



St John's, Stoneleigh Weekly Newsletter

Sunday 24th May

Collect

Risen, ascended Lord, as we rejoice at your triumph, fill your Church on earth with power and compassion, that all who are estranged by sin may find forgiveness and know your peace, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen

A MESSAGE FROM REV. KEN HOBBS

Happy Birthday to William Rogers!

As the weeks pass I value the support and fellowship and encouragement of the St John's church family. As yet we do not have any further indication of when the church will open to the community, either as a

place for private prayer or for "normal" worship services. I play golf with a small group of friends but we are not members of a club. Some golf courses are reopening for visitors but many have said that it is a "members only" arrangement. I very much hope that we will not see St John's as some "members only" set up. Archbishop William Temple said "the church is the only organisation in the world that exists for the benefit of non members!" Let us pray that we will continue to be a beacon of light and hope for our whole community.

God bless you Ken

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Don't forget you can keep in touch by joining the WhatsApp group, visiting our website and following us on Facebook. All your contributions to these groups during this time provide great encouragement to us all. For details of the website and where to find us on Facebook, please see the bottom of this page. To join the WhatsApp group, you will need a smartphone and to have installed WhatsApp. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Rev. Ken Hobbs

KEEPING IN TOUCH AND PRAYERS

Please don't forget to call if you need some help during this time or if you would like to add something to the prayer board.

Jean Tutton 020 8393 3687

SUNDAY SERVICES

Don't forget you can join us live on Sunday at 10am using this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86852818063>

For those of you who do not have access to the internet you can now join our Sunday Worship by phone.

Dial this phone number: 0203 051 2874

You will be asked to enter the meeting ID followed by # (hash).

Key in: 868 5281 8063#

You will be asked for a personal ID, just press # again and you will be connected to the Service.

If you want help with this speak to John Simon (phone 0775 187 4807).

John Simon

THURSDAY COFFEE MORNING

Each Thursday, St John's will be hosting a coffee morning via Zoom. Please join us at 10:30am using this link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83134817320>

The link will be the same each week.

Rev. Ken Hobbs

PROPOSED BLOCK OF FLATS – AN UPDATE

Here is an update on proposed block of flats to be built opposite the church. I have submitted an objection on behalf of St. John's church based on the parameters of local parking for users of the church / parish centre and the necessity for parking for Baptisms, weddings and funerals as well as the usual church services. I also included the fact that the flats would not include "affordable housing".

Janis Forder

NEXT SUNDAY

Next Sunday is Pentecost, sometimes called 'The Birthday of the Church', when we shall celebrate the Holy Spirit coming down upon the Disciples. This will be a service without Holy Communion led by Joan Simon.

Rev. Ken Hobbs

'Thy Kingdom Come' - a prayer initiative led by the Church of England

This invites us to unite with Christians across the globe in praying for people to know Jesus. It will be held between Ascension and Pentecost, from 21st May to 31st May, with denominations in 85 countries praying at the same time, using the Lord's Prayer with the intention of evangelisation.

A key theme for individual Christians who #pledgetoprayer (Twitter hashtag) is 'Pray for Five'. Christians are praying for five people they know that at least one might become a follower of Jesus. Thy Kingdom Come is not prescriptive as to how that might happen and individual churches and groups of churches are encouraged to pray for their own ways of outreach.

For suggestions for churches, follow the Link to the website <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

There is a 'Light up the world in prayer' section with resources to equip churches to encourage others to pray and shine their light. One of these activities, is a map of the world, which it is suggested we could help to see filled with light; as each

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individual, family and church commit to pray, more lights will populate the map.

As members of St John's Church, we are asked by other churches throughout the world:

'Will you play your part, as we pray for the light of Christ to penetrate the darkness across the globe?'

What should be our response?

Rev. Ken and the Ministry Team will be discussing this, but we do not necessarily have all the ideas; **this is for us all as members of the church family to think about.** Let us think and pray about what we as individuals and as a church could contribute to this initiative. **Please do send any ideas to the office and/or Rev Ken and Joan Simon, and we'll look at how we might be able to implement and organise any suggestion.**
Joan Simon

DAILY HOPE

There is a free phone line 0800 804 8044, for hymns, reflections and prayers, provided by Guildford diocese, especially for people without access to the internet. It is called Daily Hope.
Janis Forder

FOODBANK

Last week the Foodbank fed 237 people and delivered 3.3 tonnes of food. The demand has risen to record high levels but the Foodbank has seen astonishing levels of donations and the staff are so grateful to everyone for all this help. This has affected the levels of stock in the HQ so please note the items which are not required just now as well as those which would help stocks. They are overstocked on the following items and **do not** need any more for the time being please - Pasta/rice, Baked beans, Tinned soup, Breakfast cereal/porridge, Pasta sauce/ cooking sauces, Tinned fish, Long life milk, Tea/coffee, Tinned rice pudding, Pulses, Sweetcorn, Noodles, Biscuits

They do **urgently need** - Tinned meat, Long life sponge puddings, Ketchup

They have **low stocks** of - Tinned spaghetti/beans with meat, Tinned potatoes, Custard, Hot chocolate, Jam, Dried/powdered milk, Packets of dried pasta in sauce, Dog food, Kids toothbrushes 0-2 years and 6+ years, Kids toothpaste 0-2 years *And* 6+years, Adult toothpaste, Deodorant - male and female, Pump hand soap, Shaving foam/gel.

Please include the Foodbank in your prayers - the demand is likely to keep on growing as time goes on and the volunteers are working hard to keep abreast of demand whilst still looking after themselves.
Polly Elder

NEWSLETTER

Please note that we are aiming to get the newsletter out earlier in the week so those who do not have access to the internet or email can receive a paper copy in the post in time for the service on Sunday. With this in mind, any notices for the newsletter should be sent to the office by midday on a Wednesday. Many thanks.
Kerrie Winter

Worship at Home

We have come together as the family of God in our Father's presence to offer Him praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive His holy word; to bring before him the needs of the world, to ask his forgiveness of our sins, and to seek His grace that through His Son Jesus Christ we may give ourselves to His service.

Hymn Be thou my Vision

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1 v8-9*

Confession

Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, risen and ascended for us. We have not loved you as our Redeemer nor obeyed you as our Lord. We have not brought our prayers to you nor heeded your tears shed over the world. Forgive us we pray and breathe into us a new spirit of service and make us joyfully obedient to your will. For your glory's sake. Amen.

Collect

O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Praise

We praise our ascended and exalted Lord **We worship and adore you**

Name above every name, Jesus, Lord **We worship and adore you**

King of righteousness, King of peace, enthroned at the right hand of the majesty on high Jesus Lord **We worship and adore you**

Great high priest, advocate with the Father, living for ever to intercede for us Jesus Lord **We worship and adore you**

Pioneer of our salvation, bringing many to glory through your death and resurrection Jesus Lord **We worship and adore you**

Let every knee bow to you and every tongue confess that you are Lord to the glory of God the Father Amen

1st Reading Acts 1.1-11 – Sarah Tutton to read

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

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So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Hymn How deep the Father's love for us

2nd Reading Matthew 28.16-10 – Sarah Tutton to read
Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Prayers – Chris Redrup

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in 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 and 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

Song This is the Day - Sarah Tutton

Reflection

The readings today are related. The passage in Acts 1 describes the Ascension of Jesus and the Matthew passage is often known as "The Great Commission". They form the climax of Jesus' earthly ministry and include his last words. Jesus has completed his work on earth and ours is just starting!

In 1848 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels said "Workers of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains. **You have a world to win**"

In 1960 J.F. Kennedy in a TV address said "It is time for a new generation of leadership to cope with new problems and opportunities. There is a new world to be won!"

Around AD 30 on a mountainside in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire a resurrected Carpenter told his handful of dispirited followers- go and change the world and then disappeared! From that tiny beginning grew an international cross cultural and life changing faith that would literally turn the world upside down. The story is so incredible- that it has to be true- real history, real time and a real Saviour!

In Matt 28 Jesus says "Go into all the world and make disciples In Acts 1.8 we read "Be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" In order for that to happen the day of Pentecost, 10 days after the ascension, would see the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church as we know it. (our subject for next Sunday- Pentecost) Ascension Day, 40 days after Easter, has been described as the "forgotten festival" for at least 3 reasons- (a) it is always on a Thursday and not a Sunday and (b) the whole notion of Jesus ascending "upwards into Heaven" seems obscure and (c) it is mainly recorded in Acts 1 with only a single reference in the Gospels- Luke 24 50-55.

Some have said that Jesus actually ascended twice- once on Easter Day and then later. There have been numerous attempts to reconcile the two accounts but we need to remember that Luke, a precise Gentile writer, actually wrote both books! It is improbable that the same author would write two contradictory accounts of what happened. Luke appears at the end of his Gospel to condense and also supplement what happened.

Here are two perspectives on these closing events

1 A Heavenly Perspective

The NT as a whole sees the ascension as the completion of Jesus' ministry on earth and the commencement of his ministry in Heaven. The language includes that of him being our "Great High Priest" who represents us before The Father and lives to make continual intercession for us on our behalf. We may find this difficult to understand but we must remember what Jesus said on the Cross "It is finished". He had done what He came to do. But his heavenly work continues after his earthly work is done and with his departure comes the promise of the Holy Spirit and the promise of his return!

2. An Earthly Perspective

Most institutions, corporations and businesses have a mission statement or strap line that encapsulates the declared intention and values of the organisation.- eg Coca Cola "the Real Thing"; Nike "Just do it!" Sky TV "believe in better". Here at St Johns we have "For God; for Stoneleigh; for life!"

Matthew 28 contains a mission statement and a manifesto for the early church. Here are three thoughts about it

(a) "**All authority has been given to ME..**" **A Christ Centred Vision.**

The message of the disciples was not a philosophy or a set of ethical ideas, it is a message about a person. Years later Paul would say "I knew nothing among you except Jesus and him crucified. Wherever those early disciples went they preached about Jesus; incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended and glorified.

In the power of the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost, they took this message to a needy and lost world. Over two millennia men and women of all walks of life, all races, all backgrounds have discovered that those who obey the great commission receive great empowering.

The Greek word translated here as authority is also power- DUNAMIS from which we get our word dynamite! This is an explosive story!

(b) "**...All Nations**" **A Cross Cultural Vision**

To a xenophobic Jewish group the notion of "all nations" would be a cultural and religious bombshell. There would be radical barriers to be overcome and breakthroughs to be made- Geographical. Linguistic (the Good News would eventually be

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available in English!), racial, theological (from narrow OT legalism to NT grace) and Social (for women and for slaves) May God deliver us from narrow parochialism and western denominationalism. We are a holy Catholic (world wide) church.

3. "All that I have commanded you...." A Comprehensive Vision

Jesus gives a clear mandate GO and make disciples; TEACH them and BAPTIZE them The Church is God's new community- a people for His praise and glory and commissioned with the task to take the "Greatest Story ever Told" to a waiting world

Holy Communion reminds us that Jesus himself carried out his own commission- it was truly Christ centred, cross cultural and comprehensive

There is a message here which we can reflect on "From the LOCAL Church to the TOTAL church- we have a world to win.

Hymn Broken for me Broken for you (to listen to)

Peace

Thanksgiving Prayer

The Lord is here

His spirit is with us,

Lift up your hearts

We lift them up to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give thanks and praise.

On the night when He was betrayed, at supper with his friends, Jesus took bread and thanked you. He broke it and gave it to them saying "Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me"

At the end of supper, taking a cup of wine, Jesus thanked you and said "Drink this all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins; do this in remembrance of me."

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory, send your Holy Spirit that the bread and wine we share may be for us by faith the body and blood of your dear son

(do share some bread and wine if you feel that is appropriate)

Hymn I the Lord of Sea and Sky

Blessing

Book of Remembrance: James Charles Davy, Gladys Johnson, Mary Turner, Joyce Alice Frost, Donald Hollister, Margaret Dixon.

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