

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church

October 2024

News



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From Sonya

It is at this time of year that we celebrate Harvest. As we do this, we look back over the year and remember those who have worked so hard to gather in the harvest so that we will all have enough food to eat. We thank God for making the crops grow and for providing us with so much. At our harvest service we spent some time thinking about the things that we like to have and the things that we really need. In this country we all have so many blessings to thank God for. Why not take some time this week to think of the good things in your life – good friendships, a vast choice of food to eat, clean water to drink, a beautiful area to live in etc. and take some time to be grateful and to thank God. Let's also think about who we could share with. There are many people in our world who do not have enough. Who could we share something of what we have with today?



In this part of the world when we celebrate harvest, we also look forward to the harvest which is yet to come – for example the willow which will be harvested over the coming winter. We put our trust in God that He will continue to provide us with good things. In this coming season, let's choose to trust in the God who loves each of us so very much and who knows what we need. Let's look to Him to provide for us.

Blessings to you all,

Sonya

BENON'S VISIT



On 8th September we were blessed to have our Ugandan missionary partner, Benon, come to tell us of his work for God in his country. He is based in the capital, Kampala, and has to organise a team of about seven others. (Genesis, the agriculturalist, is 300 kms from Kampala.) He emphasised that churches are problem solvers and there to attend to people's spiritual and physical needs. The churches Benon approaches are multi denominational and follow the CCMP

principle. CCMP is a tool to empower people transform their situations holistically using God-given local resources - natural, human abilities, spiritual, and time. The process helps churches build relationships within the communities and mobilise local resources to meet the community's needs. As such, CCMP helps break dependency on outside aid organisations. Benon gave examples of how CCMP had helped people improve their standards of living, and showed slides of men and women of all denominations sharing information and work for their communities. He quoted two references to back this up - 'My people perish for a lack of vision', and 'How good it is for brothers to dwell in harmony'.

Benon and his team are working with Churches fighting injustice, especially focusing on Gender Based Violence. He explained that one of the problems addressing the abuse of girls and women is innate culture, Uganda being very much a patriarchal society. In order to change attitudes it is important to get religious leaders as well as cultural leaders, ie the kings and politicians, on side. He is trying to get preachers to devote a short part of their sermons to addressing the sin of GBV.

Benon gave us much to think about and we were left with the sure knowledge that God is working through Benon, and Genesis, helping Ugandan people live better lives.

Thank you for writing this Tim – Benon certainly was inspirational to listen to and it was a real privilege to have him visit us.

Looking Ahead...

Although Christmas is quite some way away, and we have yet to turn the clocks back...it is time to start thinking about Samaritan's Purse's Operation Christmas Child and their Shoebox appeal.



This year, UK shoeboxes will be destined for children in Malawi. Due to its dire economic situation, many Malawian children grow up without proper toys and end up making their own out of the clay-like

soil that forms after rain.

There is plenty of information online about how to make up and fill a physical shoebox, plus information about building a shoebox online if this is more convenient - www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/shoebox2024 and there will also be leaflets in the chapel. The deadline for getting shoeboxes ready for collection is **11-18th November** (collection places to be confirmed nearer the time).

Harvest

Thank you to the Farming Community Network for this piece which is taken from their resources for the celebration of harvest festival.

Stuck behind a tractor! (by Reverend Sarah Brown)



Hoorah!! It is harvest time again!! There you are, hurtling through the lanes in your car on some mission of huge national importance, muttering venomously at cyclists in helmets shaped like wasps' bottoms, inconsiderate enough to want a bit of your road (and hoping they can't lip-read), rounding a bend and coming up behind the ponderous majesty of a tractor and trailer. On closer inspection over the next ten minutes you conclude that it is actually a convoy of three tractors and two trailers and the glory of the aforementioned ponderous majesty begins to wear a bit thin! Hoorah. It is harvest time again. And I would wager a considerable sum that most of you do not at this point start singing songs of everlasting thanks and praise to our great God for his generous provision, or blessing the farmers for the work they do to put food on our plates!

So here is your challenge for harvest and beyond. I've learned to do it and if I can manage it anyone can. If you get stuck on your travels behind a tractor or a combine or a plough or any other mysteriously shaped implement of the sod, (by which I mean, of course, the soil!) take it as an opportunity for reflection, for thanksgiving and for praise.

Why should you bother? Firstly because praising God for what he gives us should become a matter of habit in all of us and secondly because as a nation we owe a huge debt of gratitude to the farmers who are taken totally for granted by most of us who have become emotionally and practically detached from the source of our food.

We cannot and must not take national food security as a given. Climate change and population growth mean that it is more difficult to produce enough grain for the world's needs. Global markets will sell to the highest bidder regardless of need. Political mismanagement and the power of global enterprise in the inherently local business of food production are putting countless family farms out of business.

So when you get stuck behind that tractor take a deep breath, smile and wave at the farmer and ask for God's blessing on his family and work. Reflect on our corporate relationship to food and the land as the God given source of all our well-being and praise God from whom all blessings flow. And if I rush in late to take your service on a Sunday morning you will understand why! Happy harvest to you all.

For our Prayers

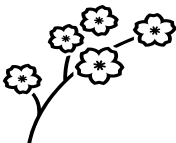
Please keep the following people in your prayers – Anne Jackson's family, Mary Strange, Tim Spotswood, Chris Coate, Paddy Scott, Sonya and Ian. The FCN volunteers and the farmers and their families who they support. May the Lord pour out his blessings on them.



BMS Birthday Scheme



We celebrate the birthdays of Alison White on the 14th and Gill Yaskin on the 27th. We thank them for supporting the scheme and wish them both a joyful day.



October Flowers

- 6th** Alison White
- 13th** Messy Church
- 20th** Ruth Loveridge
- 27th** Liz Hembrow

NOV 3rd Messy Church

October 2024 Calendar

Day	Time	
Tues 1st	2.00pm	Open the Book planning meeting
	7.00pm	Deacons' Prayer on Zoom
Weds 2nd	12 noon	Luncheon Club
Thurs 3rd	9.30am-11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
	1.00pm	Anne Jackson's Funeral
Sun 6th	10.30am	FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICE with COMMUNION
Thurs 10th	9.30am-11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 13th	10.00am	MESSY CHURCH with breakfast
Wed 16th	12 noon	Luncheon Club
	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 17th	9.30am-11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 20th	10.30am	FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICE
Mon 21st	7.30pm	Deacons Meeting
Weds 23rd	7.30pm	Homegroup
Thurs 24th	9.30am-11.30am	TWiGs in the Schoolroom
Sun 27th	10.30am	FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICE CHURCH MEMBERS MEETING
Weds 30th	12 noon	Luncheon Club
	7.30pm	Homegroup
Sun 3rd Nov	10.00am	MESSY CHURCH with Breakfast

Church Giving

The Baptist Church at Stoke St Gregory relies solely on donations. Should you wish to make an online donation at any time, please use the following details, using the reference "Church Giving":

Account Name: Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church

Account Number: 00604544

Sort Code: 30-98-45



"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you." Jeremiah 29 v11-12