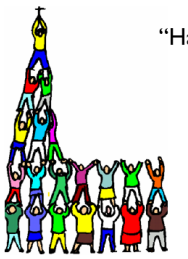
Sermons at All Saints Anglican Church, Luxembourg

Preached by Rev Canon Geoff Read on Sunday 11th October 2026

SHAPE Sermon 2

Theme: Has God done more than just bring me into being? Has He actually SHAPED me?

Text: Ephesians 2:10, and then 3:14-end; John 15:7-9



"Has God not just made us
but also shaped us?"

Sermon by
Rev Canon Geoff Read

When our daughters were very small, we lived in a housing estate where I was the priest. Part of my duties were to go into the local schools to speak to the children each week about God.

As a result, many of the children knew me as Rev Geoff, some even called out "Hello Geoff" in the street

My older daughter was about four, and thought this was great and so started to call me Geoff

As she sat in bed one evening before she went to sleep, she called me Geoff. I replied, "You know, any of those children out there can call me Geoff, but you and your sister are the only ones who can really call me Papa."



Family likeness

- physical
- character
- abilities

As our children grow up there is often a family likeness - face, hair colour

But also a likeness in character and gifts and abilities

Families, when they are working in a healthy way, also have a strong sense of shared purpose.

Each member contributes to the overall family wellbeing, pulls together to get things done

Can you think of that either in your own family or one you have known?

- Our Father ….
- "remain"
- shaped by God – fruit of the Spirit and gifts of the Spirit



It is this sense of privileged relationship, family likeness and shared purpose that is at the heart of our readings from Ephesians

in v14, Paul says that we are to call God "Father" - that isn't just the general term "God" but one that is about a relationship.

Sure, it is open to all, but first it must be desired by all

This is about allowing God to become to us not just a remote deity but our heavenly Father, and all that flows from that

Paul goes on to pray for this to happen - he uses amazing words like deepening and strengthening

Also of remaining, a very powerful word

This word gets repeated in v17

and that Christ may dwell (remain) in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded (remaining) in love.

As Jesus takes the loving initiative to love us, so we respond in love

I never stop being aware that I am a father, a husband, now a grandfather - I remain all those things wherever I go and whatever I do - it shapes how I see life

As a husband I think two - everything from laying the table for a meal through to how we arrange our finances

As a father that is changing as my daughters are now in their 30s, married or about to be married, one a parent herself

But they are always on my mind and in my prayers - sometimes more consciously, but always in the background

And this is what "remain" is like - living out of the awareness that we are loved by God our Father in an utterly reliable, unconditional way

and allowing that to shape how I see myself and how I live in the world

One of the amazing claims of Jesus is that we are not only made by God, but as a Father He has and is shaping us

He is producing qualities in us that are like a family likeness - so just as God is love, so we grow in love, plus joy and peace, patience, kindness and goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control - what we call the fruit of the Holy Spirit

And just as He is infinitely creative, so He is also gifting us with abilities - some natural, some supernatural - to join in with the family purposes: what we call the gifts of the Holy Spirit

For we are what he has made us (poiema, handiwork), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)

Our reading began: *For we are what he has made us (poiema, handiwork), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.* (Ephesians 2:10)

Before you were born He has looked at you and decided to make you you, to shape you in a particular way that are just right for the good things He wants you to do - you are made for fulfilment through love



We are made
and shaped
by God …

The word "made" is actually like a potter or artist creating something of beauty and usefulness

Pause and think about - we are what He has made us

Spiritual gifts
Heart/Passions
Abilities
Personality
Experience

And the shorthand that we are starting to use at All Saints to talk about this way of seeing ourselves is our SHAPE

With loving purpose God has shaped us to our own unique shape (read from back to front)

- **S**piritual Gifts: God's unique gifts given to you for ministry.
- **H**eart's Desire: What motivates, excites, and passes you with passion?
- **A**bilities: Your natural talents, knowledge, and practical skills.
- **P**ersonality: Your character, personal strengths, and traits.
- **E**xperience: Your life story and what you have learned from it

All of this combines in an amazing new way of thinking about our identity and purpose

Whose we are - loved by our heavenly Father

What we are for - that the things of my 24/7 life can be part of something much, much bigger



Church is a community we belong to and where each contributes out of their God-given SHAPE

But as if that isn't enough, there is even more - that we are in mutual relationship, part of a family, He is "our Father" which is where His amazing idea of the church comes in

Church not just a building

Church not just a service we come to

Church as a God purposed community we belong to and where each contributes out of their God-given SHAPE

This is what Paul means when he prays in vv20-21



20 Now to him who by the power at work
within us is able to accomplish abundantly far
more than all we can ask or imagine, 21 to him
be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to
all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

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"to God be glory in the church" - and remember glory means something of God made to be seen

What happens here at All Saints people see - those who belong to our church and those who look in from outside

When we live out of this amazing, generous love of God and live out of the way He has shaped us we connect with something far beyond anything we can ask or imagine, the love and the purposes of God our Father for us and for the world

and we begin to be part of that



Baptism

– the **start** of the SHAPE journey

This morning we are marking of the start of this SHAPE journey for Ludi'liua - it is what we call baptism

She is being shaped by many things from her natural family

And in baptism she is assured that God her Father longs to shape her through her

It happens by daily remaining and living out of this awareness

It happens throughout her life as she belongs to All Saints and brings and contributes her shape in the family of our church from her earliest years

I pray, like Paul, that she and each one here may desire to identify, explore and use your unique God shaped SHAPE in each and every place God puts you, trusting that as we do God does so much more than we can ask or imagine

And as we do, we bring God glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.

?? Statio??