



# Welcome to the 'virtual' Stoneleigh Methodist Church

## Sunday 13 September 2020

**10:30am: Morning Worship**

### Prayers

**Please pray** for Emma, our Stewards; for others within the Church and beyond, and for the continued health of our key workers and all the National Health Service, on whom we depend so much now, and at all times.

Please pray also for those of our Church family who are unwell or finding their mobility limited and consider whether they might welcome a call from friends.

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 11:28-29*

### Notices

**Evening Service** I am considering starting an evening service via Zoom from Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September. Confirmation of the service and access will be passed on in readiness next week. The service will last no more than 40 minutes and I hope most of you, if not all, will be able to join in weekly. *Emma*

**Church Centre reopening.** Enquiries for access to the Centre continue, so I'd like to update everyone on the current position (post Boris!). The NHS Test & Trace system requires the Church to record all people on the premises throughout the day/week. So, until this restriction is lifted, access into the Centre for whatever reason is 'pre-booked' only – **no exceptions**. Booking is through Denise or me, and compliance with Test & Trace is a condition (in our Risk Assessment) of being able to access even part of our building and is, sadly, now the law.

Until yesterday it seemed it could be a few months yet before any groups can start meeting again but, better safe than sorry, I guess. Meanwhile we will continue to work with those who are making plans – including for Worship which is, in theory, possible - more news as soon as we have it – we are working on it! And do read the weekly NewsSheet, through which we will try and keep the Church Family informed. Until then, please be patient, keep safe, and keep in touch - good communication between all parties is a fundamental and required part of our Covid Risk Assessment. *Robin*

**CAP Money course.** Online of course (Zoom) and run by the Vineyard Church in Epsom. Starting next week, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm, or Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am, both 1½ hours for 3 weeks during September. You can see more details and sign up at [epsomvineyard.org/cap](https://epsomvineyard.org/cap) – this is a free course to help you manage your money better and learn to budget, save, and spend well.

# Around the Trolley

**Foodbank** – the list of ‘wants’ from [Foodbank](#) now has more ‘Urgent’ items than non-urgent on it. If you can help with Sponge puddings, treats/chocolate for children, instant mash, powdered milk, sugar (500g bags) jam, tea bags, coffee, custard, washing up liquid or tinned meat, the depot behind West Ewell Primary School is open weekdays, 9:00am to 2:00pm.

**Circuit Zoom Service – thoughts thereon.** I was excited about seeing people on the screen from around the Circuit, which has been my experience of other Zoom meetings, but this was different I noticed it was called a ‘Webinar’! However, it was good to see Emma, Paul and the others who were taking part, and well done for trying something new. Perhaps we could have a Circuit ‘Hello Zoom’ and chat to each other at another date. I am thankful that we have clever people who can do all the tech stuff. *Jeananne*

**Zoom – NO, PLEASE don’t skip this.** Some of us (including our own household) don’t use Zoom on a computer or mobile phone. But did you know you can listen in to Zoom meetings (and those Zoom webinars like the recent Circuit meeting) by landline telephone. It’s as easy as dialling a local number, tapping in a code – and off you go. No need to speak – just listen.

I’ll take you through it step by step next week when Emma gives us the details for her Sunday evening service, and you can give it a try. *Robin*

**I’ve had this picture for a few weeks now–** can’t think of any context, but I thought it needed publication!



**And, finally,** the E16 bus now runs on Saturdays again.



## Contact Details

**Postal Address:** 1 Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh, Epsom KT19 0RT

**Contact:** Jeananne (07729 028850) - [contact@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:contact@stoneleighmethodist.church)

**All items for future NewsSheets – to** [news@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:news@stoneleighmethodist.church) or phone 020 8393 2155

**Christ Church with St Philip,** 10:00am - [facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchsaintphilip).

**Surbiton Hill Methodist Church,** 10:30am Sunday at [shmc.online.church](https://www.shmc.online.church). (re-opening 6<sup>th</sup> September as well.)

**The Methodist Church** is offering ‘Dial-a Prayer’ free of charge, updated every Thursday afternoon, on 0808 281 2514. There’s also weekly news, again free, on 0808 281 2478.

**The Ruxley/Stoneleigh Thursday Morning prayer** by Zoom and it is open to all. Email to [publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk](mailto:publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk) by Tuesday for details and a copy of the liturgy too.

**NEW - Methodist Church Year of Prayer** on Tuesdays at 12:45pm – a 15 minute Service on Zoom and Facebook Live – full details on <https://www.methodist.org.uk/yearofprayer/>

## **Sunday 13 September 2020 – Service by the Rev Emma Cusack**

### **Opening Prayer**

We come to the God who knows us,  
to the God who created our being,  
to the God who knows our frailty,  
to the God who loves and cherishes us beyond measure.  
Come as you are and worship God.

### **A moment of silence**

### **Scripture Reading: Matthew 18:21-35**

#### **The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant**

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” 22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

## Prayer of Confession

Forgiving God,  
more willing to forgive than often we are to confess,  
help us to see our failings,  
to see where we fall short,  
to see where we deceive ourselves,  
where we close our eyes and ears  
to the ripples of our wrongdoing.  
May we breathe in the reality of our actions,  
the need to change, the depth of our unworthiness.  
We come before you, seeking forgiveness. (keep silence)  
Now let us breathe in the power of your forgiveness,  
and breathe out the need to live and love  
in the shadow of your forgiveness of us,  
that we may forgive as you have forgiven us. **Amen.**

## Reflection

What Jesus has just said (see last week) gives rise to Peter's question: How often should I forgive the one who sins against me? There should be a limit, so Peter pitches 'seven times' – which sounds generous and is more than suggested by contemporary rabbis who thought three would be enough. But Jesus tells him to stop counting. Forgiveness is a lifestyle not an equation.

The numbers plunge us into the Old Testament where we come face to face with the logic of Jesus' response. Peter's number echoes the seven-fold vengeance threatened to those who harm Cain. Jesus' seventy times seven echoes the Jubilee at the heart of Old Testament life. Those living the Jubilee are perpetually forgiving.

To illustrate this, Jesus tells a parable that comes from the everyday world of life in the empire – the very world that the Jubilee was meant to regulate. It is a story at once funny and serious. The amounts owed make the story fantastical and amusing. The attitude of the slave is chilling as we realise Jesus is talking about Peter – and us.

A talent was the largest unit of currency (actually a measure of weight, about 30kg, usually of silver) worth 6,000 denarii. A denarius was a good day's wage for a labourer. Myria (10,000, from where we get the word 'myriad') was the biggest number in Greek. So here Jesus is saying that this slave owed the biggest number of the largest unit of currency to his master. We might say that he owed zillions!

Unable to pay such a debt, the slave throws himself on his master's mercy. The master's heart goes out to him ('took pity', v.27, is the same term that is used of Jesus in 9.36) and he writes off the entire amount. Wow! Having experienced such grace, the slave then demands that a colleague pay back the few pounds he owes him and throws him in jail when he doesn't.

Don't we cheer when the first slave gets his comeuppance! Yet, like Nathan's parable of the poor man's lamb (2 Samuel 12), we are cheering our own downfall. This, says Jesus, is the outcome of Peter's calculus. The parable serves to illustrate the foundational principle of relationships among disciples – namely that they are built on perpetual forgiveness.

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Jesus' parables inspire us to pray for those who forgive us,  
for big things and small...

for those who do not forgive, no matter what...

for those who do not know how to forgive...

for those who do not want to forgive...

for those who have not been forgiven.

God of forgiveness, for them all, we pray. **Amen.**

### **Closing Prayer and Blessing**

Into a world of noise and confusion;

into a world that bewilders and even bemuses us at times;

into a world of delight and regret;

into a world of hope and fear;

into a world that is ever changing,

we go with the message of an unchanging God

who gave his all, that we might live life to the best of our ability.

God of all, go with us and within us,

this and every day. **Amen.**

May the blessing of God Almighty,

Father, Son and the Holy Spirit

be with you now and for ever. **Amen**

*© All prayers are from Rootsontheweb*

*© Reflection from Rootsontheweb*