

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church

July 2021

News



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From Sonya

I wonder how you are finding this season? I have spoken to some people who are enjoying the new freedoms, and others who are struggling at this time. So, what can help us to recover from all that we have been through?



1. **Remembering** – we need to take some time to look back, to acknowledge the losses that we have suffered. There may be a variety of losses that you have faced – loss of loved ones, loss of freedom to do what you want to do, missing special celebrations, loss of closeness with friends and family etc. We all need to take time to grieve the losses we have faced and not underestimate their impact on us. If anyone needs to talk through what they are feeling, please contact me.
2. **Reflecting** – we also need to take some time to reflect on what we have learnt during the last season. Have you found that your priorities have changed due to all that you have been through? For example, I think all of us have become more aware of the importance of the everyday interactions with other people which we have all missed, and the need to prioritise our relationships with others. Now is a good time to reflect on how you want to live in the next season. What lessons have you learnt which you want to take forward?

I encourage you all at this time to seek God above all else, because as Paul says in Philippians 4:19: “My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”

May you all find ways which help you to recover at this time.

Blessings, Sonya



Front cover: Part of the lockdown display.

From the Deacons

The deacons met at the Manse on 14th June, the first time we have been able to meet in person for many, many months; it was so good to get together, pray as a group for those in our communities in need of God's special care at this time, for the church and for our meeting.

The main focus of the meeting was how can we, as a church (i.e. all of us) connect with the village after such a long time in lockdown and absence? We are aware that there are many in the community who have felt isolated and alone. The ideas we have are a Church picnic, a Church BBQ, the Strawberry Tea, Messy Church and TWIGS. The good news is some dates have been formalised:

1. Strawberry Tea and celebration of new crafts taken on during lockdown June 26/27th. Thanks to Dianne Callaghan and Anne Coate for organising this.
2. Lunch Club is starting again on June 30th (thanks to Liz and her team.)
3. Messy Church (outside) Crafts, trail and picnic July 17th 4pm
4. Songs of Praise with the Parish Church on the Playing field July 18th.
5. Church "bring your own" picnic after outdoor service July 25th.
6. Church BBQ (thanks to Tony and Ian for agreeing to use their culinary skills for the benefit of us all) date in August to be confirmed.
7. The school's head teacher is keen for us to start SupaClub again. There will be a meeting to discuss this, but we desperately need more volunteers so if you think you could help, even occasionally, please let Sonya know. Date to be announced.

We also considered how to support families in their faith; youngsters are such an important part of our church family and we are very aware they tend to leave regular worship as they become teenagers. Sonya is exploring a link with other local Baptist Churches where they can be encouraged and supported in Christian living.

Kathy Davidson has kindly agreed to take on the role of Publicity Officer, but we are still in need of more deacons and a treasurer. Please pray for these important roles.

And then of course we discussed our finances, the maintenance of the chapel and grounds (thanks to those who helped tidy the grounds on June 19th). A plan is to create a butterfly garden (poppies, cornflowers, stitchwort etc) on the mound near the fir tree in the graveyard. Tim has purchased native seeds for this project.

Please note that the next Church Meeting is on 26th July, not 19th as previously advertised, and our next Deacons' meeting is scheduled for 20th July.

Tim

Strawberry Tea and Exhibition

We were so lucky with the weather! It was lovely to see so many of you join us for afternoon tea and cakes on Saturday afternoon. We were able to



sit outside and enjoy each other's company as helpers dispensed tea, cake and scones and strawberries kindly donated by a local farmer. We had to serve the food in a slightly different way but this was the

first of our annual events where we were almost back to normal. We love to be hospitable and this was the first occasion for almost 18 months when we have been able to invite the community to join us. We are looking forward to hosting further events during the summer; there will be a picnic after church on Sunday 25th July. Watch this space for more news.





Some of us spent lockdown learning a new skill or improving an old one. We brought some of our work to church to give thanks for this

time and pray for the way ahead. There was so much talent to see and celebrate. People had spent their time in various inventive ways: learning Spanish, making sourdough as well as gardening, walking and much, much more. Many thanks to Anne Coate and her team for making such a lovely and thoughtful exhibition.



Luncheon Club



We are so pleased to have restarted Luncheon Club. We have not met since March last year. Who knew that it would be such a long time before we could meet again? Things were a little different but a small group enjoyed roast beef and salad followed by strawberries and

chocolate brownies. We meet every other Wednesday at 12.00 and our next lunch will be on 14th July. A two course meal costs £4. If you would like to join us, please contact Alison 490380 or Liz 490828.

Messy Church

On 17th July includes outdoor crafts, activities and games followed by a picnic.

The picnic will be provided so it will be very helpful if you could let Sonya know in advance if you will be coming so we know how many to cater for.

Songs of Praise on the Field

Sunday 18th July.
On the Playing Field
At 11.00am



“Garden Party”

The next garden party is on Saturday 31st July. Please come and help, even if you can only spare an hour: weeding, pruning, clearing brambles – all the jobs that need to be done to keep our church looking well-kept. Steven Pimm took over grounds maintenance from Ron Woodland – here is his daughter, Megan, a valued and cheerful helper.



BMS Birthday Scheme

Great news! You did it! Five years ago, BMS World Mission launched an ambitious strategy. *'We wanted to transform one million people's lives by the end of 2020... we're delighted to tell you with God's guiding and your support, more than one million people have been reached with life-changing help!'* Now a video has been produced showing how lives have been transformed:

www.bmsworldmission.org/about-us/one-million-lives

The Birthday Scheme is one way we can contribute to this work. Celebrating her birthday this month is Kathy Davidson. Our love and best wishes to Kathy as she celebrates her birthday on the 2nd.

For our Prayers

Christine and Adrian Stables
Dianne Callaghan
Freda Gadsby
Jane and Niall Waters-Fuller,
Harry and Alexander
Mary Strange
SWBA – South West Baptist Association



Our love and prayers are with Nicole and Luke following Nicole's accident, still under the care of the medical team at Southmead where she is making good progress; with Mike Hutchings who has been poorly and his brother, Ken, who is waiting for an operation; Graham, now home with Valerie and Stephen, after a spell at Musgrove; the Kellie family; also for Jackie, Mary's daughter, making good progress as her elbow heals. We give thanks for the medical care as a community we receive.

At this time we also wish those who are taking a break, days out, going on holiday, a well- earned rest, the pleasure of visiting new or familiar places or catching up with friends or family and pray for their safety Covid-wise as well as for their journeys. We also remember those for whom such a break is not possible.



Congratulations PC Marriott

We are delighted to hear that Alice has graduated from the University of Central Lancashire to continue training in pursuit of her childhood dream, now in her first full time role, attached to the Greater Manchester Police. We wish her well on this next stage of her career.

July Calendar

4th July	10.30	Morning Worship led by Jamie	Zoom
11th July	10.30	Morning Worship led by Stuart	
12th July	10.00am – 1.00pm 7.30	Quiet Church Deacons Meeting	
14th July	12.30 – 2.00pm	Luncheon Club	
17th July	4.00pm	Outdoor Messy Church Includes crafts, a trail and a picnic	Church Grounds
18th July	11.00am	Songs of Praise with the Parish Church	Playing Field
20th July	7.30 pm	Deacons' Meeting	
25th July	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Sonya followed by a bring your own picnic.	Church Grounds
26th July	10am – 1.00pm 7.30	Quiet Church Church Meeting	Church
28th July	12.30 – 2.00pm	Luncheon Club	
31st July	10.00 -	Garden and grounds working party	

Inversnaid

Hopkins visited Inversnaid - located on the east bank of Loch Lomond in Scotland - and this poem was the product, evoking the wild and untouched wonders of nature:

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.
Gerard Manley Hopkins, from Mary's covid photo-journal.