

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church
January 2022
News



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From Sonya

John says this about Jesus in John 1:4-5 “In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Living out in the countryside where there are no streetlights, we all know how important light is. Without light it is very difficult to see where you are going at night and to get where you need to go. If we want to see to go anywhere, we need light. We don't need daylight where everything is clear and obvious, but we do need sufficient light to be able to take the next step. John tells us that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:14 “You are the light of the world.” You might feel that you are unable to shine much light today. But even that amount cannot be, nor ever will be overcome by the darkness, and the darkness certainly cannot put it out! Even a small light source like a torch or a candle is enough to help us to see the next step. This is the nature of the kingdom of God. Jesus talked about light, mustard seeds, and yeast, because they all work according to the nature of the kingdom of God. It's not about how much light you think you allow to shine, but about the light source. This is the reason that we can go into a new year with confidence. The light of the world is invincible, and it



shines through each of you. Happy New Year to everyone!

Blessings, Sonya

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Willow Set Nativity Play

Camels, sheep, cows, shepherds, three wise kings, Mary, Joseph and a host of others. What a wonderful, happy performance the Willow Set put on for their families and helpers. It was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion, the children sang well especially the Spanish songs and appeared to really enjoy themselves. Wow! And there was laughter too - especially when halfway through the performance the lead camel saw his parents sitting in the audience and decided he would rather sit them than stay on the stage. Rachel and her team are just amazing in the manner they relate to the children.



Thank you, Willow Set, for choosing the chapel in which to put on your Nativity play, and thanks to Anne for putting up the backdrop and the Nativity figures.

Luncheon Club

Christmas lunch was our last meal of the year, and we had a good attendance. We were also pleased to welcome some guests. The tables had been beautifully laid with candles, crackers, and some festive treats. We had warm, mulled apple juice to start with followed by a turkey dinner with all the traditional accompaniments – Rob’s roasties, pigs in blankets, stuffing, cranberry sauce There was a choice of Christmas pudding or trifle (or both) for dessert then Tim led us in a short reflection, accompanied by Kathy at the piano, while we had coffee and chocolate. Tim chose an interesting reading featuring Mary in the kitchen, holding a knife, when she was visited by the angel, a very domestic setting.

Thank you to Dianne, Julia, Alison, Rob, and Stuart for making possible such a happy meal. Luncheon Club starts again in 2022 on **Wednesday 12th January**. If you would like to join us, we have one or two spaces,

and you would be very welcome. Ring Alison to book your place, 490380, or Liz 490828.

Junior Church Service

Despite a lack of younger members, the Christmas Junior Church service went ahead, and we were very grateful to Ruth for organising the hugely entertaining “Chocolate Nativity” and to Thomas and William for their help in labelling the multitude of chocolates (all 30 of them!!)



What makes a church a community?

Why is a church community different from other clubs and organisations? Many organisations depend on the volunteering work of its members, as does the church. The difference surely because we volunteer out of our love of God and His people. Helping others also imparts a sense of satisfaction and wellbeing to the volunteer. Our rural church depends on the good will and the work of many people, people who work quietly behind the scenes and are often not thanked.

The list is endless - cleaning the church building, always with a smile; cutting the grass and hedges, keeping the churchyard tidy; purchasing and erecting sheds; bringing his tractor to the churchyard and many, many other things; sorting out the heating so the building is warm; doing the AV system; playing the piano; organising the service and preaching; making coffee after services and at other times; spending the morning changing faulty emergency lights and making sure our fire alarm system is efficient; helping out and running TWIGS, Lunch Club, Messy Church; organising the Flower Rota, distributing the flowers to needy folk; doing the Website and keeping it up to date; various repairs and renovations to the building and kitchen; those who quietly

keep in touch with the vulnerable and lonely within the community; the newsletter editor, contributors and distributors; running Junior Church etc. etc. Although some of us are unable to help in physical ways due to constraints of time, ability, or physical impairment, those in this position do pray for the church family, the minister, deacons and all who worship at the church. We depend on physical and spiritual help, and this is the difference between a church community and others.

A thank you to all who help out in any way, prayerfully and physically. *(Thank you to Tim for highlighting just how many people we are so blessed to have as part of our church community.)*

For our Prayers

Anne Gadsby
David and Gillian Akerman
Dawn and Jamie Marriott, Alice and Luke
Jimmy and Sian Higgerson, James and
Marley
Our schools, teachers and pupils



We continue to hold in our prayers others known and unknown to us at this time in our community, especially Judith and David Hincks, Mary Strange, Anne Jackson, Freda Gadsby, Paddy and Family.

We also pray for those in our community whose physical or mental health has been affected by the ongoing pandemic and for those who have been affected financially.



January Flowers

2nd Alison White

9th Gillian Akerman

16th Paddy Scott

23rd Dianne Callaghan

30th Gill Yaskin

January 2022 Calendar

Day	Time	Event
Wed 1st	12 noon 7.30pm	Luncheon Club in the Schoolroom Home Group
Sun 2nd	10.30am	Covenant Service with Communion
Wed 5th	7.30pm	Home Group
Thurs 6th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 9th	10.30am	Short Service (half an hour) STOKE STAMPEDE
Tues 11th	2pm 3.15pm	Open The Book planning meeting SUPA Club at SSG Primary School
Wed 12th	12 noon 7.30pm	Luncheon Club in the Schoolroom Home Group
Thurs 13th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 16th	10.30am	Fruit of The Spirit 4: Patience – Café Church Followed by New Year Church Lunch
Mon 17th	7.30pm	Deacons Meeting
Tue 18th	3.15pm	SUPA Club at SSG Primary School
Wed 19th	7.30pm	Home Group
Thurs 20th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 23rd	10.30am	Morning Service
Mon 24th	7.30pm	Church Members Meeting
Tue 25th	3.15pm	SUPA Club at SSG Primary School
Wed 26th	7.30pm	Home Group
Thurs 27th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 30th	10.30am	Morning Service



“We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him.”

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place in January (18th-25th) and this year uses the above verse from Matthew 2 as its theme, chosen by the Middle East Council of Churches. There are downloadable resources available from the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (link can be found on the Baptist Union website). Below are two prayers from the materials which may be used for the week of prayer, which I felt echoed Revd. Sonya’s message about light, and Tim’s message about church community.

A star led the Magi to Christ. Today this star points to the presence of Christ, who has been revealed to us and whose light shines on us. As the Magi followed the star to Bethlehem, we gather under this star today, adding our own stars to the sky, uniting our own gifts and prayers for the visible unity of Church. As we journey towards that goal, may our lives together give a luminous witness that leads others to know Christ. Amen.

Creator of Light, illumine our path by the light of Christ who moves before us and leads us. May he be a beacon for our pilgrimage. Enlighten us and dwell within us. Guide us to discover a manger in our hearts where a great light still shines. We thank you for the gift of that unfading Star, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Heal our divisions and draw us closer the Light that we may find our unity in him. Amen.