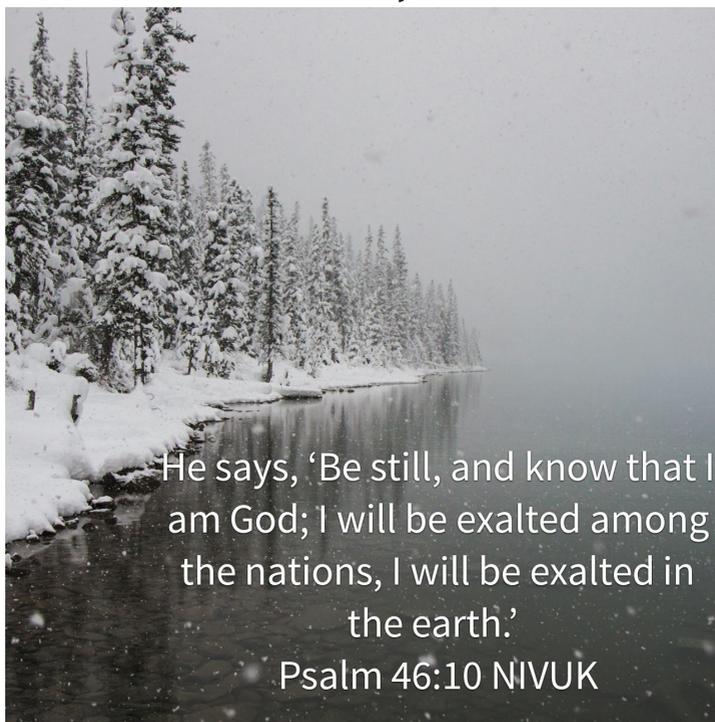


www.ssgbaptists.org.uk

STOKE ST GREGORY BAPTIST CHURCH NEWS FEBRUARY 2017



He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.'

Psalm 46:10 NIVUK

Moderator:
Rev Peter Morgan

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**OUR VERSE
FOR 2018**

***YOU WILL SEEK ME AND
FIND ME WHEN YOU
SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR
HEART.***

***JEREMIAH 29: 13
(NIVUK)***

Dear Friends,

February 14th is fast approaching. It is designated as Valentine's Day and it brings to mind love and romance, flowers and chocolates, and secret messages of affection! St Valentine is a widely-recognised third century Roman saint. He was put to death for marrying Christian couples against wishes of the emperor Claudius II. It was the poet Chaucer in the middle ages who first linked this Christian martyr with romantic love, as we do today.

This year, February 14th is also Ash Wednesday. This day marks the beginning of the period of Lent which runs for the six weeks before Easter Sunday. Traditionally it is the season of reflection for Christians – a preparation before the glorious celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the past, Lent has been a period of fasting to give more time for spiritual activity such as bible reading and prayer. More recently, many people have chosen to give up something they enjoy during this time – anything from chocolate to cheese, or from playing Candy

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Crush to watching the favourite 'soap'. This

may well be good personal discipline, but we should always check our motives. Maybe this could be a year to use Lent to take on a challenge to do something each day to build our faith or to do a good deed for someone else.

However you choose to use your time in this special time of year, I pray you will be blessed.
Revd Peter



Lent Offerings

There will be a United Lent Study commencing on Monday 19 February.

The York Course prepared by John Prichard has been chosen and deliberations will be led by Rev John Tyler at the Stoke Baptist church starting at 4.00 pm. The sessions will run for five weeks.

Our **Home group** will be exploring 'Following Jesus' during Lent, using materials prepared by Gordon Cheng and led by Tim Spotswood. Starting on Ash Wednesday 14 February at 3.00 pm, these sessions will also be held in the Baptist schoolroom.

You are very welcome to join one or both of these groups.

BMS World Mission – Day of Prayer.



“Every February, BMS World Mission staff in the UK and mission personnel around the world dedicate a day to prayer – in all its forms.

We do this because we believe in prayer, and we know you do too. That’s why we’re inviting you to join us on 4 February 2018 as we pray for God’s amazing work. We encourage you to pray as a church, in a group, as a family or individually.”

We are asked to pray for the leaders of overseas local churches, their communities, for peace and reconciliation. There is more information at www.bmsworldmission.org/ On the website there are stories from places around the world where BMS work, including China, where David and Jenny have been based since 2010 and whom our church helps to support.

We send 5 per cent of our income to BMS every year and also the BMS birthday money.

BMS Birthday Scheme

Thank you to all who belong to the birthday scheme. During 2017 your gifts raised £172.42 towards the work of BMS World Mission. This month we wish Anne Coate ‘happy birthday’ on the 25th



Make a difference, help to transform lives –

to join the scheme, speak to Alison Katte or Hazel Hutchings. You will receive a birthday card, a token of appreciation for your donation which you can pass on to Hazel or put in the offering in the envelope provided. If you wish BMS to receive gift aid, please provide the relevant info.

ONE MILLION LIVES transformed by 2020

This is BMS World Mission’s plan: ‘To transform one million lives in God’s strength through seven ministries. Through workers, partners and grants, this is what we do’.

**CHURCH
DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION
HEALTH
JUSTICE
LEADERSHIP
RELIEF**

Fairtrade Fortnight 26 February – 11 March



Fairtrade Fortnight aims to put a spotlight on trade. When trade is fair it has the potential to improve the lives of the farmers and workers who grow our food. When trade is fair, it can make the world a better place. Together we have that power, so get involved and be part of the difference. It's a shocking fact that millions of poor farmers who produce the food we love still don't earn enough to feed their own families. It's time for this injustice to end. Through Fairtrade, millions of poor farmers and workers are already coming together to demand a change. They are working hard to close the door on exploitation and transform their communities, supported by Fairtrade. There are loads of ways that you can get involved in what we hope will be the biggest Fairtrade Fortnight yet. We will have Fairtrade products available to buy or order in the church. Products include flowers, food, clothes, gifts, even beauty products! So come along and get involved.

CAMEO – Come and Meet each other

We met in January for lunch and a discussion about the things we'd like to do in the coming year. Suggestions included a train journey and a visit to Barrington Court and the toy museum at Montacute. The film show and tea is always popular as are craft and quiz afternoons. We are trying to draw up a programme that will encourage anyone to join us when they have the time but also caters to the needs of the older and less mobile. We hope you will find something to suit your taste.

To start the year we have been fortunate to persuade Julia Spotswood to talk to us about being a magistrate.

Why is a magistrate called a



beak? Come along on Tuesday 13th February at 2.30pm in the Schoolroom,

and find out. To be followed by a Bring and Share Fairtrade Tea. Please let us know if you need transport.

Cameo is not a club, you don't have to be a member, anyone is welcome join us on any occasion.

Home Study Group

We started the year looking at the Rule of St Benedict: "What kind of Man the Abbot should be".

We went on to compare this with the role of the minister as outlined in Baptist Basics 8, "Leadership in the Local Church". A minister "enables God's people to understand their individual Christian journey", having responsibility for the oversight and growth of the Church as well engaging with the wider community. They have to lead by example as well as teaching, supporting and mentoring and much, much more...

We have compared the conduct of meetings in the monastery with Baptist Basics 6 "The Church Members Meeting" and found interesting similarities and differences.

We will continue with the Rule for two more weeks before beginning our lent studies. (see p.2)

Messy Church

The next Messy Church will be on Friday 9th March and the theme will be Mothering Sunday.



Luncheon Club

Numbers were down at the start of the year due to ill health



and the roadworks, however we had a good turnout the following fortnight

despite the horrible weather.

If you would like to enjoy good food and company, or know someone who you think would like to come, please let us know. Transport can be arranged.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Will be held at the Baptist Church this year on Friday 2nd March. The country is Suriname and the theme is "All God's creation is very good".

The service from Suriname is a challenging one and as so often happens with WDP services, it is also very topical. Caring for God's very good creation is hugely important and highly

relevant to people of all ages and beliefs.

Do come along and get involved.



February Flowers



4th Kathy Davidson
11th Amanda Saunders
18th Jane Waters-Fuller
25th Anne Coate

March 4th Lesley Perry

We thank all are involved in the flower ministry month by month. Your gift of flowers is appreciated by all as we worship week by week and again by those in the community who receive them after the service with our love.

For our Prayers

David and Eileen Hunt
Stuart Mark
Rachel and Simon Robinson,
William and Thomas
John and Joan Upham
Our friends at St Gregory's

We were sorry to learn Des lost his father as 2017 came to a close. Our love and prayers are with Des and Lesley and Des's mother and the family.

Pam Botterill sustained injuries following a fall and we pray for her comfort. She has been transferred to a nursing home.

We mourn the passing of Ralph. Ralph has been a long standing member of the church, serving as a deacon and treasurer for many years. He will be sadly missed by us all. Ralph had a quiet way about him but always had a twinkle in his eye and wonderful dry sense of humour.

We remember Mary and the family in our prayers at this time.

Our thoughts continue to be with others in our church family and the wider community who are facing difficult times. God knows their needs and concerns. We pray they will feel His peace and comfort.

Many friends have been struggling with particularly nasty seasonal colds and flu. We wish them all a speedy recovery.

Congratulations to Michael & Katie on the arrival of a son, George. Liz's grandson.

Pastoral Team

Alison White and Di Callaghan have been chosen to head the pastoral team. If you have any concerns about a member of the fellowship or a situation that you feel needs praying about, please contact them.

Other members of the team will help them by visiting, taking flowers, praying ... or anything else that might be helpful.

Village Agent

Audrey Mansfield Village Agent is now working for Adult Social Care in Taunton Deane and GP Surgeries in Broadway and Ilminster as a Community Agent. She will no longer be acting as a Village Agent within the villages. However, Audrey is still contactable if you need any advice where she can look at forwarding your concern onto another bordering Village Agent to assist with if appropriate. Still working for the Community Council for Somerset, Audrey hopes to continue to stay in touch with the local community as her knowledge and connections can be helpful to those she will be helping through Social Care and GP's.

Thank you to all those that support Audrey in her role within the Community she serves.

Bon voyage!

As we approach February, Alice will be finding her feet in Bangladesh where she is serving with VSO for 3 months. We look forward to hearing how she is getting on.

Others are visiting family and friends overseas at this time. We pray that they will have good journeys and a happy time with new experiences, catching up and some R and R as well.

Congratulations!

Helen Onley celebrated her 90th birthday at the end of January by holding a gathering of friends and family at the Royal Oak. Her son, Martin remarked in his speech that as a family they left the village in December last year under a veil of darkness - Helen having broken her second hip. However, one year on it was lovely to return and mark such a special occasion with Helen looking fighting fit, thanks to the care and support of those present.

Charity Lunch

Monday 26
February 12.30
– 2.00 pm at
the Baptist
schoolroom. In
support of Scouts, Cubs, Beavers.
Hosted by Kath Long & Co



The **Deacons and PCC** recently met to draw up a programme for the year of joint events including the Good Friday service, Easter Sunrise service, Christian Aid Week, Songs of Praise, Remembrance Sunday, as well as those mentioned in this newsletter. Of interest to those with family roots in Stoke will be St Gregory's Parish Church Open Weekend 7 and 8 April, open for viewing Church records and registers.

Day	Time	Event
Thur 1	8.30 9.15	Prayer time TWIGs in the schoolroom
Sun 4	10.00 10.30 12.00	Church open for prayer Family worship with Communion Revs Peter and Kathryn Morgan followed by Meeting of the Church
Wed 7	12.00 3.00	Luncheon Club in the schoolroom Home group with Joan
Thur 8	8.30 9.15	Prayer time TWIGs in the schoolroom
Fri 9	7.30	Deacons meeting at Leeswood, Meare Green
Sat 10	8.30 9.00	Prayer Time Who Let the Dads Out? in the schoolroom
Sun 11	10.00 10.30	Church open for prayer Des Perry and deacons
Mon 12	9.00 -5.00	Church open for Prayer all day
Tue 13	2.30	CAMEO talk by Julia Spotswood followed by Fairtrade tea
Wed 14	3.00	Ash Wednesday beginning of Lent (<i>see page 2</i>) Home group Lent course in the schoolroom
Sun 18	10.00 10.30	Church open for prayer Café church with Rev Nigel Manges
Mon 19	4.00	Lent course led by Rev John Tyler in the Baptist schoolroom (<i>see page 2</i>)
Wed 21	12.00	Luncheon Club in the schoolroom Home group Lent course in the schoolroom
Thur 22	8.30 9.15	Prayer time TWiGs in the schoolroom
Sun 25	10.00 10.30	Church open for prayer Family Worship with Rev John Courtie
Mon 26	12.30 4.00	Charity lunch in the schoolroom for Scouts (<i>p 7</i>) Lent course led by Rev John Tyler in the Baptist schoolroom
Wed 28	3.00	Home group Lent course in the schoolroom
March Sun 4	10.30	Baptist Union President Dianne Tidball preaching at Yeovil Baptist Church