

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church

March 2023

News



Luke 4: 5-8 "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve".

Minister:

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From Sonya

Lent is a time when we prepare spiritually to celebrate Easter. We remember the many sacrifices which Jesus Christ was willing to make in order to win the victory over sin and death and set us free from the things which hold us captive. Traditionally, one of the ways that people celebrate Lent is by giving up something.

Self-discipline and self-control are important in the Christian life, so giving up something can be a spiritual practice and can lead us closer to God if that is our motive in doing it. In recent years, there has been a move towards taking something up for Lent, for example, supporting a charity or doing generous acts.



This Lent, why not decide to commit to exploring a spiritual discipline which is not part of your regular practice with a view to growing deeper in relationship with God? You could choose to regularly take time on your own with God to be in His presence in silence seeking to receive whatever God wants to bring to you. You could try walking and praying, making sure that you leave time to listen to God as well as speaking to Him. You could take time each day to praise and worship God because He is worthy of honour and glory and praise. You could decide to meditate on Scripture by taking a Bible passage and imagining yourself within the story and seeing how God speaks to you. You could explore creative ways of praying by using art or poetry or colouring. Whatever You choose, ask God to draw you closer to Him during this time of Lent and enable you to take another step towards becoming more like Jesus.

May each of us grow closer to God this Lent season.

Blessings, Sonya

Church Meeting

Members met at the very end of January after the church service (so too late to include details of the meeting in the February newsletter). The budget for the year ahead was agreed and we are grateful to Liz for putting together the figures since we are still without a treasurer.

Members also voted on a new verse for the year ahead –

Jeremiah 17: 7-8

“blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit.”

Stables Update

Work is finally now well underway with the repairs to the old stables and will hopefully be completed by the beginning of March. A new soakaway will also be installed at the same time, which should resolve the ongoing issue of dry rot appearing in the vestry and under the schoolroom floor. It will be wonderful to be able to use the stables, once work is completed, for services and community events. Please continue to pray that we might find the finances still needed to cover all of the costs and thank God for providing so much already.



Lent Course

This year's Lent course will be led by Revd Simon Bale and will follow the theme of "Growing on the Frontline" (which may sound familiar as it's the theme we've been exploring in church recently with Revd Sonya!). All are welcome to join in with informal discussion to reflect and share on how we, as Christians, speak light into the darkness as we live on our frontlines.

Each Wednesday of Lent from 4pm, starting 1st March in the Church Rooms at Stoke St Gregory's Church.

Upcoming services -



Sunday 5th March and a special Easter Messy Church on Sunday 3rd April

Easter

Joint Good Friday Service at the Baptist Church – 10am Friday 7th April

Sunrise Service outside the chapel – 6.15am Sunday 9th April

Easter Sunday Communion Service – 10.30am



2023 World Day of Prayer

Friday 3rd March at 3pm, North Curry Methodist Church.

The World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical Christian laywomen's initiative. It is run under the motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action" and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March. This year the focus is on Taiwan and the theme of the worship service is from Ephesians 1: 15-19

A beautiful artwork has been created for the World Day of Prayer by Taiwanese artist Hui-Wen Hsiao.

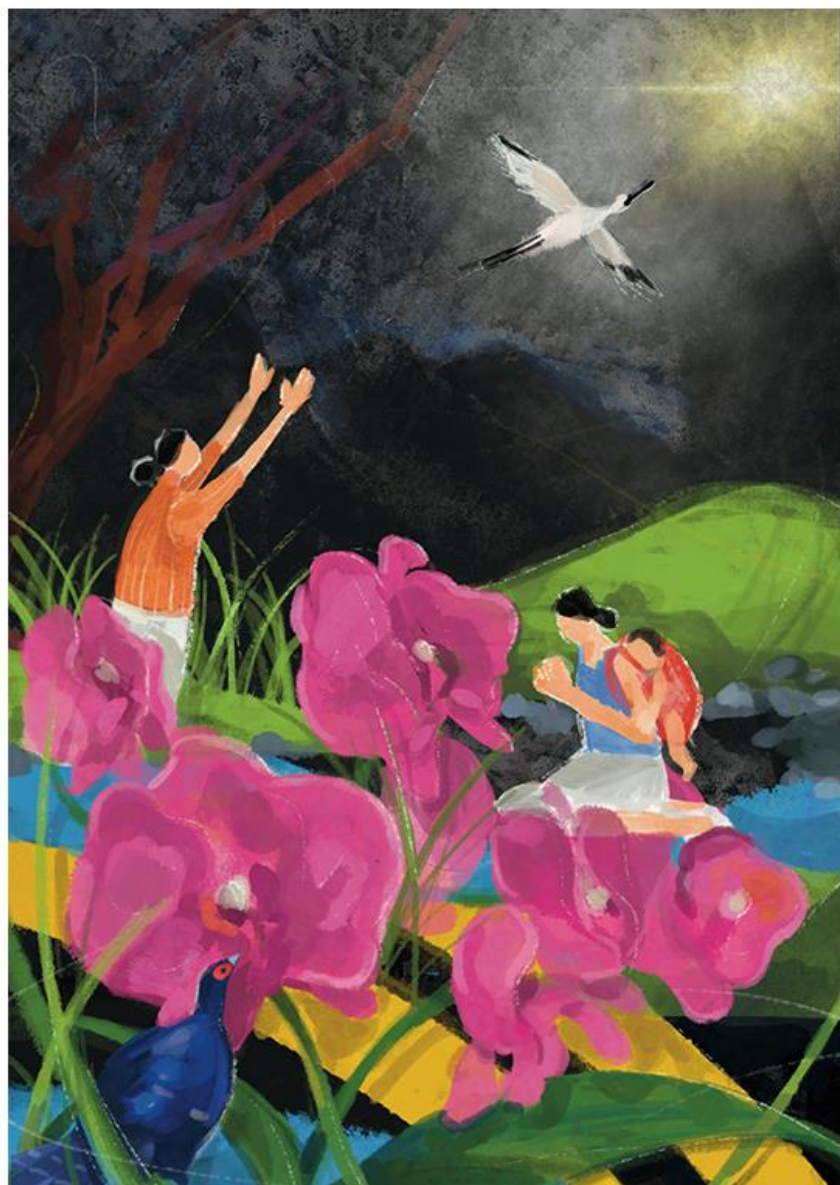
"In my exhibitions, I compose my artwork to express my observation, gratitude, and faith. I cherish my God-given talents and serve God with my artwork. I humbly hope people will know God through my art".

The artist, Hui-Wen HSIAO, has used several motifs that highlight Taiwan's best-known features to express how the Christian faith brings peace and a new vision to Taiwan.

The women in the painting are sitting by a stream, praying silently and looking up into the dark. Despite the uncertainty of the path ahead, they know that the salvation of Christ has come.

Two endangered species are featured: the Mikado pheasant and the Black-faced Spoonbill, which are both of unique significance to the Taiwanese people. The Mikado pheasant is endemic to mountainous regions of Taiwan and is usually regarded as one of Taiwan's national birds. The Black-faced Spoonbill migrates thousands of miles every year to spend the winter in Taiwan. Their distinctiveness symbolizes a characteristic of the Taiwanese people—confidence and perseverance in times of difficulty.

The green grass and Phalaenopsis (Butterfly) orchids stand out against the dark background. They are the pride of Taiwan, which has a worldwide reputation as the "Kingdom of Orchids." In recent decades, Taiwanese orchid's exports have increased, and Butterfly orchids have frequently been featured in international competitions. This beautiful island is known by its rich natural resources. Green grass represents the Taiwanese as simple, confident, strong and under God's care.



For our Prayers

David and Judith Hincks
Irene and Ron Browning
Lys Kellett
Mike and Kath Long, Rory, Toby and Harry
Alison Mellors, Betsy and Emily
Our schools, pupils, teachers and parents



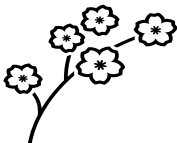
We also lift in prayer all those affected by the Earthquake in Turkey and Syria. May the Lord provide hope where there is none, food and shelter where it is needed, and energy and resources to all those who are involved in providing aid. We also pray for Ukraine as it faces the start of a second year of war with Russia.

BMS Birthday Scheme



We celebrate several birthdays this month - Tim Spotswood on the 4th and Dianne Callaghan and Alison Katte, both on the 17th.

We thank them for supporting the scheme and wish them all a joyful day.



March Flowers

5th Lesley Perry
12th Freda Gadsby
19th Alison Katte
26th Jean Pimm

APRIL

2nd Ruth Loveridge

March 2023 Calendar

Day	Time	Event
Weds 1st	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 2nd	9.30am– 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 5th	10.30pm	MESSY CHURCH starting with breakfast at 10am
Weds 8th	12 noon	Luncheon Club in the Schoolroom
	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 9th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
	7.30pm	Deacons Meeting
Sun 12th	10.30am	FAMILY SERVICE with Communion. Growing on the Frontline 6
Weds 15th	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 16th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 19th	10.30am	FAMILY SERVICE. Growing on the Frontline 7
Weds 22nd	12 noon	Luncheon Club in the Schoolroom
	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 23rd	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 26th	10.30am	FAMILY SERVICE. Growing on the Frontline 8, followed by a CHURCH MEETING.
Weds 29th	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 30th	9.30am- 11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
APRIL Sun 2nd	10.30am	EASTER MESSY CHURCH starting with breakfast at 10am