

Stoke St Gregory Baptist Church NEWS September 2020

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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 Sonya

During lockdown, people suddenly became aware of where our food comes from and the work that goes into producing it. They started to value food producers instead of taking them for granted. This month we are celebrating Harvest and praising God for providing us with food to eat. It is right that we are thankful to God because He makes the crops grow.



Psalm 67:5+6 says, “May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us.”

We are planning a Harvest service in the church building at 10.30am on Sunday 27th September.

But at this time, we also remember the farmers who have put in so much hard work to produce good food for us to eat. It has been a difficult year for farmers for many different reasons. The Arthur Rank Centre is encouraging churches this Harvest to say thank you to our farmers. So, I encourage you, as well as thanking God, to think of a small way to say thank you to the farmers that you know, so that they know that their hard work is appreciated.

Blessings to you all,
Sonya

There will be a small display for harvest this year and the service will include a video from BMS World Mission about their harvest appeal for their hospital in Chad.

BMS is our charity this year and we will be taking up an offering for this work. We hope to be able to give generously.

Church Annual Meeting

Monday 12th October

7.30pm

Finance

August Gift Aid	1694
Receipts	2640
Payments	<u>2866</u>
Surplus	1468

Chad

One of the poorest countries in the world, Chad has struggled with instability throughout its history. BMS works in two hospitals in Chad. One in the north of the country, and another near N'Djamena, the capital, which is serving the local Muslim-majority community.



Every day in Chad, mothers and children die. Chad has one of the worst maternal and child mortality rates in the world, with over 75 per cent of women giving birth with no midwife or doctor present.

In July 2015, BMS opened a new maternal health centre at Guinebor II hospital near N'Djamena. Now, they want to continue supporting the centre, which helps to safely deliver over 100 babies every month.

BMS supports two health workers, who

provide treatment to malnourished children and also run a wider hunger prevention awareness programme.

The disease prevention programme provides a basic medical awareness to people, as well as practical items (such as mosquito nets), to try and prevent illnesses and disease.

BMS also supports the hospital chaplain and his outreach programme to the local Muslim-majority community. This outreach is done through prayer with patients, Christian film evenings and building positive relationships.



BMS Birthday Scheme

Our love and best wishes to Liz Hembrow as she celebrates her birthday on 23rd. Happy birthday Liz! The Birthday Scheme is a great way to get our church friends involved in supporting BMS World Mission's health and medical ministries around the world.

Luncheon Club



Will it, won't it? Shall we, should we? After a week obsessively watching the weather forecast for thunderstorms, Wednesday dawned hot – and got hotter! Fortunately we were able to borrow a large gazebo to provide much needed shade. Over a dozen of our lunchers gathered together with their helpers and the team for

sandwiches, scones and cake. Without exception everyone said how good it was to get out and meet people again. “This is my ‘get out of jail free’ card, one lady said.

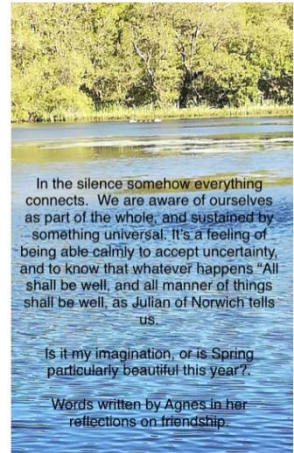
We very much hope to start serving lunches again as soon as the government guidelines permit.

“We will meet again ...”

Another happy occasion as we were able to gather together for worship on Sunday 23rd. Again we were watching the weather but the rain held off and eventually the sun peeped out. Sonya and Ian led the service – they had hidden stones for us to find so we were able to move about and keep warm. They then preached on the themes of hope, peace, mercy, etc, interspersed with prayers, readings and intercessions. We were able to give things for the many blessings we have enjoyed: the kindness of friends and family, technology that has enabled us to stay connected. We also prayed for those facing change and uncertainty. Thank you Sonya and Ian for organising this service.



A Harvest of Talent



My son lives in a beautiful part of Wales. Every morning he walks his large dog and when lockdown started he kept in touch by sending me a photograph from his phone so that I could share his walks and enjoy the spring flowers and lovely scenery. I thought it would be good to make a book with some of the photographs and to add a few poems and words that I thought fitted the pictures. The words I put on one picture were written by my sister during her final illness and in a way seemed to fit with some of the feelings in lockdown. I have enjoyed putting the book together with the guidance of my daughter and it has been good to try something new to me.

I am now going through old photographs and making a family history and I am still amazed by modern technology. *Mary S*



During lockdown, I saw on TV that there was an organisation in the Midlands that was sewing scrubs for the NHS, and I thought that I had the skills to do that and could maybe help. There was a sudden urgent need for lots of Scrub "pyjamas", and scrub hats and headbands, as everyone at the hospital had to wear these instead of their normal clothes,

and they had to be washed daily. These clothes are worn underneath PPE. We also made drawstring laundry bags.

I searched and found “Taunton Scrubbers”, it was organised via Facebook and grew very rapidly, they had various hubs where people could deliver their Products, and volunteers from a Driving School (who were not working) did a collection run twice a week. Then I discovered that Alison Katte was also sewing scrubs, and she gave me a pattern for a scrub hat, and so we went on scavenging bits of cotton fabric from our cupboards, and turning them into hats. The buttons on the side are



for the elastic loops of face masks, as otherwise they rub ears and make them sore. You may have noticed that, now that we are all wearing masks!!! *Julia S.*

During the height of the pandemic I made hearts for Musgrove Park Hospital. The idea was for the patient in hospital to have one of the hearts and the relatives to have the other. Hopefully this provided some comfort and connection between them whilst the patient was in hospital. *Alison K*

Wild Flower Meadow

One of the only benefits of 'lockdown' has been time to appreciate nature around us. I am sure you too have been seeing God in even the smallest creatures and flowers around us. A few weeks ago Julia and I paid a visit to Rosemoor Gardens and were bowled over by the beautiful wildflower meadow they have created. This made me think it would be good aesthetically and for the small creatures to turn a small area of the chapel's grounds into a wild flower meadow.

Wild flower meadows are vital for insects as well as being beautiful to look at, will reduce the amount of grass needed to mow and once established reduce our maintenance costs.

The initial stage involves removing areas of grass, scarifying, then sowing Yellow Rattle seeds; these need at least 4 months at 5 degrees C to germinate so must be sown before the end of November.

Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) is an annual, completing its life cycle in one year. In early spring the seeds germinate and grow quickly. As their roots develop underground they seek out the roots of plants



growing nearby, especially grasses. Once contact is made the yellow rattle draws water and nutrients from them, suppressing the growth of grasses by as much as 60%. In the resulting space, other flowers have room to grow. The plan is next year to start wildflower plants in pots in our gardens and in the autumn plant these in the designated area colonised by the

Yellow Rattle. We will have a plug planting day in the autumn of 2021. Thanks to all those who have volunteered with help and equipment; I will be in touch. *Tim S*

Thoughts on going back to school:



Thomas:

It will be lots of fun to see my mates again. We can play fun games and run around in the playground. But it will be different because I think they won't let us be within a metre of each other.

William:

I can't wait to see my mates again and play football. But I think it will be really different from how it was before. I think we will have to social distance and wash our hands after each lesson.

Catching up...

We are sorry to learn that Steve Loveridge's brother Colin passed away recently. He grew up in Stoke, and lived in Taunton latterly. Our thoughts and prayers are with Steve and Ruth and family.

We are delighted to hear news from the Saunders family: Georgie and Luke are to be married on Saturday 5th September at St James Church, East Lambrook. Our love and prayers are with Georgie and Luke; Amanda and Stuart and families.

For our Prayers

Mary Cooper
Ruth and Steve Loveridge
Dianne Sheppard
Joan Thatcher
Gill and Anthony Yaskin



Throughout the year, each month, we remember individuals, couples and families who are part of our church family. Next month it may be you we are praying for. By the end of the year, we will have prayed for all listed in the directory.

At this time for those still on holiday or enjoying days out, we pray for safe journeys, that all will be kept safe and feel energised and refreshed by new or fond familiar experiences. We specially remember those in stressful situations when travel plans suddenly fall through or disruption of unexpected quarantines. We wish Sonya and Ian a happy time with family and a generous dose of R & R in Cumbria.

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with those in our church family and the wider community who are facing difficult times: our young people who have left school, college and university, uncertain of their future; those whose circumstances have changed due to the pandemic; others who are undergoing medical treatment.

6 th September	communion service outside in the church grounds led by John Courtie
13 th September	outdoor service in the church grounds led by Tim Spotswood
20 th September	Service on Zoom led by Sonya. Theme is "Worshipping inspires our everyday speech."
21 st September	Deacons meeting by Zoom
27 th September	Harvest service in the church building led by Sonya

The church is open for quiet prayer every Monday from 10am – 1.00pm