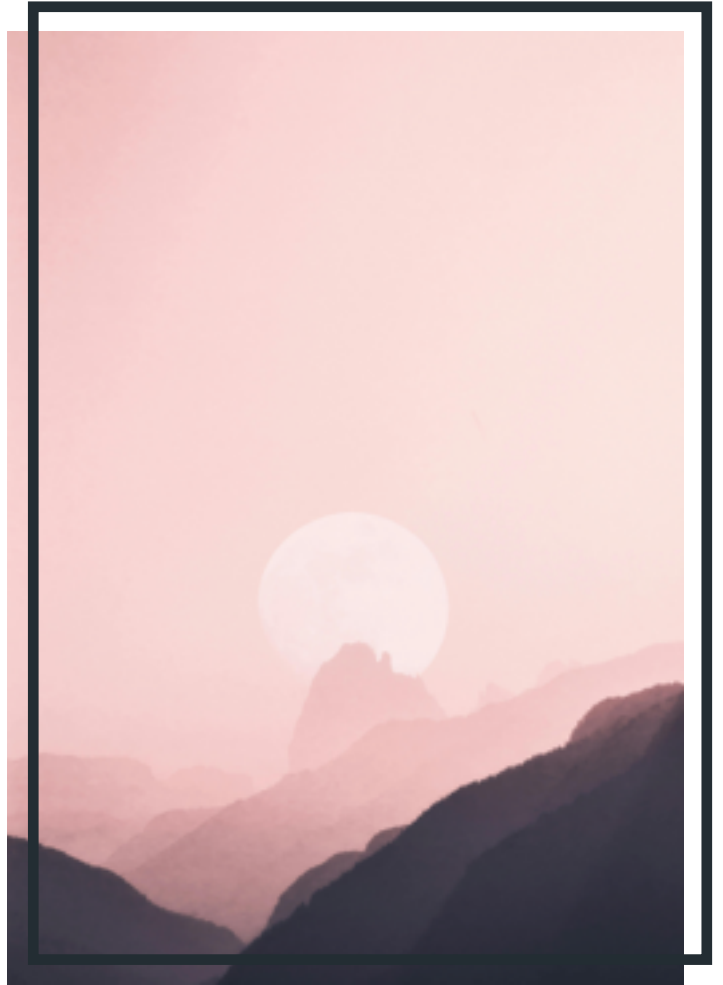
I will hope in my God!

I will praise him again - my Saviour and my God!

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# Song Suggestion

All Things Bright And Beautiful



# Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you today for all the bright things of life. Help us to see them, and to count them, and to remember them, that our lives may flow in ceaseless praise of you. We thank you

Lord, for the Good News of Jesus, that he loves each and everyone of us. We thank you for the pleasures of life that we can enjoy, and for all the blessings that you have given to us.

Teach us this day Lord, to serve you as you deserve. Help us to be a shining light to those around us, that your name may be glorified, in order that your presence may be known. Give us grace, O Lord, not only to hear your word with our ears today; but also help us to receive it into our hearts and lives, so that we be your witnesses wherever you may send us and we ask all of this through the wonderful name of Jesus.

**Amen**

# The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power  
And the glory, forever and ever.

**Amen**

I have been crucified  
with Christ; it is no  
longer I who live, but  
Christ lives in me; and  
the life which I now  
live in the flesh I live  
by faith in the Son of  
God, who loved me and  
gave Himself for me.

**Galatians 2:20** ☆

# Bible Reading

**John 15 v. 1 – 17 NIV**

## **The Vine and the Branches**

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s

business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17 This is my command: Love each other.

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# Song Suggestion

Light Of The World



The phrase  
"abiding in Christ"  
pictures an  
**intimate**  
**relationship,**  
and not just a  
superficial  
acquaintance.



# Church Together

## Thought

In the Old Testament, the vine frequently represented the people of Israel, who were planted and nurtured by God. The image is often used to show the difference between God's ideal for his people and the reality of their unfaithfulness.

Jesus' claim to be the 'true vine' is therefore very striking! He is the one whose life has demonstrated perfect obedience and utter reliance on God. In this passage, Jesus calls his disciples to share the life he has in the Father as we see in **John 15 v. 9 – 10** which says: 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love' and so become one people in him.

The disciples had been deeply worried when Jesus their master told them he would be going away. Some boasted of their determination to follow him, wherever he went, as we are told in **John 13 v. 37** which says: 'Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you'. Some of the other disciples wanted to know more about the likely direction of where Jesus was going as we are told in **John 14 v. 5** where we read: 'Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way'?

We are told in **John 14 v. 3** that Jesus assures them that he will not let them down and he promises them that he is

going to send to them the Holy Spirit – the ‘one who is called alongside’.

His words of reassurance continue through the following two chapters of John’s Gospel and the activity of the Spirit is further explained in **John 15 v. 26 – 16 v. 15**. (When you get home, why not have a look at that part of Scripture for yourself). It is the Holy Spirit who makes it possible to respond to Jesus’ call to remain in him – to be part of him as branches are part of a vine.

Jesus’ words in John about the work of the Spirit fall either side of a passage about living in his love and loving one another. We can see a parallel of this in **1 Corinthians 12 and 14** where Paul discusses the gifts of the Holy Spirit either side of his beautiful description of Christian love that is described in **1 Corinthians 13**. (Again, when you get home why not have a read through this great part of God’s word).

At the heart of the Holy Spirit’s activity is the bringing together of all who share in the love of Christ. Paul’s concern is for the unity of the Church in the one Spirit. When Jesus prays for his disciples, as reflected in **John 17**, after reassuring them of the Holy Spirit’s presence and calling them to remain in him, one of his main concerns is that ‘they may be one’.

In his book, *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer emphasizes that our unity in Christ is not an ideal we must strive to create, but rather a spiritual reality ‘created by God in Christ in which we may participate’. The Holy Spirit is the lifeblood of the body of Christ, as we know from **1 Corinthians 12**, the sap giving life to the branches of the vine.

The vine is not cultivated for decoration, but for the

practical purpose of producing grapes. The gardener, who is mentioned in **John 15 v. 1** has a clear intention – that the branches should bear fruit. And what is the best expression of that fruit? As Jesus commanded, it is to: ‘Love each other’ as **John 15 v. 17** tells us to do.

So what does the thought of belonging to ‘Jesus the Vine’ speak of, for us here at Salendine Nook Baptist Church?

**FIRSTLY, WE NEED TO KNOW THAT WE BELONG TO CHRIST**

Only Christ can satisfy us, scatter our darkness and he has done this because he has given his life for us which is proof of his great love for us. Therefore, we need to ask the question: Do we belong on his vine, as reflected in **John 15 v. 4**? If so, Jesus graciously regards us as his friends as we are told in **John 15 v. 15**.

When astronauts first landed on the moon, Buzz Aldrin asked mission control in Houston for a few moments of silence for each person listening to give thanks in his own individual way. For Buzz, this meant taking communion. Afterwards he wrote: ‘I opened the little plastic packages which contained bread and wine. I poured wine into the chalice my parish had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine curled slowly and gracefully up the cup. It was interesting to think that the very first liquid ever poured on the moon, and the first food eaten there, were consecrated elements. Just before I partook of the elements, I read the words which I had chosen to indicate our trust that as man probes into space, we are in fact acting in Christ. I sensed especially strongly my unity with our church back home, and with the Church everywhere. I read: **“I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.”**

## **SECONDLY, WE ARE CALLED TO BE WITH OTHERS**

Even those whose inner resources are best replenished in solitude, not partying, find themselves needing other people to know that they belong together. This is reflected in **John 15 v. 12 – 14**, which says: 'My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command'.

**St Teresa of Avila, during the 16th century, reflected this thought when she wrote:**

Christ has no body now on earth but yours,  
No hands but yours, no feet but yours;  
Yours are the eyes through which is to look out Christ's  
compassion to the world;  
Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing  
good;  
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now.

## **FINALLY, AS PART OF THE VINE WE ARE CALLED TO BEAR GOOD FRUIT**

We have an understanding from the passage that God the Father is the gardener. Gardeners know that fruit is improved when side-shoots are shortened at an early stage. When this happens, more fruit is produced.

Diseased or dead wood has to be cut out, as referred to in **John 15 v. 2, 3**. Remaining close to Christ, so that he is also 'at home' in us, means obedience, as we are told in **John 15 v. 10, 16, 17**, especially over how we relate to others.

Let's end our thought on this passage from **John 15** with this illustration:

A lady by the name of Margaret Old once wrote: "I once had a grapevine. One spring, its buds failed to burst into leaf. Scraping the bark showed no sign of life. Why had it

died? A neighbour, whose patio was only a few feet away from the main stem of the vine, had needed to carry out drainage work. In the excavations, the main root of the vine must have been fatally damaged. No root, no living branch; no living branch, no fruit!"

# Prayer Of Dedication

We want to be part of the vine, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to obey your command, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to bear fruit for you, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to be full of your joy, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to give joy to you too, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to be known as your friends, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to bring glory to God, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

We want to remain in your love, Jesus,  
*Loving you and loving each other.*

**Amen**

# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

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If you feel that you are able to, then please keep on giving to the work of the church here at Salendine Nook, with a generous and cheerful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.



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# Song Suggestion

King Of Kings, Majesty



# Prayers Of Intercession

We come before you today, Lord, and we thank you for teaching us that we belong to you when we are part of your vine and that we are your friends and we can know each other as brothers and sisters in Jesus. We thank you for hearing us when we cry out to you in moments of despair and anguish, and we also thank you for the ability to praise you and glorify your Holy name.

Heavenly Father, we pray for those who govern over us, for our Prime Minister and his Cabinet. We lift before you our Royal Family, and all the complexity of their lives at this present time. We pray for the ongoing situations throughout the world where there is turmoil and unrest, where individuals and countries can not agree and war prevails. May your mercy and grace be evident in all that happens throughout our world.

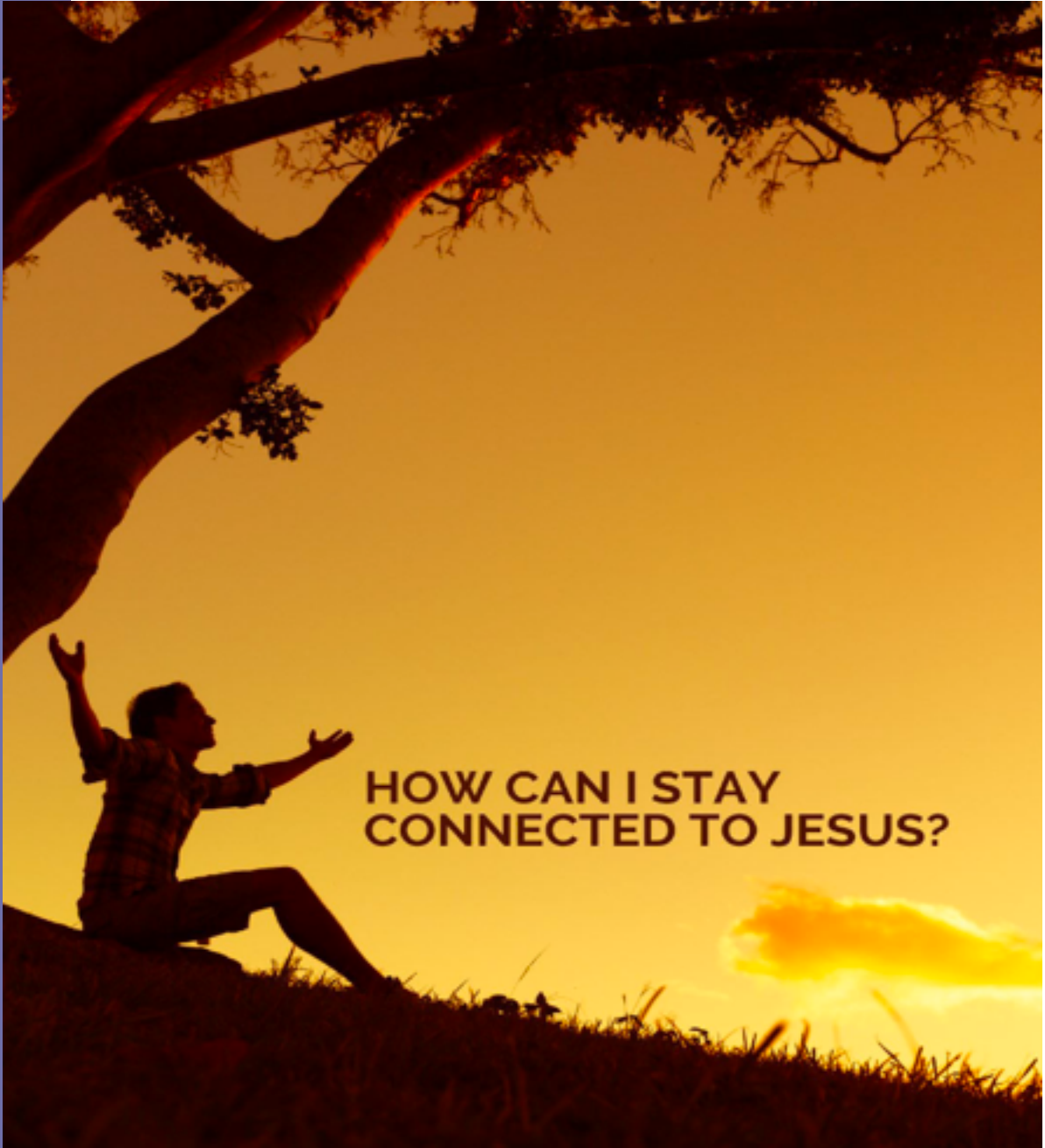
Loving Lord Jesus, we pray for our families and friends. We thank you that Jesus knows our every situation. Help us today to face the different situations we face with dignity and love, and give us peace in our hearts and minds when we have not been able to see or be with our families or friends for a long time.

We continue to pray for those who are unwell, both at home and in hospital, or hospice. We think of the elderly, the housebound and those in care homes. We pray for all those who care for their needs. So again, as we share a moment of silence together today, we bring before you

those known only to ourselves and name them before you, Lord Jesus.

And finally, Lord we pray for ourselves. Help us Lord to follow your example in all that we do and say as we journey with you. We place ourselves, this Church and all your people into your loving care. Please accept these our prayers, in Jesus name.

**Amen**



**HOW CAN I STAY  
CONNECTED TO JESUS?**

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# Song Suggestion

My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less



# Blessing



May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ  
The Love of God  
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
Remain with us all  
Now and forever more.

**Amen**

