



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter 7th January 2024 The First Sunday of Epiphany

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

Happy New Year dear St John's family! I hope this Christmas season you have managed to find some space to relax and spend time with loved ones. But even if it has been a challenging time for you, I pray that 2024 will be a year of joyful blessing, good health and spiritual growth for us all. I am sure God has great plans for us in the year ahead. Service times are back to normal this weekend (9.30am and 11am), and this Sunday (Epiphany) we begin a new 6 -week sermon series called 'Walk the Talk' based on the book of James. James' letter is well-known for its focus on the practical side of Christian living. Yes we are saved by faith, but James challenges us by asking 'what good is faith without actions?' I am also delighted to say that two new Home Groups will be starting in the coming week. Home Groups are a great place to worship, pray and discuss faith issues with a small group of people. Why not make it a new year's resolution to build your own faith and support others? Let me know if you would like to join a group.

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

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

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

FOODBANK

Thank you for the wonderful response we had to the Advent calendar weekly sheets. Special thanks too to Geoff who got all the leaflets organised and distributed round Stoneleigh each week and to Maggie and John for delivering everything to the Foodbank Store.

In December Epsom and Ewell Foodbank fed 1,324 people. That is done with all the kind support of local donors.

The work carries on though and this week they urgently need:- Jars of pasta sauce, Jars of cooking sauce, Tinned fruit, Tinned fish, Tinned meat, Tinned spaghetti, Tea bags, Honey, Long life sponge puddings, Custard, Long-life juice, Ketchup, Loo rolls, Deodorant, Shampoo & Conditioner, Shaving gel / foam, Toothpaste adult, Nappies 5+, 6. Thank you.

The Foodbank Team

PRAYER GROUP

We are delighted that the monthly prayer group is gaining momentum. 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

Today's Services

The book of James was most likely written by Jesus' half-brother James (not the disciple James) who became a very influential figure in the early church, alongside Peter and Paul. His key themes in the letter include the relationship between faith and good deeds, dealing with temptation and the power of words. This week we focus on growing through suffering. How do we respond when things go wrong? And how can we allow God to transform us in the process?

Book of Remembrance

Dora Blake
Beatrice Marie Ernstzen

Readings

James 1:1-11

Janis Forder

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. ⁶ But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. ⁹ Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. ¹⁰ But the rich should take pride in their humiliation – since they will pass away like a wild flower. ¹¹ For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

Matthew 10:16-20

¹⁶ 'I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Collect

Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intercessor

Ken Mussell

Music at 9.30am

1. As with gladness men of old
2. We three kings of Orient are
3. What a friend we have in Jesus
4. *During Communion:* Spirit of the living God
5. Guide me oh Thou great Jehovah

Music at 11.00am

1. In Christ alone
2. This is amazing grace
3. No longer slaves
4. Goodness of God