



LINK



STONELEIGH METHODIST CHURCH

Minister: Revd. Emma Cusack Fd.A; DipHE

October November 2020



*Part of the Revelation Tree of Life Tapestry,
by Jacqui Parkinson*

Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh,
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www.stoneleighmethodist.church



Jessica Joyce Lawrence



*Brenda Petty
on her 100th Birthday
See page 7 for a letter from
Brenda's daughter Linda*



*A Cat, painted by Tony,
from Conquest Art.
For more news see page
6*

27th July was the first anniversary for Louisa and Ali,



*And here is a
photo of their
daughter, Poppy,
at 8 weeks.
Congratulations to
them all.*



Dear Friends,

In all things, we are thankful to God and our Saviour Jesus Christ who continues to be our provider, deliverer, sustainer and fountain of our faith.

The words of 'The Serenity Prayer', written by the American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, has come to mind so profoundly since the lockdown, and I say since the lockdown as it is real for so many of us, having some time on our hands now to revisit or do the things we have put aside for a long time.



The words of the prayer: "GOD, grant me the SERENITY to accept the things I cannot change, COURAGE to change the things I can and WISDOM to know the difference."

I came across this prayer during my primary school days when I went for a sleepover and in the morning when the whole family woke up, we had a devotional time of prayer and finishing off the host reached from the wall this prayer and asked us all to read together.

Over the years and until now, when I come across this prayer in people's homes, Christian book shops, the market etc I pause to reflect on the key words in the prayer – serenity, courage, and wisdom.

I find it helpful to reflect on it as a prayer for unlimited grace to endure whatever might be going on, knowing it will pass. I warm to it as a prayer for deeper faith and to be assured that I have a God to go to and ask for his grace to lead.

May the words of the serenity prayer echo loud in your ear as it is in mine; may it be meaningful to you as it is to me.

Whenever I come into God's presence and pray this prayer, it challenges me because it questions my sincerity of wanting to ask God's help.

Thinking of the "new normal" and the challenges it brings to us, how honest are we to say GOD, grant me the SERENITY to accept the things I cannot change, COURAGE to change the things I can and WISDOM to know the difference. May the Peace of the Lord be with you.

Emma

Tree of Life & Open Heaven.

Some of you may remember the 'Threads through Revelation' exhibition at Guildford Cathedral three years ago. Jacqui has since worked on another set of pieces called 'Tree of Life'



There are three stitched panels that take you on a journey and each have a tree at their centre. Photos of the three panels and the sculpture are on the back cover, pages 19 and 20. The first panel is from The Garden of Eden and is the journey away from the tree of life. The second one tells the Easter Story with the tree of life at its centre - the tree on which Jesus died. The final panel depicts the journey towards the eternal tree of life that has

fruit all year round and will bring healing to the nations. The photo is part of the Revelation tapestry, an angel and the 10,000 witnesses praising God.

Open Heaven is a sculpture, a plaster cast of a young man on the ladder between Heaven and Earth – bringing thoughts of Jesus opening the way for us to see God. It is profoundly moving.

Vivienne and Jeananne

Church Centre reopening. Enquiries for access to the Centre are increasing, so I'd like to update everyone on the current position. The NHS Test & Trace system requires the Church to record all people on the premises throughout the day/week. So, at the moment, access into the Centre is 'pre-booked' only Speak to Robin or Denise. We are working on one group in the building at a time – that will be extended when we have agreed with groups who will clean after their use. More news as soon as we have it – Catherine and Robin are working on it!

Ruxley's Garden of Reflection.

If you have walked past Ruxley Church, or stood by the bus stop recently, you will have noticed a change. During August we have been planting, and now there is a beautiful space for you to sit in and enjoy.

We are grateful to all of you who helped with our fund-raising which all started in 2018 with our Ruxley Challenge Walk. The garden is now a reality, with just a few more plants to come. If you've been wondering what the patterned area of paving in the other patio is all about – it's a labyrinth. More information will be available in the garden fairly soon to explain how to use it. The plants will provide all year-round interest; some are scented, some are lovely to touch, there are evergreens for structure and climbers to cloak the fences. We hope you will enjoy using this space.

The three pillars are ready for commemorative plaques to be installed. This will complete our aim of having a special place to come and reflect on the loss of our loved ones, but also to remember all the happiness they have brought in our lives, knowing they will never be forgotten.

The garden was the main stage of our Memorial Project – we started in November 2017 and, two and a half years later, the Planting of the Garden of Reflection is completed. Yes, it may have taken a while but “all good things come to they who wait!” If you would like to know more, contact us on office@ruxley-church.org.uk *Jenny Meineck on behalf of Ruxley Church*

Conquest Art.

Along with everything else CA groups were unable to meet during the lock down period leaving some of our members isolated from their friends and their art. In the beginning many, including myself, intended to use the time productively but, as I'm sure you have experienced, as time went on the motivation grew less. At Stoneleigh we have kept in touch with our members, encouraging them to keep painting and one or two of their pictures were included in a news letter produced by one of the Trustees and a volunteer in the summer, to try and keep everyone connected. This picture (page 2), painted by Tony, was actually a 'Painting by Numbers' set but Tony really enjoyed painting it and was very happy with the end result and that's the whole premise of Conquest Art, the pleasure of creating and the feeling of achievement.

A few groups have been running Zoom meetings, and the Trustees have continued to meet monthly by Zoom, a new experience for me.

At Stoneleigh we had hoped to open up again early in September but, having got everything in place to meet the Church's risk assessment, the Prime Minister pulled the rug from under us by bringing in the rule of six so, once again we are waiting to see what happens next.

Now that the CA co-ordinator Tina is back, albeit working very limited hours, we are able to get things moving a little and we are hoping to hold the 'Lady Shepperd Awards' (which would have taken place at our annual meeting) online, we hope this will get members painting again.

Sadly we have not been able to hold our annual exhibition or produce our calendars or Christmas cards this year but we hope that the exhibition will take place in the spring of 2021, but who knows?

Don't forget that you can keep up with Conquest Art on our website. www.conquestart.org.

Lesley

Our Congratulations to Beryl Petty who celebrated her 100th birthday over the summer. Her daughter, Linda, wrote to us:

"Having read in the previous magazine, which we still receive regularly from Stoneleigh, that Stan Shepherd had attained his 100th birthday, I wonder how many of your congregational members will remember my mother, Beryl Petty, who has also just reached the same milestone?



We, as a family, had a long association with Stoneleigh Methodist: My mother was one of the founder members of the Young Wives' Group, and then went on to become Brown Owl of what was then the 2nd Stoneleigh Brownie pack; my sister Jackie and I were both members of the Brownies and Guides – I gained my Queen's Guide badge with the help of 'Captain' Valerie Wycherley – later becoming a member of the Youth Club and performed in various Christmas pantos with Pat Maskell, Janet Burge and others!

Sadly, when my father was transferred from the bank in London to Bradford, we moved up North, but my mother still continued to play an important part in the life of their village and church there.

Retirement saw them moving back down south to Somerset, where my mother still lives in her own home. I have fairly recently come down to give her a hand after my own husband died of Motor Neurone Disease; my father passed away and my sister Jackie died of cancer 3 years ago. Of course, with Lockdown, I have stayed put down here and we have been very grateful to the local church for putting Sunday services on to YouTube – one of the wonders of modern technology much appreciated by my mother!

So, for her birthday, although our original plans were somewhat scuppered by the pandemic, I was still able to organise a wee local celebration. We couldn't have a fly past like Captain Tom did, but I organised a 'walk past' with socially-distanced cake and Prosecco for all passers-by!

My mother even made it on to BBC Radio Bristol in the morning and a short clip on Points West on TV that night!

All in all a very memorable day for a very deserving lady, who still has very happy memories of our time in Stoneleigh.

Linda Wood (nee Petty)

A litany prepared by Rev Michaela Youngson (Chair of the London Methodist District)

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be,
Day followed night, every week had a Sunday and that was the day for church

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be.

We made our plans, held our meetings, kept the roof on the church and the show on the road

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We thought we knew how the world was meant to be.

We would see colleagues, friends, loved ones again, and we would embrace, laugh and share stories as we always have.

How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

And now we know something new,

We know that the world is not ours to control, and that our plans are confounded by the smallest microbe.

And now we know something new,

We know that the church is not committee, agendas and buildings, It is in homes, streets, hospitals, throughout the land.

God is teaching us a new song for a new land,

And now we know something new,

We only have today with those we love, today is the day To say 'I love you, to mend an argument, to hold on tight

God is teaching us a new song for a new land



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Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the
Lord!

Unnumbered blessings give my spirit
voice;

Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart
rejoice.

*The Magnificat,
adapted by Timothy Dudley-Smith*

If you would like an item to be in
'The Link' please send it to

Vivienne Ridgway
vivienne@ridgworld.com

Articles for inclusion in the next LINK should
be with Vivienne by November 10th

*The right to edit or omit articles is reserved to
SMC, The Minister and Stewards*

*The views expressed in this magazine are not
necessarily those of SMC as a whole*

Our Worshipping Community

As lockdown continues, I know we're all missing the opportunity to worship as a body.

Circuit have agreed that their Churches **may** reopen for Worship on Sunday 1st November, and it is now up to Church Council to decide when we should have the first service.

Meanwhile many continue to worship, joining in online. Do remember that you can join Zoom services on the phone – sounds weird, but better than no contact!

This is the process:

1. On your home phone, dial the number you're given
2. listen to the announcement and enter the meeting ID, then # (hash);
3. after the next announcement, press # again.

And that's it. You should be connected and just need to listen. Hang up when the service finishes, or when you want to leave.

Evening Service

A new opportunity: Emma presented the first evening service via Zoom on Sunday 20th September at 6:30pm.

She hopes most of you, if not all, will be able to join in weekly. Details will be on the news sheet.



Other suggested Links:

<https://shmc.online.church/> - Surbiton Hill Methodist Church

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/christchurchsaintphilip/events/>

any links to Richard's services are printed in the news sheet.

<https://gatewayleeds.net/> - Gateway church in Leeds

<https://www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk/whats-going-on/sunday-services/>
Tidenham Parish Church - over the river from Chepstow

Please let me know of other churches and the links to their services so we can share.

Church Cleaning – many thanks to our gallant cleaning crew who bravely donned gloves and masks to tackle the accumulations of dust, cobwebs and general dirt that has settled over the past five months or so. Our thanks to Robin for keeping the building going over the last few months.

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

Monday Night Group

We have been meeting on Zoom which has been a success. Richard introduced us to a series on Nehemiah from New Wine (an Anglican version of Spring Harvest), and The Bishop of Lancaster, Jill Duff, had produced three videos on how Nehemiah returned from exile to mastermind rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. She was inspiring and talked to us about dealing with opposition, and not wasting our time focusing on the negativity which comes in all churches.



Nehemiah had to counteract all the doom-mongers seven times; each time more serious than the last. At the end of one of the sessions Richard posed the question to us “What are you weary of?” in and around our church life. I was worried about how churches could go on with few members and limited resources. He turned it back to me and said I should take it to God.

Later that evening, whilst pondering and praying, an idea came to me; to be like Nehemiah and pray boldly, asking boldly, and do it twice a day up in the church carpark.

So, I have done it for three weeks, up to now, and it has made me really focus on praying for the new team, the Stewards and Emma, plus all our congregation. To be expectant for an answer for us going forward and for unity of purpose and direction. So, I am asking for you all to pray Nehemiah's prayer every day and really get behind our new team, so they know we are behind them and supporting them.

Here is the Prayer from Nehemiah: Chapter 1 adapted by me for us as a church and a community.

Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you night and day for you, for your servants, the people of this church, and community.

Verse 7/8 I adapted. This next section I used for asking for wisdom, unity and direction and blessing to be on our new team, and to ask for forgiveness if we have let negativity stop us from being hopeful and expectant that we can find a way to be a blessing for our community here in Stoneleigh. What I prayed for changed some days, so you can make it really personal.

I prayed that:

our doors would open and people would return, and remembered that God said to Moses that he would gather people from the farthest horizon, remember ever hopeful, to the place he had chosen as a dwelling place for His Name, Stoneleigh Methodist Church!



These are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. Lord let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayers of your servants who delight in revering your name, here in this church, and in this community.

Give us success by hearing our prayers and may we always trust and follow your purposes, your direction, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Jeananne

Summer Term activities from the Scouts, Cubs & Beavers:

3rd Stoneleigh Scouts, whilst very keen to return to normal scouting as soon as possible, have continued their 'virtual scouting' with online meetings using Zoom each week.

All sections have had fun and productive evenings, and all Leaders are now exhausted and grateful for the summer break. Here is a flavour of some of the activities each section has completed.

Beavers have played a lot of games, including zoom charades, guess who and bingo. The children's favourite game was the Scavenger hunt where they had to run around their home collecting certain items as quickly as possible. They have had two 'sleepovers', one with a VE day theme where the children had activities to complete such as baking and word searches relating to VE day.

The second sleepover had a 'movie' theme where the children had to decorate their sleepover location in a movie theme. We had Star Wars, Harry Potter and Mickey Mouse. The Beavers' biggest project has been working with the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank with the children designing posters to ask for donations and then popping a box outside their house to receive items. It has been



very successful, and we were given lovely food and toiletry donations as well as cash so we could buy lots of toothbrushes.

Cubs have been very busy this term and have all worked extremely hard. They made Bug Hotels and grew sunflowers as part of their Gardening Badge. They also made some very beautiful Dream Jars (anyone read or seen *The Big Friendly Giant* will know where the idea came from), some of which were very creative indeed. In addition, they completed the Scientist Badge by performing lots of experiments, with varied results. It was all thoroughly enjoyable but often very messy.

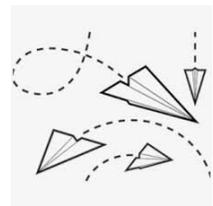


Another Badge they completed out of the weekly sessions was their Home Help Badge. Lots of the Cubs proved very helpful for their parents by cleaning windows, making their beds and washing the dishes.

They also had to make their parents an evening meal, indeed one Cub cooked his parents a steak as part of a 3-course meal!!

All their hard work paid off when we celebrated by having a badge presentation ceremony, when a total of 130 badges were awarded, all delivered to each Cub's house prior to the presentation evening. Holding a badge award ceremony online was challenging; however, all went well, and one Cub even participated whilst on holiday in France.

Scouts This term the Scouts have tried several different challenging activities such as making paper airplanes using several different designs to observe how subtle changes can affect greater distance and more stable flight. The Scouts captured the flights on video and uploaded it to share on the meeting evening. We also ran a photography badge over two weeks showing the Scouts how the use of settings such



as shutter speeds and aperture can create different effects. Some of the results were very pleasing and have been uploaded onto our Scouts' Facebook page

The Scouts also took part in an online treasure hunt challenge against the Cubs, each section's children guiding their respective Leaders around the local area via a mobile video link to our online Zoom meeting; a kind of 'Challenge Anneka' evening. Amazingly the technology worked very well with no real problems and the Scouts really enjoyed the evening, but it would be unsporting to say who won!

Finally, in the last two weeks the Scouts have been designing their own marble run using cardboard, plastic bottles, newspaper and other recyclable materials to create a gravity maze for a marble to travel along. The winner is the design that can keep the marble moving for the longest time without stopping. Currently it stands at 1 minute 8 seconds with a run that travelled all through the house and into the garden; an amazing construction that must have taken several days to construct.

Other Church Family News:

GDPR changes.

From 1st September Sally will be taking over my role as SMC Data Officer; I would like to thank Sally very much for taking on the role. The Methodist Church has recently reviewed their GDPR procedures and has decided to change the forms that we have previously completed, therefore one of Sally's first tasks will be to ask you all to complete these new 'simpler' forms. With the situation as it is, we are not yet sure when this will be, but Emma and Sally will be working on this from September.

Lesley.

Changes in roles: The 1st of September marked the beginning of the Methodist Church New Year, and on this note I would like to first of all thank Lesley, Denise, Jeananne and Gloria for working with me in the past two years as the Leadership Team. I have valued their support and partnership in leadership. I also want to share that the new Leadership Team - Vivienne, Richard, Marion, Catherine, Debbie, Gloria, Pat (sent apologies) and myself met on Wednesday 2nd October for the first time in the courtyard. May God's spirit continue to guide us all in this New Year. *Emma*

Jeananne has taken on board delivering the news sheet to over a dozen members and other contacts. If anyone would like her to knock on their door, she is very happy to oblige.

Jim's Travels – part 3. Bad news – some weeks back I experienced some pain on the side of my foot so, eventually, saw a GP. She referred me to St Helier and, although the Dermatologist did not think the growth was serious, in view of my past history of melanoma he decided to remove it. This was done on 22nd July and the growth sent for investigation. Then came the bad news- rest the foot as much as possible AND no specific walking for at least four weeks. End of my travels for the time being. *Jim*

Catherine's Wheels Recently a friend bought a bike and encouraged me to get mine into working order. I cycled over to New Malden, this side of the A3. We decided to try the Hogsmill Trail, and we discovered new places including the mosaic under the railway track. We did a lot of stopping and looking at information boards. We ended up beside St John's at Malden and had a very interesting wander around the graveyard, being cool



under the trees. Why is there a brand-new gravestone for a service man killed in World War II?

How is it that these areas have been there for so long and I have never seen them? *Catherine*

Chris sends thanks for all the cards and kind wishes she received during and after her recent hospital stay – all much appreciated.

Margaret & Jack have settled in well to their new home in Worcester Park.



It was Jean's 90th over the summer – congratulations

A New Arrival. On Tuesday, 28th July 2020, Jim became a great grandad for the second time when his grandson Paul (daughter Jackie's son) and his partner Tara had another little boy (7lbs-ish), a brother for Archie

See photos on the inside front cover of other new babies – a grand-daughter for Norma, and a daughter for Paul and Stacie.

Brenda & Ken celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on Thursday 24th September. They'd like you all to know that, because of the Covid restrictions, the face to face celebration had to be limited to close family members only. Congratulations to Brenda & Ken from the whole Church Family.



Whitechapel - don't forget, we're still happy to accept donations of clothing etc – just drop them off in our porch and I'll get them into the trailer after a day or so. *Robin*



Ruxley's Garden of Remembrance

See page 5



A

Open Heaven

Jesus connects earth with Heaven
Sculpture, on display at Guildford Cathedral in August.
See page 4

The Tree of Life: An exhibition by Jacqui Parkinson of three panels

The Tree of Life in Genesis



Jesus Crucified on the Tree

The Tree of Life from Revelation



Photos courtesy of Jeananne