



# St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter 9th March 2025 – First Sunday of Lent

## A MESSAGE FROM REV. GEOFF ANDREW

Last Saturday was a very enjoyable one in the social life of St John's, and a successful one too in terms of fundraising. Our thanks go to Steve Simper who has gifted the church the money raised during his 'special birthday' celebration. We also held a quiz on Saturday evening with nearly 100 people in attendance. Between the two events we managed to raise about £1500 which is very welcome as we need to spend quite some money on our central heating boiler! Thanks to everyone who helped out or participated in any way. We are now in the season of Lent, 40 days of penitence and preparation leading up to Easter. It's a time when we traditionally give up something that helps us to draw closer to Jesus. It's not too late to join our midweek Lent course (see details below). And those who come to church for the Lenten services will be able to collect a little box representing 'spiritual essentials' as we think about who Jesus is based on readings in John's gospel. In these unsettling times, let's recall Jesus' words to his disciples: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

## LENT COURSE

Lent began on 5<sup>th</sup> March with Ash Wednesday and our Sermon Series, Lentwise, commences on Sunday March 9<sup>th</sup> for five weeks up to Easter. Please consider joining our 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.

The book we are using for the course is Lentwise by Paula Gooder. You can order this online or ask me and we can source a copy for you. The price on Amazon is £9 (or £6 for Kindle). **Rev. Geoff Andrew**

## ELECTORAL ROLL

As most of you probably know, the Electoral Roll has to be renewed every six years, so even if you are already on the Electoral Roll please fill in a new form. Your envelope can be found at the back of Church. If you don't have an envelope with your name on, please take a blank form. There is a black box at front of Church for your completed forms.

**Sue Pennington**

## CONFIRMATION SERVICE FOR GRAHAM DERBYSHIRE

Graham Derbyshire is being confirmed this Sunday March 9<sup>th</sup> At 6.30pm at St Mary's Cuddington in The Avenue. It would be wonderful to have a good turnout to support Graham so please come if you 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**

## ECO CHURCH

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**

## GREEN CHRISTIAN

The Eco Church Team has signed up St John's to be a Church Member of Green Christian. Since 1982 Green Christian has been helping members to understand and relate our responsibilities to our Faith. They offer insights into ecology and the environment to Christian people and churches. There are magazines and leaflets on the Eco table at the back of church. **Roger Blake**

## PRAYER GROUP

Please join us every 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday between 3.30 and 4.30 in the chapel for a time of worshipful prayer. **Steve Simper**

## 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**

Have you picked up a Lent leaflet for the Good Company - which includes the Foodbank- from the Welcome Desk? Even if you are unable to support the Foodbank with donations your prayers are really needed as they try to support people in financial hardship. We only asked them for 45 leaflets so hope that we do not waste them, 45 people's prayers could make a huge difference.

In February they supported 465 people, 191 of those were children.

This week they need: Cooking Sauces, Tinned Fish, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Spaghetti, Instant Mash, Powdered Milk, Long-life Milk, Tea bags, Instant Coffee, Squash, Long-life Juice, Ketchup/Mayonnaise, Chocolate Spread/Peanut Butter/Honey, Crisps, Sugar (500gr), Custard, Tinned Fruit, Long life Sponge puddings, Savoury Biscuits, Chocolate Biscuit Bars, Deodorant (Male/Female), Shower Gel, Shampoo & Conditioner, Adult Toothpaste, Washing Up Liquid, Washing Powder. Thank you for your support.

***The Foodbank Team***

### **Sunday's Services**

In this first Sunday of Lent, our theme is Finding Direction. Thomas' despairing question to Jesus – "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" – was answered by Jesus with one of his most famous pronouncements: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." What does it mean for us to head in the direction of Jesus? Those who come to one of our services on Sunday will receive a little compass as a memory aid. The 9.30am service is a Prayers for Healing service and there is Communion at 11am.

### **Readings**

**Isaiah 35:3-10**

***Maggie Savill***

<sup>3</sup>Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way;  
<sup>4</sup>say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.'  
<sup>5</sup>Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.  
<sup>6</sup>Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.  
<sup>7</sup>The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.  
<sup>8</sup>And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it.  
<sup>9</sup>No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there,  
<sup>10</sup>and those the LORD has rescued

will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

### **John 14:1-7**

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.  
<sup>2</sup>My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?  
<sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.  
<sup>4</sup>You know the way to the place where I am going.'  
<sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'  
<sup>6</sup>Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.  
<sup>7</sup>If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.'

### **Collect**

Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Music 9.30am**

1. He who would valiant be (MP 224)
2. I, the Lord of sea and sky (MP 857)
3. Be thou my vision (MP 51) vs 1,2,4,5
4. *During communion:* As the Deer (MP 37)
5. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation (MP 564)

### **Music 11am**

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

### **Intercessor**

***Ken Mussell***

**From our Book of Remembrance**

Francis John Redrup