



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter 5th January 2025 – Second Sunday of Christmas

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

Happy New Year to everyone in the St John's extended family! I hope you had a peaceful and enjoyable time over Christmas with friends and family. After a busy but wonderful Christmas period, Anne and I spent a few days on the Cornish coast which was beautiful if blustery. As we head into this new year, I'm looking forward to all that God has in store for us. As He says to the prophet Jeremiah, 'I know the plans I have for you...plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' As Christians, we are always people of hope, people who carry the Good News of Jesus to the world around us. My New Year's resolution on behalf of all of us is that we would grow in faith, joy and love in 2025.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

ZOOM

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

Tim Rogers

UPCOMING SERVICE TIMES

Sunday January 5 and thereafter: normal service times at 9.30am (Communion) and 11am (Worship for Everyone)

CALLING ALL LITTER PICKERS

On Saturday January 25th at 10.30am, a group of us under the expert direction of Julian Morris, will spend an hour picking up litter in our local neighborhood. This is a community service and hopefully a bit of fun too! Litter pickers and high viz jackets will be provided, along with bags. Anyone interested please speak to Rev. Geoff.

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

Thanks to everyone at St John's who donated chocolates and biscuits etc. for the Christmas appeal. We were overwhelmed with your generosity! It is all on its way to Ukraine now. The White Eagle Club will continue to collect donations for:

Plasters, bandages, Pasta, rice, baby food, nappies and wipes, batteries, detergent, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, shower gel, hand wash and soaps, deodorant, sanitary pads, hand wipes, hand sanitizer, hand cream.

Please put them in the box marked Ukraine at the front of the church.

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

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

FOODBANK

While we are all trying to remember to write 2025 on letters etc. let's look at some figures the Good Company (including Foodbank) has sent us. In 2024 8,000 people were helped with food essentials and additional support (that's a 26% reduction in frequent users) ; 470 people were helped by their Support Work resulting in £210,000 financial gains for clients; 430 people were involved in participation activities; 148 people were supported at the Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network; 300 people benefitted from energy saving advice and appliances; 5,500 Pantry member shopping visits made; £13,000 saved by members on the Christmas Savings Scheme . There is still a need out there but congratulations and thanks to everyone concerned who has contributed to their mission to lead the community towards a poverty-free future whilst supporting those who need help.

So taking up the new challenges of 2025 please can we donate any of the following items to help out with stocks; - Cooking Sauces, Tinned meat, Tinned vegetables, Tinned potatoes, Beans/Pasta with Meat, Noodles, Instant Mash, Powdered Milk, Squash, Long life Juice, Long life Milk, Ketchup/Brown Sauce/Mayonnaise, Jam/Marmalade/Honey/Chocolate Spread/Peanut Butter, Sugar (500gr), Rice Pudding, Custard, Tinned Fruit, Long life Sponge puddings, Deodorant (Male/Female), Adult Toothpaste, Loo Rolls, Shaving Foam, Sanitary Towels, Tampons, Washing Up Liquid, Washing Powder. Thank you.

The Foodbank Team

Today's Services

This Sunday is Epiphany Eve, otherwise known as Twelfth Night, traditionally the time when our Christmas decorations are taken down and retired to the loft for another year. Epiphany is always on January 6th, but we will celebrate it on Sunday. Epiphany literally means revelation or manifestation, and in our church calendar it is usually associated with the coming of the Magi (Wise Men) whose visit to Jesus represents the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles (non-Jews). The Magi came searching for Jesus after they had seen and interpreted the sign of a new star rising in the sky, believing it would lead them to a King. We may already feel we have found King Jesus, but there is always more to discover about him and about life with him. At the start of this New Year, let's pray that our journey with Jesus will be marked by fresh experiences and inspiring revelation.

Readings

Psalm 27:1-6

Ian Hargrave

¹The LORD is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? ²When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. ³Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. ⁴One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. ⁵For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. ⁶Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

Matthew 2:1-12

²After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.' ³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵'In Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”' ⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.' ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Collect

God our Father, in love you sent your Son that the world may have life: lead us to seek him among the outcast and to find him in those in need, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Music 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 11am

1. Cornerstone
2. King of Kings
3. As the Deer
4. Living Hope

Book of Remembrance
Dora Blake
Beatrice Marie Ernstzen