



Welcome to Stoneleigh Methodist Church

Sunday, 2 January 2022

10:30am – Morning Worship led by Richard Graham

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

Prayers

Please pray for Richard leading our Service here today and for Emma at Ruxley; for our Stewards, and for others within the Church and beyond who continue to work quietly for the benefit of all. We thank especially those for whom Christmas is a time of much extra effort, from maintaining essential services, supporting additional services, caring for others directly and indirectly etc, this year with the added constraints of Covid. Their efforts may not have been rewarded officially in the 'List', but nevertheless are very much appreciated.

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 or visit from friends.

"Most people stop looking when they find the proverbial needle in the haystack. I would continue looking to see if there were other needles." Albert Einstein

Notices

KEN MARSHALL would like to thank all the people who sent him cards on his recent 90th birthday.

PLAN B. I thought it might be helpful to summarise the current requirements of 'PLAN B', as introduced by the Government and thus applicable in principle to all in England, including the Methodist Church. These requirements will be in place until further changes are announced and apply to anyone using the Church Centre for activities, meetings, and Worship.

To keep everyone safe in Church, we ask you to . . .

- **If you are able to do so, please take a lateral flow test**, weekly if possible. Do not come into our Church Centre if this is positive, or if you have any Covid symptoms.
- **Get the jobs** you are entitled to. Call 119 (free) for advice)
- **Sanitise your hands** on entry – there is free sanitiser at every entry point. Wash or sanitise your hands whenever you feel appropriate.
- **Wear a face covering** (unless you or the activity is exempt), this includes whilst singing.
- **Be aware of others** – some may feel comfortable with more space than yourself.
- **Be prepared with suitable clothing**; the building will be well ventilated and heating on to circulate fresh air.

Thank you. *Robin*

TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP will be meeting on the January 4th as arranged, but please wear masks at all times and ensure you sanitise your hands on arrival. Social distancing must be maintained, and tea will be served to you at your table. Please remain in your seat until the meeting closes, and then leave the building separately. Thank you. *Pat*

HOW WAS YOUR CHRISTMAS? If you have any news or interesting happenings from the Christmas period, please let me know for the Link (by the 10th January) - *Vivienne*.

PINE CONES. A very large bag of cones appeared in the Room 1 store during December – could the owner please contact me – thanks. *Robin*

QUIZ NIGHT AT RUXLEY CHURCH is on Saturday 22nd January 2022, 7:00 for 7:15pm - and SMC are invited! All the family welcome - easy to play, no experience necessary - and there will be a raffle during the evening. One price fits all £12 (no concessions) towards the cost of food, stationery & prizes etc - this includes a Fish & Chip Supper, but please bring your own drinks, glasses & cutlery. Tickets available in advance - get yours NOW! Further information and tickets available from Emma.

RUXLEY CHURCH IS CELEBRATING 20 YEARS of being an LEP on Sunday 30th January 2022 at 10:00am (please note time). Everyone at Stoneleigh have been invited to join them for their Service – Stoneleigh will be closed that day. The preacher will be the Rev Dr Mark Wakelin, former President of the Methodist Church for 2012. We are also invited to stay for lunch afterwards, and there is a sign-up sheet by the Memorial book. The closing date for lunch registration is **next weekend** so if you don't come to Church by then, feel free to get in touch with us by phone/email and we'll add your name for you. *Robin/Denise*

NEXT WEEK (9th January) we have our annual Covenant Service with Holy Communion at 10:30am with Emma.

We start 2022 by looking at King Solomon - the man of great wisdom whose fame spread far and wide throughout the ages.

JANUARY 2022

Sunday 2	1 Kings [4:8-19], 5:1 to 6:1	(Temple build)
Monday 3	Proverbs 2 & 3	(Proverbs)
Tuesday 4	<i>skim</i> 2 Chronicles 3:1 to 5:1	(building the Temple)
Wednesday 5	2 Chronicles 5:2-14	(the Ark)
Thursday 6	2 Chronicles 6:4 to 7:3	(prayer of dedication)
Friday 7	2 Chronicles 7	(God speaks to Solomon)
Saturday 8	Ecclesiastes 1:13 to 2:14, 3:1-15	(the Philosopher)



A HAPPY NEW YEAR

from Stoneleigh Methodist Church

Morning Worship, 2 January 2022, 10:30am

Led by Richard Graham

Watch live or at a time convenient to you on YouTube: youtu.be/ZVKzQjrCrmc
or join on Zoom: bit.ly/2J5jvY8

To join the service through Zoom on your landline phone,
dial **020 3481 5240**, listen to the announcement and when prompted,
enter the meeting ID **874 6773 6490** followed by #;
just # on its own when asked for your Participant ID;
and when prompted, the passcode **702336** followed by #.
You will then be connected to the service – simply hang up at the end
or whenever you wish to leave.

Welcome and Prayer for the Church Family

Call to Worship: Psalm 148

(NIRV)

Praise the LORD.

Praise him, lightning and hail,
snow and clouds.

Praise the LORD from the heavens.

Praise him, you stormy winds
that obey him.

Praise him in the heavens above.

Praise him, all his angels.

Praise him, all you mountains and hills.

Praise him, all his angels in heaven.

Praise him, sun and moon.

Praise him, all you fruit trees
and cedar trees.

Praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise him, you highest heavens.

Praise him, all you wild animals
and cattle.

Praise him, you waters above the skies.

Let all of them praise the name of the Lord,
because at his command

Praise him, you small creatures
and flying birds.

they were created.

Praise him, you kings of the earth
and all nations.

He established them for ever and ever.

He gave them laws

Praise him, all you princes
and rulers on earth.

they will always have to obey.

Praise the LORD from the earth,

Praise him, young men and women.

you great sea creatures and all the
deepest parts of the ocean.

Praise him, old men and children.

Let them praise the name of the LORD.

His name alone is honoured.

His glory is higher than the earth and the heavens.

He has given his people a strong king.

All his faithful people praise him for that gift.

All the people of Israel are close to his heart.

Praise the LORD.

Lighting of the Christmas Candles

(Roots)

We lit the first candle,
that its flame be for us a sign of hope;
that its warmth be a symbol of God's love for us;
and that it may inspire us to be hope bearers –
people of compassion and integrity.

The first candle is lit.

We lit the second candle,
that its flame be a light that shines for all to see –
a sign that Jesus is for all;
that we would know God's presence and power
as we gather in the name of Jesus,
who is the light of the world.

The second candle is lit.

We lit the third candle,
that its flame be for us a sign of the light
that reveals to us our path through life;
an inspiration for us to live simply and generously
after the example and call of John the Baptist
that we ourselves may be signs
of the good news we proclaim.

The third candle is lit.

We lit the fourth candle,
that its flame be for us a sign of blessing.

We remembered how Mary and Elizabeth greeted each other,
and Mary praised God for the blessings received,
and asked that we know God's blessing in our lives and community.

The fourth candle is lit.

And we lit the central Christmas candle,
that its flame be for us a sign of Jesus' birth.

The fifth, central candle is lit.

Loving God, we remember in the days after Christmas Day
that you can use anyone and everyone for your purposes.
We willingly offer you all that we are and all that we have,
choosing to believe that who we are is enough to be used by you.
We do this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn: Singing the Faith 202

Hark! The herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim:
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark! The herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel:

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth:

Prayers of Praise and Confession

(SPCK)

Glory be to God on high,
and on earth peace,
peace among those of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we worship you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
holy God, tender God, God our beloved creator.

Christ our desire,
only embodiment of God,
bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh,
foolishness of God, greater than human wisdom,
poverty of God, stronger than human pride,
emptiness of God, full of our redemption,
bearing away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Holy one, bearing away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Beloved one, bearing away the sin of the world,
receive our prayer.

Janet Morley

In silence, we think about the times in the past week where we have fallen short of God's glory, have not sought out his light, and failed in our witness to him.

Lord, we are dwellers in darkness,
and often content to stay there.

(Roots)

We confess that we are not always seekers after signs,
nor do we actively pursue your guiding light.

We fail to raise our eyes from the murk of our existence
to the intimations of the miraculous in which your world abounds.

Forgive us for dwelling on the darkness of our lives;
we lift our gaze to you, O Lord.

Let your star blaze anew in our vision,
that we may follow where you lead,
our hope rekindled, our strength renewed.

Amen.

The festive lights are dimming and the shadows encroach again;
we have kept them at bay with cheer, good company and food.
But now they creep back,
accusing us of all the darkness we have denied awhile.
In the weak light of morning, in the dim days stretching ahead,
we feel bad about ourselves,
diminished by despair at our shortcomings –
our lethargy, our fears, our failure to live as we should.
Yet you, Father, blaze into our darkness and dazzle us with hope.
You, Son, reach out your hand and raise us up.
And you, Holy Spirit, bind us in this active forgiveness
that encourages, and inspires, and urges us onwards.
Amen.

Offering

Reading: Matthew 2: 1-12

(NIV)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.’

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ‘In Bethlehem in Judea,’ they replied, ‘for this is what the prophet has written:

‘“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”’

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.’

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Hymn: Songs of Fellowship 1931

Joy has dawned upon the world,
promised from creation:

God's salvation now unfurled,
hope for every nation.

Not with fanfares from above,
not with scenes of glory,
but a humble gift of love:
Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky
with the songs of angels,
as the mighty Prince of life
shelters in a stable.

Hands that set each star in place,
shaped the earth in darkness,
cling now to a mother's breast,
vulnerable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb,
gazing at the glory;

gifts of men from distant lands
prophecy the story:

gold, a King is born today;
incense, God is with us;
myrrh, His death will make a way,
and by His blood He'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of heaven,
given as a ransom
reconciling God and man,
Christ our mighty champion!
What a Saviour, what a friend,
what a glorious mystery:
once a babe in Bethlehem,
now the Lord of history.

Stuart Townend & Keith Getty

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Reading: Romans 15: 1-13

(NIV)

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbours for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: 'The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.' For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind towards each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

'Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing the praises of your name.' *[Ps 18:49]*

Again, it says,

'Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.' *[Deut 32:43]*

And again,

'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples extol him.' *[Ps 117:1]*

And again, Isaiah says,

'The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope.' *[Is 11:10]*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Message

Hymn: Singing the Faith 224

As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright,
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped,
Saviour, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee, whom heaven and earth adore,
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy-seat.

As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure, and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing
alleluias to our King.

William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

Prayers of Intercession

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us,
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen

Hymn: Singing the Faith 134

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
triumph o'er the shades of night;
Day-spring from on high, be near;
Day-star, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
unaccompanied by thee;
joyless is the day's return,
'til thy mercy's beams I see,
'til they inward light impart,
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine;
pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
fill me, radiancy divine;
scatter all my unbelief;
more and more thyself display,
shining to the perfect day.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Blessing & Dismissal

(Roots)

God of hope, Jesus our companion, Holy Spirit our strength,
travel with us as we journey onwards
into paths known and unknown, familiar and unfamiliar,
through times of darkness and into your marvellous light,
always knowing that you are by our side.

Amen.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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