



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

16th February 2025 – Third Sunday Before Lent

A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

Last Sunday's Valentine celebration with the Brownies and Guides was a real treat. The girls helped as welcomers, handed out painted pebbles to the congregation, led the prayers and paraded their flags. They also enthusiastically joined in with the Good Samaritan sketch. It was a wonderful opportunity to talk about 'true love' being God's love and the importance of caring for each other. Talking of which, as a church family we are generally very good at looking out for one another. But sometimes people and situations can be overlooked, so do let us know if you feel that someone needs help (maybe you!) - perhaps a listening ear or prayer support. Finally, if you're reading this before the weekend, do please consider joining us in church on Saturday for our Church Development morning. We will begin at 9.15am with coffee and croissants and finish by 12.30pm. It's your chance to have your say on our future.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT MORNING

Many of you will have participated in our planning morning two years ago which resulted in 'The Way Forward' document that has guided our development in the intervening period. We plan to hold another session in church on SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15 from 9.15am to 12.30pm. This will be an informal and hopefully enjoyable event that will help set our direction for the next couple of years. Please do mark this on your calendar and make it a priority to attend if you possibly can.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

ZOOM

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

Tim Rogers

LITTER PICKING CREW

Following our trial session a couple of weeks ago, we plan to set up a regular monthly schedule for litter picking around the parish on a Saturday morning. These sessions will begin at 10.30am and last for an hour or so. The upcoming dates are: March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28. Please sign up for the dates you can manage on the sheet in the welcome area. This is also a great opportunity to invite a friend or neighbour to join us...but if you do this, please let me know so that we have sufficient equipment.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

ST JOHN'S QUIZ NIGHT – Saturday, March 1 (Doors at 7pm for a 7.30pm start)

Time to gather into teams once more and strive to assume the mantle of St John's Quiz champions. As usual, we need teams of six. Sign-up sheet is on the Welcome Desk, or send your team to office@stjohnsstoneleigh.org.uk. If you don't have a team, sign up anyway and we'll endeavour to team you up with others. Entry is £5/person and we will take payment on the night. Bring your own food

and drink. (We'll also have wine and soft drinks available for a donation). Raffle prizes too!

Rev. Geoff Andrew

ESSENTIAL WORKS – SES WATER – WEDNESDAY 19th and THURSDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2025

Partial road closure on Stoneleigh Park Road. This means vehicles can access Stoneleigh Park Road from Kingston Road but not exit onto Kingston Road.

ECO CHURCH

The church Land Management Plan and Environmental Policy were recently finalised by the Eco Church Group. Please do review these important documents. They are available to look at on the Eco Church display at the back of church. Please also take a **FREE** Wild About Garden Booklet Boxed Set.

The Creation Care Household Award scheme aims to encourage households to make changes to care for God's earth. It covers seven areas of household life such as home, garden, travel and food. You can enter the scheme by completing an online questionnaire that will tell you how well your household is doing in each category and hopefully give you ideas for ways in which your household might improve. You can link your household to St John's church, so we can support and provide ideas for next steps. Once you reach an award level, you can receive a certificate that you may, if you so wish, have presented to you by Geoff during one of our services. Please take an introductory leaflet about the scheme for further information and for instructions on how you participate.

Roger Blake

PRAYER GROUP – THURSDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2025

Prayer helps us grow closer to God, becoming more aware of His constant presence with us. Experiencing God right here and right now leads to awe, which strengthens our faith and encourages us to trust God in deeper ways. Ultimately, prayer leads us to worship.

Please join us every 4th Thursday between 3.30 and 4.30 in the chapel for a time of worshipful prayer.

Steve Simper

LENT COURSE

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 5th, and our Sermon Series, Lentwise, commences on Sunday March 9th for five weeks up to Easter. Please consider joining out mid-week Lent Course which will follow the themes of the Sermon Series. Each session will last for approximately 60 to 90 minutes and you can join either the day session on a Tuesday or the evening session on a Wednesday. Sign-up sheets on the Welcome Desk or email the office.

Rev. Geoff Andrew

CALLING ALL LANDLORDS

Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network are desperate to find landlords in the area to talk to about renting to a Ukrainian family. EERN have a number of families in Epsom & Ewell looking to rent, the families are working and can afford market rent and EERN will offer full support to landlords and tenants. Please get in touch to receive the list of families currently looking or to get an answer to any questions you may have. jo@goodcompny.org.uk. Tel : 07775 798 047.

UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

The White Eagle Club are continuing to support the people of Ukraine and the refugees in Poland who are affected by the Russian invasion.

Thank you to everyone at St John's Church who are supporting us. We are still collecting the following:

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 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 .

Time for crazy idea number two! Think of a colour and then challenge yourself to find items in packaging of that colour from the lists below. Remember though, that although these suggestions are a lighthearted way to draw your attention to the Foodbank's wish list, when times are tough, shopping is no game, it becomes a real worry.

This week the Foodbank urgently needs: Pasta Sauce, Cooking Sauces, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Fruit.

They also need the following to maintain a balanced stock: Tinned Spaghetti, Noodles, Instant Mash, Squash, Long life Juice, Powdered Milk, Instant Coffee, Ketchup, Mayonnaise, Brown Sauce, Jam, Marmalade, Chocolate Spread, Peanut Butter, Honey, Sugar (500gr), Custard, Long life Sponge puddings, Savoury Biscuits, Chocolate Biscuit Bars, Deodorant (Male/Female), Shaving Foam, Shampoo & Conditioner, Toilet rolls, Nappies size 6+, Washing Up Liquid. Thank you for your support. **The Foodbank Team**

Sunday's Services

Today's reading comes from one of St Paul's early letters, to the Galatians. The church there had been established by Paul, but in his absence they had had their heads turned by those who wanted to replace the love and grace-based relationship with Jesus with a return to Jewish law. Not surprisingly, Paul is aghast, and this letter is an impassioned plea to get them back on the right track. Why would anyone want to substitute their new-found freedom in Christ for a return to slavery under the law? Indeed. Why do any of us slip back into old ways once we've known the love of Jesus?

Readings

Galatians 4:8-20

⁸ Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. ⁹ But now that you know God – or rather are known by God – how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? ¹⁰ You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you. ¹² I plead with you, brothers and sisters, become like me, for I became like you. You did me no wrong. ¹³ As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you, ¹⁴ and even though my illness was a trial to you, you did not treat me with contempt or scorn. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself. ¹⁵ Where, then, is your blessing of me now? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷ Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may have zeal for them. ¹⁸ It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always, not just when I am with you. ¹⁹ My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, ²⁰ how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!

Matthew 5:21-26

Jane Mathews

²¹ 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, "You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment." ²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, "Raca," is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, "You fool!" will be in danger of the fire of hell. ²³ 'Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ 'Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Collect

Eternal God, whose Son went among the crowds and brought healing with his touch: help us to show his love, in your Church as we gather together, and by our lives as they are transformed into the image of Christ our Lord.

Intercessor

Chris Redrup

Music 9.30am

1. All Creatures of our God and King (MP 7)
2. Praise My Soul the King of Heaven (MP 560)
3. I, the Lord of sea and sky (MP 857)
4. *During Communion:* Majesty (MP 454)
5. Thine be the Glory (MP 689)

Music 11am

1. Everlasting God
2. No Longer Slaves
3. Holy Spirit
4. What a Beautiful name

Book of Remembrance
Grace Florence Schofield