



SORRY – We are closed again due to Covid - *but we are always open on-line*

Welcome to Stoneleigh Methodist Church

Sunday 21st March 2021

10:30am: Morning Worship led by Brenda Cannon

You can join our Service today online or by telephone – details in the Service header

Prayers

Please pray for Brenda preaching here today, for our Stewards, for others within the Church and beyond who continue to work tirelessly for the benefit of all, and for the continued health of the National Health Service staff and all our other key workers. And especially for Emma as she continues her sabbatical. 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.

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:31-32

Lenten Thoughts - Sunday 21st March - Fifth Sunday in Lent

Bible Reading: Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 14:1-11 . . . “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased”. . . “Away from me Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only”

Is there anything that has been tempting you for a while? With lockdown have we been tempted to eat more, drink more, do less and just sit because it is easier than trying to motivate ourselves? Can we put aside our temptations and overcome whatever is preventing us from moving forward.

Hymn: StF 238 - Lead us Heavenly Father, lead us.

Prayer:

Blessed Lord Jesus, you stepped from water to wilderness, from God’s voice to the taunting voice of Satan. In the wilderness of today’s world, we face many enemies, many temptations. Forgive us for succumbing to selfishness, greed, lust, anger, and power. **Lord most high, forgive us, we pray.**

Sometimes difficult times follow fast on the heels of one another and it is hard to keep our focus on you. Forgive us. Help us not to wallow in selfish self-centredness, but to remember your promises and recognise you in those you bring alongside us. **Lord most high, forgive us, we pray.**

Forgive us when our minds fail to focus on you and your Word. Help us to remember that no matter what we are going through, you’ve been there before us. Whether we’re swimming in the warm waters of your love, or journeying through the arid wilderness, help us not to lose sight of your hand guiding us to your rainbow’s end. **Lord most high, forgive us, we pray.**

(©ROOTS for Churches Limited)

What Can I do: Challenge yourself to do something different this week, put the temptation to do nothing behind you. Pray for God’s help to overcome your anxieties and inertia. You can now meet someone for a coffee outside – is there someone who would appreciate some company for a walk.

The following words, written by Richard, are so poignant and are a wonderful description of how many feel from time to time, but there is always hope and strength when we trust in God. Thank you, Richard, for sharing this with us.

(It is not to a tune that we know, so please read it as a prayer.)

How can I sing (God in the darkness)

How can I sing these songs
when inside my heart is torn?

How can I praise Your name
and lift my worship to You?

How can I see You here?

How can I know You near?

How can I see Your face
when all I feel is despair?

*But You're God in the darkness,
You're God when I'm found in the desert.
You're God when I've lost my faith,
and I lift my heart to You
put my trust in You alone.*

When the scars don't heal
and the pain is all too real.
When I feel all alone
and life is getting me down.

You're God in the darkness . . .

When the tears have run out
and my mind is full of doubt,
when my future seems bleak
and I don't know my way.

You're God in the darkness . . .

Notices

Woven – Week 5:

How many stories and lessons and parables are there in the Bible using seeds? I'm sure we didn't think of all of them on Monday. The picture we had to contemplate was a handful of wheat and chaff in a hand. Though there was a lot of chaff in our conversation, we did look at several nuggets of Jesus' teaching in John's gospel. And we were all moved by the singing of 'From Heaven you came'. It's number 272 in Singing the Faith - every verse, nearly every line, includes inspiring thoughts. Do read it and consider it. *Vivienne*

Maundy Thursday

After visiting the Moravians, John Wesley was very struck with their 'love-feast' where the congregation ate, worshipped, and prayed together. The love-feast became a regular part of Methodism in the chapels, providing an opportunity for Christians to get together, share testimony, hear God's Word, pray and praise together. The eating together quite often included a special love feast cake – for which there are several recipes – and a drink of water – no tea or coffee readily available in those days.

As part of our Easter celebrations, we are planning a love feast on Maundy Thursday at 4:00pm. We will meet over 'Zoom' and have fellowship together, worship, and pray and eat. Please have food and drink readily available (just a snack, not a full meal) and meet with the church on Zoom.

Below is just one of the love-feast cake recipes from Yorkshire. This one has been adjusted and tested by Vivienne, so it's not too big, as we can't actually share the cake on the day. It produces a madeira-like cake.

4 oz (100g) plain flour	spoonful of peel
1 tsp baking powder	1 oz (25g) sultanas
1 oz (30g) (a generous 1 oz) butter	1 egg
2 oz (50g) sugar	50ml milk

rub the butter into the flour and baking powder, add the sugar, sultanas and peel.

Beat the egg and add to the dry ingredients.

Beat in the milk till the mixture is a soft consistency,

pour the mixture into the loaf tin (or other suitable dish/bowl/tin),

cook at 180 °C, 350 °F or gas mark 4 for at least 30 mins, then check till knife comes clean.

Enjoy it. *Vivienne*

Around the Trolley

Conquest Art. This week's Conquest Art lockdown paint by numbers picture is by Pete. All these pictures are on the outside Church notice board week by week and are on display in Church ready for our return. *Lesley*



Easter Sunday Communion. Our Easter Sunday Service will be at 10:30am with the Rev Chris Morley, and there will be Communion for ALL Church members who want to take part. The Church will be open for worship, but numbers will be limited to enable social distancing – we are thinking around 30 at the most. So that everyone can take part in Communion, even if you'd rather not come to Church just yet, we will be able to deliver pre-consecrated wafers and red juice which you can use during the on-line Zoom Service, either by computer or telephone. Full details of the 'ways and means' next week – meanwhile, if you know you'd prefer to take Communion at home and haven't already told someone, please let Jeananne know, by Palm Sunday at the latest, so she can add you to the delivery list – her number is below.

Don't forget (please!). As the Church seems ever closer to awakening from its enforced 'slumber', we are talking with the groups that use the Church Centre to agree arrangements for their return to meeting. There is also still some maintenance work to be done to complete the permanent 'streaming' facilities, so please give us a ring if you need to come into the Centre so we can co-ordinate access. Thanks. *Robin & Denise*

Contact Details

Website: - stoneleighmethodist.church

Contact: Jeananne (07729 028850) - contact@stoneleighmethodist.church

All items for future NewsSheets – to news@stoneleighmethodist.church or phone 020 8393 2155

Our weekly News/Service sheet is delivered to every member, and also a YouTube or Zoom Sunday Service is available to those able to receive it, including by telephone. A DVD copy is also available – contact Jeananne.

The Ruxley/Stoneleigh Thursday Morning prayer (10:00am) by Zoom is open to all. It is followed by Chat Time and virtual tea/coffee from 10:45-11:15. Email to publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk by Tuesday for details and a copy of the liturgy too.

Zoom/YouTube details for on-line meetings – Zoom telephone number **020 3481 5240**

Group/Event	Day/Time	Meeting ID	Password	One Click
Lent Group (M)	Monday 8:00pm	882 9496 8024		
Lent Group (W)	Wednesday 3:00pm	818 9255 0864		
Fellowship	Tuesday 3:00pm	880 8308 5350		
Sunday Service (YT)	Sunday 10:30am			
Sunday Service (Zoom)	Sunday 10:30am	874 6773 6490		
Maundy Thursday	Thursday April 1, 4:00pm	874 6773 6490		

Morning Worship – Sunday 21 March, 10:30am

Morning Worship, led by Brenda Cannon

Watch live on YouTube: youtu.be/mbhmz5czarI or join on Zoom: bit.ly/2J5jvY8

To join the Morning Service through Zoom go to bit.ly/2J5jvY8
and if prompted, use Meeting ID: **874 6773 6490**, and Passcode **702336**.

On your home phone, dial **020 3481 5240**, listen to the announcement
and enter the meeting ID **874 6773 6490** followed by # (hash) when prompted;
just # on its own when asked for your Participant ID; and when prompted,
the passcode **702336** followed by #.

And that's it: you should be connected and are able to listen into the service.
Simply hang up when the service finishes, or whenever you want to leave.

To unmute yourself during the post-service chat time, press ***6**

Call to Worship

The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Jesus calls us to serve and follow him,
and promises that if we do, we shall be with him.

Come, be with him now.

Serve him, follow him, and give glory to God.

Amen

A Gathering Prayer

Today, in this place, we want to see Jesus,
who knew what it was to be human.

Jesus, draw us in and open us up;
open our eyes to see you, our hearts to share with you;
open our mouths to share with one another
all that we know of you.

Amen.

Hymn StF 94 – To God be the glory

To God be the glory, great things he has done!
So loved he the world that he gave his Son,
who yielded his life in atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in:

*Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son:
And give him the glory – great things he has done!*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
To every believer the promise of God!
And every offender who truly believes,
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives:
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord . . .

Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see:
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord . . .

Fanny Crosby, (1820-1915)

Prayer of Adoration & Praise

Yours, Lord, were the arms stretched wide on the cross,
a welcome to all in the midst of your agony.
Yours were the arms spread in blessing after the resurrection.
Crucified Lord, risen Lord,
we adore you in your pain and in your victory,
your welcome ever the same,
gathering us to you and blessing us,
enfolding us in your loving embrace.
Lord God, in covenants old and new you have held your arms
open to your people.
In the arms of a baby in a manger, waving in delight at
strangers from near and far, you embraced all humanity.
On the cross, you held your arms open to the world.
God incarnate, God Crucified and risen, we praise you for all
you have sacrificed to welcome us.
Help us to give up our pettiness, our selfishness, in order to
embrace others in the welcome that comes from you. **Amen.**

Prayer of Confession

Gracious and patient God – we hope!

There are times when you must feel that we were sent to try you
with our prejudice, our apathy, our intransigence,

and our refusal to receive the grace that we are made whole by the cross of our Lord.

Forgive all our ingratitude, our small-mindedness, our stiff necks, and bind up our
brokenness.

We are without excuse, but bold to ask pardon

from our Lord who lived his life and died his death

and gave his flesh and blood for the forgiveness of our sins.

(Let's share a time of silence and consider where we have gone wrong)

Lord God, if anyone can cope with us, you can,

here is all the stuff that weighs us down –

You won't look the other way but take it off our hands

set us free – Forgive us, and show us, here and now,

the people you know we can be. In Jesus name we prayer

Amen.

Assurance of forgiveness

God, thank you for welcoming us back no matter what we have done;

for that initial embrace that welcomed us, though we were sinners;

for the forgiveness that greets us every time we turn back to you.

Help us to embody your forgiveness in our dealings with one another

and with those outside the flock.

May our welcome be the sign of the greater welcome that comes from

you. **Amen.**

O.T Reading – Jeremiah 31:31-34 NIV *(God is making a new covenant with His people. However, this covenant will be different from the one which previous generations had broken. This one will be written on people's hearts, not just on stones like the Ten Commandments)*

'The days are coming', declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, declares the Lord. 'This is the covenant that I will make with the people of Israel after that time,' declares the Lord. 'I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, "Know the Lord," because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,' declares the Lord. 'For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.'

Gospel Reading – John 12:20-33 NIV *(It is thought that maybe the Greeks referred to in this reading may have already known the apostle Philip. They came from Decapolis that was close to Bethsaida where Philip came from. It's also a possibility that their quest to see Jesus was prompted by a desire to learn from him rather than just simply mere curiosity)*

Jesus predicts his death

Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. 'Sir,' they said, 'we would like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. Jesus replied, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me. Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour"? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.' The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. Jesus said, 'This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Reflection:

Prayers of Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

God of all, we turn to you to pray for those who,
like Christ, are ridiculed for what they believe
and persecuted for what they hold dear...

God of all, we turn to you to pray for those who,
like Christ, put their lives on the line for others,
in the full knowledge of the risks they are taking ...

God of all, we turn to you to pray for those who,
like Christ, are beaten and abused,
the victims of torture and brutality...

God of all, we turn to you to pray for those who,
like Christ, are betrayed by friends and colleagues
who run away at their hour of greatest need...

God of all, we turn to you to pray for those who,
like Christ, know their need of you,
and turn to you in prayer. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven
hallowed be thy name
thy kingdom come
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven
give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us
lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil
for thine is the kingdom
the power and the glory
for ever and ever **Amen**

Hymn StF 319 – Christ triumphant ever reigning

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:

*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name!*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:

Yours the glory.....

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!
Death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:

Yours the glory.....

Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
Sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:
Yours the glory.....

So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon you gazing
this shall be our song:
Yours the glory.....

Michael John Saward (1932-2015) c) The Jubilate Group, CCL9 19650

Closing Prayer & Blessing

God be with us in the coming week,
As we think about Jesus making his way to Jerusalem
To die upon the cross and rise again on Easter Day
Amen.

And may the blessing of The Father the Son and the
Holy Spirit be with you now and remain with you
Throughout the coming days ahead.
Amen.