



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

1st October 2023 – Harvest Festival

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

This week I have been on retreat to reflect and pray and catch up on some work I need to do for my curacy portfolio. I have driven our campervan to a small, quiet campsite based on a farm in the Wiltshire countryside. Yesterday evening I watched as a huge farm vehicle fertilised the neighbouring field. I was amazed that it kept going even after dark, the bright headlights sweeping the ploughed earth. It is a great reminder as we approach Harvest Sunday of God's wonderful provision of fertile earth and abundant crops. Don't forget that we have one service on Sunday at 10am. Please bring your food offerings which will be donated to the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank as usual (see below details of urgently needed items).

Rev. Geoff Andrew

CHURCH MAGAZINES

The latest edition of 'What's On at St John's' is ready for distribution. Thank you to all of you who have already delivered. There are still a few streets left and it would be great to see them all taken by this weekend.

Rev Geoff Andrew

THE START COURSE: FROM 3RD OCTOBER FOR SIX WEEKS

I will be running another Start Course from Tuesday, October 3rd (7.30pm to 9.00pm). The course lasts for six weeks and looks at the basics of life and the Christian faith. No assumptions are made about participants' background or experience or knowledge of Christianity or the church. It really does start from scratch. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining, please let me know.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: ST PAUL'S HOWELL HILL TALKS

Arrive at 11:30am for coffee, 12pm Talk / 1pm Lunch

Finish at 2:30pm - Charge £10

Book your place at saintpauls.co.uk/foodforthought

Autumn 2023 programme:

4 Oct, A World to Win - challenges for the global church

Rev Dr Chris Wright (Former Principal of All Nations College and Global Ambassador for the Langham Partnership)

1 Nov, Wonderfully Made - God and genetics

Dr Alison Male (Consultant in Clinical Genetics)

CHURCH TIMES GROUP

For a number of years, a small group of us has been meeting about every six weeks to discuss articles of interest in the Church Times. We wondered if there was anyone else who was interested in joining the group. People would not have to buy the Church Times each week if they did not see wish to. It would be possible to join in the discussion without having read the article or people could borrow a copy from those of us who take it. If you are interested in having more information and the

date and place of the next meeting get in touch with Sue Pennington on 02083934356 or suepennington@uwclub.net.

Sue Pennington

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

Thank you so much to St John's church who are still helping the people of Ukraine 18 months after the start of the war. According to the UN Refugee Council, there are 5.1 million internally displaced people in Ukraine as of May 2023 and more than 6.2 million people have crossed into neighbouring countries including Poland. Poland has welcomed 60 per cent of all refugees from Ukraine. The Polish White Eagle club in Balham will continue to send lorries to Poland and Ukraine for as long as people donate supplies. Many Ukrainians are living in damaged homes and buildings ill-prepared for another winter. As the war continues, humanitarian needs are growing and we estimate that 17.6 million people in Ukraine will need help to survive the forthcoming winter and the freezing temperatures.

If you can donate: shower gel, shampoo, soap, sanitary items, nappies, warm socks, protein bars, packet soups, first aid kits, toothbrushes, toothpaste, torches, bandages and warm gloves, or anything else listed on the donation box in the church, you will be helping people survive in Ukraine. If you wish to donate money, please either write a cheque made payable to Shelly Weiczorek, go to the whiteeagleappeal.org page or put cash in an envelope marked Ukraine. We can then buy chest drains and other medical equipment that is not easy to buy in shops. Thanks for all your support. *Shelly, Ukrainian Refugee Contact*

UKRAINE REFUGEES

There is a renewed need to find accommodation for Ukrainian refugees. There are some who are already based here that need to find alternative homes. And there are also people still leaving Ukraine as the war continues to drag on. I have been made aware of one lady in particular who is in her late 50s and is a professional musician who speaks good English. She wants to be in this area because she has friends here. If you can help, please let me know.

Rev Geoff Andrew

COMMUNITY SURVEY

As part of our ongoing commitment to better serve and understand the needs of the wider community in Stoneleigh, we are keen to hear your thoughts about St John's and what we do. We want to learn more about how you currently use the church, your opinions about services and events, and the ways in which we can enhance our offerings to benefit everyone in the local area.

The survey is an opportunity for you to share your thoughts openly and honestly. We assure you that your responses will remain completely anonymous and will be used solely for the purpose of improving what we provide in church and to the local community. It will take only a few minutes of your time, and your input will help us to make decisions about future initiatives. Thank you.

Chris Webb



MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR PETER MURTON ON TUESDAY 3RD OCTOBER 2023 AT 2PM

There will be a service in church in memory of Peter Murton, followed by refreshments. Please sign up on the form at the front of the church if you can attend. Thank you.

FOODBANK

Harvest! I wonder what sort of picture this conjures up in people's minds. I remember my Mum collecting us from school to "come and see this".....a first combine harvester in the area! I also remember a modern version of the favourite harvest hymn 'We Plough the Fields' it was so thought provoking and apt - the last lines were 'Lord, help us learn more swiftly To share with open hands.' No matter how old your memories are or how modern, the message is the same - alongside gratitude for our food comes the need to share. Thank you all for being so generous this year.

Epsom and Ewell Foodbank has issued this request list, remember the church is open in daylight hours and donations can be dropped into the box at any time.

Tins: Meat (Meatballs, Ham, Hot Dogs, etc), Fish, Baked Beans, Spaghetti Hoops, Pulses, Soup, Vegetables, Sweetcorn, Tomatoes, Fruit, Custard, Rice Pudding.

Other groceries: UHT Semi skimmed or full fat milk, Powdered milk, Jars of cooking sauces, Long-life juice, Long-life sponge puddings, Pasta sauce, Rice, Pasta, Pulses.

Toiletries: Toilet rolls, Deodorant, Shampoo, Shaving Gel/Foam, Shower Gel, Toothpaste. **The Foodbank Team**

ZOOM

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

SEASON OF MUSIC 2023

Following last year's successful Season of Music, we're doing it all over again! The programme this year sees the return of Blues musician Bryn Haworth (Nov 25th) and Rock Choir (Dec 15th, in aid of RUSH founder, Andrew Amukowa). New to St John's for 2023 is a visit from Jonathan Veira, a multi-talented singer, musician and raconteur (Oct 28th). Full details are on the fliers at the welcome desk. Tickets can be purchased from the St John's website and there are also sign-up sheets at the front of church. **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

Today's Services

We take a break from our Epic Tales series this week to focus on thanksgiving. Harvest is that time of year when we thank God for his blessings, not only the food on our table, but all the good gifts he has given us. We also remember those who are less fortunate than us. Our God is a generous God and he wants his us to respond with generosity in offering our time, talents and treasure to meet the needs of those who need help both in our local community and around the world.

Readings

Psalm 67

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us – ² so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. ³ May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. ⁴ May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. ⁵ May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. ⁶ The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us. ⁷ May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Intercessor

Chris Redrup

Music

1. We Plough the Fields and Scatter
2. Amazing Grace (my chains are gone)
3. Goodness of God
4. How Great Thou Art

Book of Remembrance

Jean Anne Martin
Sydney William Ramshaw