



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter 17th December 2023 Third Sunday of Advent

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

As we enter the third week of Advent, there's a real sense now of Christmas being upon us. We have sung carols in the pub, carols at the Rock Choir event (thanks to all who came and what a great concert!) and this weekend we'll have more carols at the Carol Service. I do hope you can join us. And I do encourage you to invite friends and neighbours to the Christmas services. This time of year is such a great opportunity to point others to the Light of the World!

Rev. Geoff Andrew

RUSH ACADEMY CHILD SPONSORSHIP

RUSH is one of our primary mission partners. Based in Kakamega, Kenya, RUSH was set up by Andrew and Lucy Amukowa to provide education to local children and give them the tools to break out of the cycle of poverty. One of the ways we can support the work of RUSH is to sponsor a child. We have a number of children's profiles available at St John's and sponsorships cost £20 per month. Please speak to Claire Cornell or Rev. Geoff if you are interested. *Rev. Geoff Andrew*

MINCE PIES AND MULLED WINE

We are planning to serve Mulled Wine and Mince Pies after Carol Service on 17th December. Mulled wine is all taken care of but we would be most grateful for donations of Mince Pies for this event. Please bring your donations to Church on 17th. Thanking you in anticipation. *Social Committee*

ADVENT SERMON SERIES

The Advent sermons are based on the book, 'The Whole Christmas Story' by Jo Swinney. If anyone wishes to follow along, the book includes reflections for every day of Advent. You can find it on Amazon (and no doubt other reputable booksellers!). *Rev. Geoff Andrew*

CAFÉ BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Please note there will **NO** Café on Thursday 28th December.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

We will be holding our Christmas Carol Service on **December 17th at 6.30pm** followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies.

Chris Webb



The next meeting of Craft Club will be on Monday, 18th December, from 10am to 12 noon. Bring your crafting and join us in the Parish Room. It's time to sparkle and shine, so see you there!! All are welcome. *Veronica Gittins*

SERVICES BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

There will be no midweek Morning Prayer or Holy Communion between Christmas Day and New Year's Eve. On New Year's Eve, there will be one service at 10am. There will be **no** Morning Prayer on Monday 1st January 2024. The normal pattern of services will resume from January 4th with a service of Holy Communion at 9.30am *Rev. Geoff Andrew*

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE – SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER AT 4.00pm

We will be holding our Christingle Service in aid of the Children's Society. We will be making the candles on Thursday 21st December at 2.00pm in the Parish Centre and would be grateful for volunteers to help make the candles, you will be welcomed with coffee/tea and cake! We have 100 candles to put together so any help would be gratefully received. *Social Committee*

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*

ST JOHN'S REFLECTIONS

We have set up a new WhatsApp group dedicated to sharing Christian reflections, meditations and bible verses. Called St John's Reflections, its purpose is to build one another in the faith. That doesn't mean that such things can't be shared on the main St John's WhatsApp group, but it makes sense to have a place set apart from the general admin and chat. The new group is open to all. Just let myself or Will Porter know if you would like to join. And I should add that joining does not mean you have to contribute...it's perfectly fine to just receive! *Rev. Geoff Andrew*

ADVENT FOODBANK CALENDAR

We know that this year there will be extra demand on the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank as more and more people are struggling to make ends meet. We have devised a way to focus our shopping activities through Advent by identifying specific themes for the four weeks of Advent. Look out for a different coloured flyer each week with a new list. Let's help to open the doors for everyone in need this Advent! Additional urgent items have been posted on WhatsApp. *Rev. Geoff Andrew and Polly Elder*

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.

With Christmas quickly approaching please can we add a few extra seasonal food items:

Chocolate tubs - celebration, heroes etc. Biscuit Selection boxes - Victoria, Fox's etc. Marshmallow Assorted roasted nuts, seeds etc. Hot chocolate/Coffee/Tea Sugar Rice Pasta Soup packets and tins Custard Long life baked foods.

Shelly, Ukrainian Refugee Contact

UKRAINIAN REFUGEE CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This Christmas, Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN) is supporting refugee families in our area to buy Christmas gifts for their children, and to host a Christmas celebration so that the community has a space to come together. A donation of £20 will support one child to attend this Christmas party and a £15 voucher for each child so that their parents can choose a meaningful Christmas gift for them. The party will be organised by the Ukrainian community, with support from the EERN team. Please follow this link to donate:

<https://epsomandewellfoodbank.enthuse.com/cf/4a8d>

Rev. Geoff Andrew

CHRISTMAS CHOIR

There will be a choir practice on the afternoon of the carol service at 4pm. Do come along and join us and please encourage other family and friends to join our merry band of singers. Many thanks.

Chris Webb

PRAYER GROUP

We are delighted that the monthly prayer group is gaining momentum. Having said that, due to the festivities in December there will not be a meeting this month. The next meeting will be at 3.30pm on Thursday 18th January 2024 in the Chapel. This will follow coffee café.

Steve Simper

ZOOM

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

Tim Rogers

Book of Remembrance
Marie Florence White

Today's Services

In the first two Sundays of Advent we talked firstly about the goodness and beauty of God's creation and his continued love for humankind. Then we considered how humankind has turned its back on Him leading to the brokenness we experience now. This week, we focus on hope; the hope of the Old Testament prophets in awaiting a Messiah, and the hope we cling to now for a world of peace, forgiveness, justice and love as we partner with Jesus in fulfilling God's mission of redemption and restoration.

Readings

Isaiah 9:2-7

Maggie Savill

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. ³You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. ⁴For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. ⁵Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and for ever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, ⁴⁸for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me – holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. ⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. ⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful ⁵⁵to Abraham and his descendants for ever, just as he promised our ancestors.'

Collect

God for whom we watch and wait, you send John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intercessor

Ian Hargrave

Music at 9.30am

1. O Come, O Come Immanuel (MP 493)
2. Angels from the realms of glory (MP 35)
3. The first Nowell (MP 644)
4. *During communion:* As the Deer (MP 37)
5. It came upon a midnight clear (MP 345)

Music at 11.00am

1. Angels from the Realms
2. While Shepherds Watch
3. O Come, O Come Emmanuel
4. Calypso Carol