



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter 5th November 2023

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

It was great to have a full church last weekend for the Jonathan Veira concert, especially since more than half the people there had never been inside St John's before. Thanks to everyone in the church family who helped out and made it such a successful event. This week marks the beginning of the final season of the church year, Christ the King. The colours in church switch to red and a new service booklet for Kingdom season will take us through until Advent. Anne and I are away this weekend and I'm grateful that my colleague Rev. David Packham, curate at Nork with Burgh Heath, will be leading and preaching at the 9.30 and 11am services. I'm sure you will give him a warm St John's welcome. **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

There will be one service at 10.15am on November 12th for Remembrance Sunday. **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

CHURCH 'WHO'S WHO'

With us having two well-established congregations now, it is not always easy to match a face with a name. So we plan to produce a church 'Who's Who' booklet with names and photographs so we can get to know each other better. This is only for the use of church members and will not go further afield. John Martin has kindly agreed to lead the project and he will be approaching you sometime in the next few weeks to ask if he can take your photograph and a few details. I encourage everyone to participate. Thank you! **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

Book Wise

Sue Pennington recommends 'God of Surprises' by Gerard Hughes. She has read it more than once and found it really helpful. One reviewer wrote: 'it is wise, humble and down to earth and clearly the fruit of deep personal experience and years of spiritual direction. The author has a marvellous understanding of the vagaries of the human spirit and the rare gift of helping us to understand ourselves.' **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

HOME GROUPS

Home Groups (or House Groups) are a wonderful way for us to enjoy fellowship with each other during the week. We currently have two groups hosted by Rosalie Jackson and Jean Tutton which meet once or twice per month. We are planning to add one or two new groups (depending on demand) in the new year, with at least one being held in the evening. If you are interested in joining a Home Group, please let me know. **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

CHAIR APPEAL

I am delighted to report that our chair appeal has so far raised £1,230! That means we need another £750 to reach our target. If you have contributed already, thank you so much. If you have

not done so, please consider contributing the cost of one chair (£84). If just nine more of you do so, we will achieve our goal.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

Thank you so much to St John's who are still helping the people of Ukraine. 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**

PRAYER GROUP

Future dates are below but times are to be confirmed.

Thursday, 23rd November.

Thursday, 21st December; and,

Thursday, 18th January 2024.

All are welcome to this informal group, but if you can't attend in person, you are welcome to pray with us wherever you find yourself at this time.

If these dates are not ideal for you, please speak with Rev. Geoff Andrew or Steve Simper as we welcome your suggestions.

FOODBANK

As Jonathan Veira started to sing advertising jingles of the 60's and 70's at the concert last weekend it was amazing to hear the audience joyfully join in. Are there any jingles attached to items on our list this week? Dare we challenge you to hum them as you shop?

Urgently required please: Long Life Sponge Puddings, UHT Milk full fat and semi skimmed, Powdered Milk, Long Life Juice- (we have none), Squash, Packet Soup, Instant Mash, Marmalade, Chocolate Spread, Toilet Rolls, Washing Powder (Bio and Non-Bio)

Also needed please: - Brown Sauce, Mayonnaise, Crisps, Nappies 6+, Shaving Gel/Foam.

Many thanks for the overflowing boxes the many cash donations St Johns have banked for the Foodbank recently - you are a kind and generous lot, and the Foodbank is grateful.

The Foodbank Team

PRAYER VIGIL

Following the wonderful success of our last 24-hour prayer vigil, we are planning to repeat this on Saturday 9th December starting at 9am and finishing at 9am on Sunday 10th.

Please put the date in your diary and speak with Lizanne Matthews or Steve Simper to sign-up to one or more of the one-hour time slots. Alternatively, add your name to the sheet at the front of the church. More details to follow.

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). 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

Our Epic Tale this week recounts the famous story of Jonah and the Big Fish (no, it wasn't a whale!). It is a story of how God's purposes were fulfilled despite the disobedience, and then reluctant obedience, of Jonah the prophet, God's chosen messenger. It is also a wonderful depiction of God's mercy and compassion toward all those who turn to him. Whether we see ourselves as reluctant messengers or repentant sinners (or both), there is much to learn from this dramatic tale.

Readings

Jonah 1:1-17

Janis Forder

1 The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: 2 'Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.' 3 But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD. 4 Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. 5 All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. 6 The captain went to him and said, 'How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.' 7 Then the sailors said to each other, 'Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.' They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. 8 So they asked him, 'Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?' 9 He answered, 'I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.' 10 This terrified them and they asked, 'What have you done?' (They knew he was running away from the LORD,

because he had already told them so.) 11 The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, 'What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?' 12 'Pick me up and throw me into the sea,' he replied, 'and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.' 13 Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. 14 Then they cried out to the LORD, 'Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased.' 15 Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. 16 At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him. 17 Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Luke 16:19-31

Rev. David Packham

19 'There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. 20 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores 21 and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 'The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire." 25 'But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us." 27 'He answered, "Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment." 29 'Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them." 30 "No, father Abraham," he said, "but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent." 31 'He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

Collect

God of glory, touch our lips with the fire of your Spirit, that we with all creation may rejoice to sing your praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intercessor

Ken Mussell

Music at 9.30am

1. Love divine, all loves excelling
2. We have a gospel to proclaim
3. Tell out my soul
4. *During Communion:* Make me a channel of your peace
5. Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah

Music at 11.00am

1. 10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)
2. The Lords my shepherd (I will trust)
3. Light of the World (Here I am to worship)
4. In Christ Alone

Book of Remembrance

Gillian Francis Marshall

Iris E Mussell

Marie Florence White