



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

8th January 2023

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

For all those who were still away last Sunday (or fast asleep), let me once again wish you a very Happy New Year! Most of us will now be getting back into our usual routines and perhaps planning ahead. Planning is a bit of a feature for St John's too. This Sunday we are back to our regular 9.30am and 11am services and we're inviting everyone to stay afterwards and spend some time chatting over coffee with representatives of the various ministries we have on offer. Churches really do rely on an army of willing volunteers and we would love for you to consider a new role for a new year...or maybe a change if you've been doing the same thing for many years. Also related to planning, I want to draw your attention to a change of date. The Church Planning meeting has been postponed (from January 14th) and will be held now on Saturday morning, February 4th. Please do put this important meeting on your calendar. Blessings to all!

Rev. Geoff Andrew

NEW SERMON SERVICE

Next week we begin a new six-part sermon series that will take us through until Lent. It's called 'Fit for the Future' and is based on Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. This is believed to be Paul's earliest letter and it is a great example of Paul's incredible pastoral heart as he celebrates, encourages and challenges a young church that he founded but had to leave prematurely. It contains wonderful wisdom about church life and individual responsibility. The Bible Project has produced some really helpful animated overviews of books of the Bible I encourage you to check out an overview of 1 Thessalonians. Here's the link <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/1-thessalonians/> or just go to YouTube and search for Bible Project Thessalonians. Oh, and remember to pick up a sermon series card in church this Sunday!

Rev. Geoff Andrew

SERVICE BOOKS

The Christmas and Epiphany Service book is available in church and on the website at:

<https://church.stjohnsstoneleigh.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Advent-Season-Service-Book-2022-11-29.pdf>

Rev. Geoff Andrew

JOHN NEALE CELEBRATING HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

John Neale will be celebrating his 90th birthday on 19th January. He would like to invite all at St John's to celebrate with him on **Sunday 15th January** after the 9.30am service with cake and refreshments. All welcome.

Our Sunday service is streamed via <https://stoneleigh.tv>. Any problems, please let us know.

Tim Rogers

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

Shower gel, shampoo, soap, sanitary items, nappies, warm socks, protein bars, packet soups, first aid kits, toothbrushes, toothpaste, torches, Bandages and gloves.

Thank you so much for your support.

Shelly, Ukrainian Refugee Contact

UKRAINIAN REFUGEE NETWORK

Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network urgently needs to find more sponsors and landlords for Ukrainian refugees. If you or anyone you know could consider taking in a refugee, please speak to Rev. Geoff.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

CRAFT CLUB

January's meeting will be on Monday 16th January 2023.

Veronica Gittins

FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

Please speak to Anne Andrew if you would like to donate flowers to be displayed in the church, perhaps in memory of a loved one or for a special occasion. We would be delighted to hear from you and write a dedication to go in the newsletter and be displayed in the church.

Anne Andrew

START COURSE

On Tuesday, February 7th at 7.30pm, we will be embarking on another edition of the Start Course. This is a six-week course exploring the basics of Christianity. The format is an informal discussion group with video clips, music, prayer and lots of opportunities to share stories and ask questions. Please speak to me if you – or someone you know – is interested in joining.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

DONATING TO ST JOHN'S



If you would like to contribute financially to the work of St John's, you can donate using this QR code. Using your smartphone's camera will take you straight to a page where you can make a donation using a credit card. Thank you.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

GROWTH GROUPS

In the New Year, I will be launching and hosting a new discipleship program based on a housegroup format. The aim of the group is to help us grow in our faith and learn how to apply what we learn in the real world. To that end, the group will meet every week for 4 weeks, then have a month's break, then meet again for 4 weeks. Between January and July, the group will meet for 4 x 4 weekly sessions (16 sessions in all). The format will consist of worship, prayer and bible study with an added element of practical application. There will be two groups, one daytime and one evening, but run on the same day (Wednesdays). The dates are Jan 11 – Feb 2; Mar 8 – Mar 30; May 3

– May 24; Jun 21 – Jul 13. To take part, you must commit for the January sessions and attend as many times as possible thereafter. A sign-up sheet is available at the front of the church. Please speak to me if you are interested.
Rev. Geoff Andrew

CHURCH PLANNING MEETING – CHANGE OF DATE

On Saturday February 4th from 9.30 – 12.30, we will be holding an open meeting for all members of the church family to attend a Planning Day at which we will present a framework for our Parish Development Plan (something required of us by the diocese) for discussion and feedback. We would love as many people as possible to attend so please put it in your calendar now. I promise there'll be coffee and cakes!

Rev. Geoff Andrew

Sunday's Services

Today's Service

Epiphany

The final punctuation mark on the Christmas season is the feast of the Epiphany which falls on January 6th, though we celebrate it today on the nearest Sunday. Traditionally, in the Western church, this is the day when we remember the Magi, those foreign seekers, whose worship of King Jesus revealed him to be a saviour for the world, not just for Israel. But Epiphany Sunday is also a time when we remember the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. Both events recognise the incarnation and the appearance of Jesus to a waiting world. Today's readings and sermon focus on Jesus' baptism.

Readings

Acts 10: 34-43

Maggie Savill

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: 'I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism ³⁵ but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. ³⁶ You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷ You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached – ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. ³⁹ 'We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, ⁴⁰ but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹ He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen – by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

Matthew 3: 13-17

Rev. Geoff Andrew

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?'

¹⁵ Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.' Then John consented.

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'

Collect

Heavenly Father, at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: May we recognise him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; Through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Intercessor

Chris Redrup

Music at 9.30am

1. As with gladness men of old (MP 39)
2. At the name of Jesus (MP 41) vs 1,2,5,6
3. Spirit of the living God (MP 613) – sing twice
4. Praise, my soul, the King of heaven (MP 560)

Music at 11am

1. In Christ alone
2. Living hope
3. The Blessing

From Our Book of Remembrance

Dora Blake

Eric William Orford