

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church
November 2020
News



The "Cobbers Memorial" at Fromelles.

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From Sonya



Over the last few months of government restrictions, the thing that most of us have missed the most is connection with other people – to see people face to face and communicate together. I know I have. That is why it has been great to begin services in the church building again. It has been great to see each other face to face, even if that involves face masks! It has been great to worship together, even if that means being unable

to sing together at present! Over the next few months, we are planning to continue holding some services in the church building and some on Zoom, to include as many people as possible. Look at the back of this newsletter to see what we are doing when.

On Sunday 8th November we are planning to hold a village Remembrance service at 10.45am on the memorial playing fields by the pavilion. Keep an eye out for more details in case the government guidelines change again.

You probably don't want to think about it yet, but Advent begins at the end of November! We will be looking at the theme of "Worship in the Waiting." It explores the themes of waiting – for Jesus to come in the incarnation, to return in his second coming, and the waiting we all experience in our everyday lives. This theme seems appropriate in this season we find ourselves in, so hopefully we will explore themes which will help us in our journey with God at this time. More on this next month.

Blessings, Sonya



Our verse for 2020

Colossians 2:6-7 "And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness."



From the Deacons

We met again by Zoom and welcomed Amanda to the team.

We reviewed past services – the harvest service held in the church



went well and Sonya received many thanks and compliments.

We also thank Anne Coate for the simple but effective display of God's creation and provision of food.

For the time being we decided to continue with the present mixture of holding some worship by Zoom and other services in the church building. Some people

have said they felt cold with the doors open, however we feel it's important that doors and windows remain open in order to provide adequate ventilation. Please wrap up warm and feel free to bring your rug and hot water bottle! Our next service in the church will be on 22nd November. Carl Smethurst, one of the regional team, will be coming to speak to us about Home Mission, which is his special area of

responsibility. During the service we will be taking up a collection for Home Mission and we warmly encourage you to contribute to this. We will try to record Carl's sermon and make it available to those who cannot attend the service.

Zoom services do not seem to be so popular, although many of us are used to meetings and classes by Zoom and have become familiar with the technology.

Please talk to Sonya or one of the deacons if you think there is some way of improving this form of worship and making it more relevant to you. In her report to the Church Annual Meeting, Sonya said that it is important that we continue to be a community and this includes worshipping together.



We started to think about Christmas – what will it be like this year? Which services will we hold and how? We think that if we have the carol service by Zoom then we will be able to sing and include contributions from junior church. Tim and Alison will produce a Christmas card on behalf of the Church but we will not be able to sign it individually. There will not be a service on the 27th December. Sonya proposes that we follow an Advent course: “Worship in the Waiting”.

We continue to be concerned about the activities that used to connect us to the community. We were asked to pray in particular for “Open the Book” as they face the challenge of presenting the Bible stories to the school children in a virtual format.

Tim has grown some wildflowers from seed. He will organise a working party to plant them on the bank by the trees. We also thought about building a “bug hotel”.

We are due to have a Quinquennial Inspection as it is now 5 years since the refurbishments were completed. We need to know if any works are required and how much they will cost.

We felt that the Annual Church Meeting by Zoom went well, although some people are excluded if they are not able to get online and there

Church Meeting

on 30th November
at 7.30pm by Zoom.

was not as much discussion as we would usually hope for. Despite the limitations of this format we decided to hold another church meeting by Zoom before Christmas so that we can discuss services and keep in touch with each other. Please note the date in your

diaries and try to participate. If you have access to the internet but are not quite sure how the software works, please contact Sonya or one of the deacons, who will be very happy to help you.

Finance

September	Income	1740
	Expenses	<u>2574</u>
	Deficit	834

Our finances continue to run at an average deficit of £750 - £1000 a month. The budget for 2021 will be presented to members at the November church meeting.



Advent Course

This course is a series of daily readings and prayers that can be used individually or as a basis for group discussion. For more information go to engageworship.org. Please let Sonya know by 14th November if you would like her to order a booklet for you or download the PDF version.

There will be a Service of Remembrance on the Playing Field conducted by the Revd Sonya Setchell. We are asked not to encourage too many people to assemble for this but should be able to accommodate a reasonable number at sensibly spaced intervals.

Remembrance Sunday

at
Stoke St Gregory Memorial Field
on
Sunday 8th November, 10.45am



There will not be a house to house collection this year. Poppies are available in local shops as well as supermarkets, etc. Please support this important charity.

From the Parish Council

COVID-19 is becoming more serious in our area

Infection rates in Somerset are still less than the national average, but they are rising in a second wave parallel to the pattern nationally. The latest statistics can be seen at www.somerset.gov.uk/covid-19-dashboard.

The effects of catching COVID-19 could be devastating to our elderly residents, and it is only a matter of time before it touches Stoke St Gregory. It is vital therefore that we remain vigilant in following NHS guidelines to protect us all from catching or passing on the virus. Many people exhibit no symptoms, and inadvertently infect others without being aware that they themselves are infected. Assume that

everyone you meet could have been infected, and self-isolate immediately if you have any reason to suspect that you may have come into contact with the virus. For more information see the village website or contact the Health Centre.

Nick Sloane.



The Travelling Post Office

Visits Stoke once a week on Thursdays 10.15 – 12.15, offering all the services of a full post office

The friendly post office assistant, John Bull, is seen here at his desk in the meeting room of the Village Hall.

Harvest Appeal for Chad

At our harvest service we watched a video made by BMS about their work in Chad.

Photographer, Alex Baker, took photos of the hospital and some of them can be seen on the BMS website together with the stories behind the shots. We have sent £350 to BMS for this appeal.



“It was in the operating theatre that we understood for the first time what makes Kalbassou, Director of G2, so special. Why his skills are such a blessing. Watching him performing surgery was an intense experience – it’s a space where the preciousness of life becomes apparent. Kalbassou was as calm and commanding there as he was when he greeted us. He was exactly the person I’d want to operate on me.”



Shoebboxes there is still time to fill a shoebox. You need to take it to the Manse before 8th November. Alternatively you can send a virtual shoebox. Details are online at www.samaritans-purse.org.uk .

For our Prayers

Graham and Valerie Board
Chris and Anne Coate
Steve and Charlotte Pimm and
Megan
Kathy and Mike Davidson
Betty Woodland and family
Jonathan and Karen Stannard,
Eleanor, Toby and Matty



We also remember those who are having a difficult time health-wise or as they become separated by and weary of the Covid restrictions. Our love and prayers are with Ron and Freda, Anne J, Anne M, David and Judith, Paddy, John and Bill, and Sonya's Mum and Dad, Gill and Ivan, for comfort, resilience and healing.

Please pray for the residents and staff of local care homes and their families. We specially remember Joan Upham so well cared-for at Avalon, and Lizzie and Paul with very limited visiting, as well as other friends in a similar situation.

We continue to pray for all in our schools and further education. Our thoughts are with Lesley as she shoulders complex difficulties of her students; Luke as he now heads two schools. We pray they will be given strength equal to the task. With no letting up of the pandemic all our teachers at all levels face new and different situations every day and our prayers are with them.

On the move....

We understand that Mrs Liz Moorsom is handing over to a new Head at Stoke. We welcome Mrs Dawn Baker as she takes up the baton. Our thoughts and prayers are with them both.

After more than 30 years in our community and very much part of our church family at SSGBC, Jan and Colin are moving on! We shall certainly miss them. Yet we appreciate there can come a time in our lives when change is the right move. We thank them for what they have meant to us at Griggs Hill and the wider community and wish them much happiness and God's blessing as they re-locate to Milverton – not too far away! We hope Colin and Jan will soon settle in their new home and neighbourhood; we will keep in touch!

We were sorry to hear of the death of Basil Mann at the end of September. He had been very unwell particularly since his wife Jo died earlier in the year. He was such a gentleman and they were a lovely couple – much loved by their neighbours, friends and the SSG Meals team.

Amanda



We've been coming along to the chapel since 2003 shortly after we moved to the area, after meeting John and Karen Barnes who recommended the church as a "family friendly place"! We felt very welcome there from day one! I'm married to Stuart and we

have four children: Georgina, Amelia, Freddie and Olivia.

I currently work at North Curry school as a Teaching Assistant, working on a one-to-one basis in the afternoons. I've been supporting SEN children within primary schools since 2010.

I was approached about becoming a deacon last year, but didn't feel confident about standing at the time. However, when I was asked again recently I felt that it was now the right time, and although still not certain about what skills I can offer, I think that God encourages us sometimes to step outside of our comfort zone and trust that he'll guide as needed! I feel honoured to have been voted in as a deacon and hope to learn from past and existing deacons as to how best to serve the church, the membership and our local community.

1st	"Called to be a sacrificial community" with communion	Zoom
8th	Remembrance service 10.45am	Memorial playing field
15th	"Waiting for a king"	Zoom
22nd	"Called to be a missionary community" Carl Smethurst preaching. Special offering for Home Mission and Sunday school is planning to meet	Church building
29th	Advent 1: "Holy Suspense"	Zoom