



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

8th December 2024 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

In my sermon at the Wednesday Communion this week, I referred to last Sunday's events as feeling 'like heaven had broken through to earth as another beloved sister joined the family of Jesus, and all the saints in heaven and on earth celebrated.' It really was a special moment to baptise Glory in our newly acquired pool, as well as to celebrate Advent Sunday. It was certainly a day of candles and lights! Of course, there are lots of events in the (Advent) calendar and it was a particular pleasure on Friday to be invited back to the Station Pub to lead some carol singing. Thanks to all who came to sing and support. If you are reading this on Saturday, then our 24 hour Advent Prayer Vigil is still going. Even if you can't make it down to church in person, please do pray with us for our church, our community, and for local businesses, schools, public workers and emergency services. **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

ZOOM

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

Tim Rogers

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Please see below service times for the Christmas period:

15th December – Carol Service at 6.30pm

24th December – Christingle Services at 3pm and 5pm

24th December – Midnight Communion – 11.30pm

25th December – Family Worship with Holy Communion – 10am.
Rev. Geoff Andrew

CHRISTMAS TREE IN CHURCH

Many thanks to Chris Webb for donating and then dressing (with Helen's assistance) the splendid Christmas Tree in the chancel. It's a beautiful addition to our Advent and Christmas season.
Rev Geoff and Churchwardens

MINCE PIES AND MULLED WINE

We are planning to serve Mulled Wine and Mince Pies before the Rock Choir on Friday 13th December and after the Carol Service on 15th December. Mulled wine is all taken care of but we would be most grateful for donations of Mince Pies for these events. Please bring your donations to Church on either Sunday 8th or Thursday 12th December. Thanking you in anticipation.
Social Committee

CHURCHES TOGETHER AT CHRISTMAS

Are you alone at Christmas this year? Come and join us for a traditional festive dinner. 'Churches Together in Ewell' is pleased to offer a Christmas dinner plus festive activities to all who would otherwise be on their own.

Christmas Day 12:30 – 4.15 at a local church. This offer is open to all Ewell residents. Transport can be arranged. **No charge.** To join us call: 07999 80475 or email: Christmas.dinner@dsl.pipex.com. Please pick up a flyer at the Welcome Desk at the front of Church.

PRAYER INITIATIVE FROM EWELL CHURCHES TOGETHER

Do you feel a call to pray blessing on your local area? Would you like to pray with local Christians from other churches? If you would like to explore the possibility of gathering with others for inter-church prayer - either in person or over zoom, please feel free to contact me.

I would love to hear from you! **Paula Smith**
paula.smith@mybroadbandmail.com

CHRISTINGLE SERVICES –TUESDAY 24TH DECEMBER AT 3.00pm AND 5.00pm

We will be holding our Christingle Services in aid of the Children's Society. We will be making the candles on Monday 23rd 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 150 candles to put together so any help would be gratefully received.

Social Committee

THURSDAY AFTERNOON PRAYER MEETING

There will be no Thursday afternoon Prayer Meeting during the month of December.
Steve Simper

SEASON OF MUSIC & COMEDY 2024

December 13, 6.30pm: Rock Choir (preceded by carols on the lawn) (£5/ticket)

December 21, 5.30pm: Movie Night: It's a Wonderful Life (£5/ticket)

A sign-up sheet for each show can be found in the welcome area.
Rev. Geoff Andrew

DIGGING FOR TREASURE

In Mathew 13:44 a man finds treasure in a field and then sells everything he has to buy the field. I then imagine he still has to dig out the treasure, and that as he finds treasure he realises there is even more treasure than he thought. The more I have read the bible, the more I have come to realise that there are treasures hidden both on the lines and between the lines. I only find that treasure if I take the time to look and the Holy Spirit to shine a light on the hidden gems within. This year I have read through the bible in a year on the Bible App using a plan put together by the Bible Project. The Bible Project provide short videos from which I have learned new things that brought what I was reading to life. Next year, I plan to read

through the New Testament in a year. That will allow me to dig even deeper.

Would you like to join me on a treasure hunt every day next year? If you are interested, let me know, and I can point out a field to buy and which shovel to use. Contact me on WhatsApp (07990 560 363) or email (willporter2167@gmail.com).

Will Porter

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

Hello to our friends at St John's Church

The people of Ukraine are now going into their third winter under bombardment. We are so grateful to everyone who has been donating items for them since February 2022. We have now received a list of items needed for Christmas. Anything donated before the end of November will be delivered to the people of Ukraine who cannot leave the country or to the refugees in Poland. We know there are many calls on your time and money and we are so grateful for everything received. If you can please donate: Chocolate tubs: e.g. Celebration, Heroes, Quality Street, Biscuit selection boxes, Assorted roast nuts, seeds etc., Hot Chocolate, instant coffee, tea bags, Sugar, Soup packets, Tins of fruit and vegetables, Custard, Long life baked goods, Childrens' Toys (new only). Please put them in the box marked Ukraine at the front of church.

I also take cheques made payable to Shelly Wieczorek or you can donate money online at the "White Eagle Club Ukraine Appeal" on Facebook, Instagram or X.

Thank you again. **Shelly Wierzorek, Coordinator, White Eagle Ukraine Appeal**

FOODBANK

It was interesting to hear some short testimonies from users of the Foodbank, The Pantries and the Refugee Network at the Good Company's Carol Service. The Ukranian choir entertained us with a couple of beautiful carols and we were accompanied for the congregational carols by a small brass band. Jonathan, founder of the Foodbank in Epsom & Ewell told us about his first experience in a panto last weekend. He felt very exposed by the stage lights and was worried about forgetting his lines. He compared this to the feelings of clients who need our Foodbank's help. For the period of their crisis they can feel marginalised but also very exposed. The worry involved in maintaining a home, feeding and clothing their families at this time can leave them exhausted and isolated in communities. The Christmas story recounts how the marginalised shepherds were the first to be invited to see a very special baby and how the young family relied on others to support them at this vulnerable stage in their lives. Thank you for supporting the Foodbank's Christmas campaign, please consider trying to help maintain the regular stocks as you rush around to prepare for your own Christmas celebrations.

This week they need:- Cooking Sauces, Beans/Pasta with Meat, Packet Soup, Noodles, Ketchup/ Brown Sauce/Mayonnaise, Marmalade/Honey/Chocolate Spread, Sugar (500g), Rice Pudding, Chocolate Biscuit Bars, Long life Sponge puddings, Crisps, Deodorant (Female), Shaving Foam, Tampons.

They are desperate for:- Loo Roll, Washing Up Liquid, Powdered Milk, Long life Juice, Squash.

Thank you for all your support.

The Foodbank Team

Today's Services

Our Advent series, 'Journeying With Luke', continues this week with 'A Time for Renewal'. We will be looking at two of Jesus' parables that address things that are lost...a sheep and a coin, and the celebrations that result when those things are found. Advent is New Year as far as the church calendar is concerned, so now is a good time to rediscover joy in our relationship with Jesus that will send us refreshed and renewed into the next twelve months. The 9.30am service includes Prayers for Healing and the 11am service is Communion.

Readings

Ezekiel 34:11-15

Maggie Savill

¹¹“For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. ¹²As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. ¹⁴I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will tend my sheep and make them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Luke 15:1-10

15 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering round to hear Jesus. ²But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, ‘This man welcomes sinners, and eats with them.’ ³Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴‘Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.” ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who do not need to repent. ⁸‘Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.” ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.’

Collect

Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as Judge and Saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God.

Intercessor

Chris Redrup

Music 9.30am

1. Joy to the World (MP 393)
2. Rejoice, the Lord is King! (MP 575)
3. Tell out my soul (MP 631)
4. *During communion:* Father we love you (MP 142)
5. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation (MP 564)

Music 11am

1. Shout to the Lord
2. Be Still for the Presence of the Lord
3. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
4. Cornerstone

Book of Remembrance

Hilary Jane Runnalls