



Pews News

United Benefice of Shenstone & Stonnall



4th Sunday after Trinity – 5th July 2020

**The Lord be with you
And also with you**

We are of course very excited about our churches re-opening. A lot of work and consultation has taken place and although the services are limited we can at least worship together for a short time. Details and opening times are included in this edition of PEWS NEWS

If you are unsure about any aspect regarding church services please do give me a call.

With all Blessings
Rev Liz
01543 480286



**Collect Prayer –
4th Sunday after Trinity**

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of Jesus
you brought salvation to our
wayward world:
draw us into harmony with your
will,
that we may find all things
restored in him,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Opening Times and Services
St John the Baptist, Shenstone**

Sunday 5 th July	10.00 am to 1.00 pm 11.00 – 11.30 am	Church Open Morning Worship led by Rev Liz Chamberlain
Sunday 12 th July	4.00 pm	Evening prayer led by Rev Liz Chamberlain
Wednesday 15 th July	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Church open for private prayer and reflection
Sunday 19 th July	10.00 am to 1.00 pm 11.00 – 11.30 am	Church Open Morning Worship led by Alan Bateman
Wednesday 22 nd July	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Church open for private prayer and reflection
Sunday 26 th July	10.00 am to 1.00 pm 11.00 – 11.30 am	Church Open Morning Worship led by Carol Law
Wednesday 29 th July	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Church open for private prayer and reflection

**Opening Times and Services
St Peter's Church Stonnall**

Wednesday 8 th July	10.00 – Noon	Church open for private prayer and reflection
Sunday 12 th July	10.00 – Noon	Church Open time of led worship by Rev Liz to be confirmed
Wednesday 15 th July	10.00 – Noon	Church open for private prayer and reflection
Sunday 19 th July	10.00 – Noon	Church Open time of led worship by Patsy Toulouse to be confirmed
Wednesday 22 nd July	10.00 – Noon	Church open for private prayer and reflection
Sunday 26 th July	10.00 – Noon	Church Open time of led worship by Graham Wigley to be confirmed

All opening times dependent on availability of stewards.

Important for St Peter's Church

St Peter's Church will be open for the first time on a Sunday, 12th July between 10 – Noon, during that opening time Rev Liz will lead a short half hour service of Morning Prayer. Due to restrictions seating is available for only 16 people. A 2m distancing has been adopted so that wearing a mask is not required, although if you want to wear a mask you can do so. If you would like to come to the led part of the morning **its important that you 'book in'. Please call Rev Liz to book a place.** If more than 16 want to reserve a place Rev Liz is happy to lead more than one service during the opening time.



News from the Church of England – current as at 3rd July 2020

- Public acts of worship within church are now allowed to take place, subject to certain conditions.
- From 15th June, when safe to do so, churches may open for private prayer time.
- Weddings and funerals are permitted to take place within churches, subject to certain conditions.
- <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>
- <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/latest-coronavirus-information>

Our Prayers

- We pray for all our Government, our Bishops and Clergy. We pray especially for the Prime Minister and our Government as decisions continue to be made.
- We thank you for the Queen and the Royal Family
- We pray for our country as we cope with the lifting of some restrictions. We particularly think of Leicester city at this time. Protect us and help us to make the right choices.
- We think about families preparing funeral services at this time under very different circumstances.
- Many couples who expected to get married this year have moved their weddings till next year. However two couples are getting

married in August and September and we hold Lisa and Ian, and Gemma and Russell in prayer.

- We hold our clergy, Church Wardens and PCC members in prayer as they continue to work through the guidance and changes required to enable our churches to open.
- We hold before the Lord our schools, teachers, support workers and those pupils who have returned to school. We ask for patience and strength for all families where children have not been able to return to school.
- We thank you for all key and frontline workers. Protect them Lord

Mike Raybould

Mike's funeral will be 9th July, 1.00 pm at Sutton Crematorium, followed by a service at 2.00 pm St John the Baptist. Due to current restrictions attendance at both the Crematorium service and the Church service will be by invitation only. However if you would like to listen to the service will be relayed outside. If you are invited to attend the church service please would you wear a face mask and brightly coloured clothing.

If the weather permits you are very welcome to bring a picnic, but please observe social distancing on the glebe land (social bubbles of 6, 2m metres apart) while you enjoy your food. Hot drinks will be available outside of church after the service.

Larry Butler

Larry's funeral will take place 22nd July at 2.30 pm and attendance at this is by invitation only. However St John the Baptist Church will be open that afternoon should you wish to spend some time in private prayer and reflection.

Happy Wedding News

Sarah Williams (who used to worship at St John the Baptist and niece of our own Joyce Williams) married her fiancé Richard Cunningham on Saturday 4th July. Sarah and Richard are one of the first couples to marry after the lifting of lockdown restrictions and applied for a Common Licence to allow the marriage to go ahead. The wedding has been reported in the media including Midlands Today and Good Morning Britain.

We wish the happy couple well and may their marriage be a blessing to them and to their families.

Here are some links to follow if you would like to see some reporting.

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.eveningexpress.co.uk/news/uk/no-bells-no-singing-staffordshire-couple-ready-for-post-lockdown-wedding/amp/>

<https://www.itv.com/hub/good-morning-britain/2a3211a2822>

Help and Assistance

We want to make sure everyone in our church and our communities stay safe. If you have any need whatever please contact one of our care coordinators who will their best to find someone to help you.

Graham & Margaret Birt 01543 483138

Di Proctor 01543 480442

Val Neale 01543 374430

Contributions for our local foodbanks.

If you would like to make contribution to our food banks the following collection points are available;

For the Lichfield Food Bank (Shenstone Church) –

The Vicarage, St Johns Hill, a container is in the porchway

7 Church Close, Shenstone, a container is outside the door.

For the Thomas Project (Stonnall Church) –

1 Lazy Hill, a box is inside the porch

Thank you for your generous contributions. Both foodbank projects can only take gifts of non perishable items, so please no fresh goods.

Morning Prayer times on FaceBook

During the week, Monday to Friday, there is a short time of Morning Prayer on both FaceBook pages. This time of prayer is based on the set liturgy for Morning Prayer for the day. You can access an app for this at <https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/time-to-pray>. It's a free app and includes Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Night Prayer for each day.

Church Finances

Although both our churches are closed for public worship and private prayer time our bills still need to be paid. Thank you to those of you who continue to give by standing order and those who have posted donations through the Vicarage door. If you do usually give by envelope on the plate you will have received a letter with a supply of envelopes in to enable you to continue your donations during our shut down time. You can either save these up till we're able to reopen or contact one of the wardens and they'll arrange for it to be collected from you.

Our readings for this Sunday are;

Romans 7:15-25

¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

Matthew 11:16-19, 25 – end

¹⁶ "But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

¹⁷ 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; ¹⁹ the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."^[a]

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, "I thank^[i] you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.^[j] ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Songs for today

Your love shining like the sun. O lord my God.

Thoughts for today

Its lovely to be speaking with people in church, and to actually see you here in church. Although I have been recording services as many of you know, its not quite the same as speaking for real in front of living breathing people.

Our readings today have a great deal of relevance for us all in these times. Come to me all that are weary.... And in Romans we hear about Paul's struggles with doing the right thing, and how the right thing doesn't seem quite as attractive as doing the wrong thing. I'm sure you've all had those moments during lockdown when you've been faced with the choice of 'one more cake, because there's nothing else to do but eat....' No? Just me then Or I really want to go and see so and so, I know I shouldn't... and you struggle with the choice you have to make. No? Just me then. Or must I really wash my hands yet again..... Surely missing once won't hurt. No? Just me then – again! Its easy to become weary though isn't in, living with the circumstances and situation we've all been living through and continue to do so.

Life in usual times is always full of contractions and conflicts and these have been highlighted and exaggerated even more so during the last 3 months. We've all had to make choices and decisions the likes of which we've never had to make before. What should we do, what shouldn't we do? And often what we should do has been in contradiction and conflict with what we want to do. I'm sure many of us our younger days have made rash decisions that as we've got older we've regretted...No? Just

me again then. But the decision we've had to make over the last few months have been important and far reaching ones, and sometimes the contradiction and conflict has resulted in personal pain. Missing family members, missing important family occasions, saying good bye to loved ones in highly pressurised circumstances.

In Matthew's gospel we heard about contradictions and conflicts that our patron saint John the Baptist had to deal with. He was a controversial figure and his lifestyle exposed him to more criticism and dislike, so much so people thought he was possessed. And our Lord himself... Well he mixed with those on the edge of society mixing with those not wanted, tax collectors and sinners. If you happen to have been a tax collector or are still one, welcome. If you happen to have been a sinner or are still one, welcome. Being a tax collector now isn't quite as it was in Jesus' day, being a sinner..... I'll leave you to your own thoughts there. But Jesus was and still is a controversial character. People in his time didn't like it and sulked, he didn't play the game and much like the children in reading, we played and you didn't.... and so on.

It tiring isn't it living through conflict and contradictions but the last few lines of our reading pull this all into line.

Come to me all who are weary. Jesus tells us, he understands when life gets too much, when the conflicts, the contradictions, the decisions, the burdens are too much for us to bear, he knows, he knows. Come to me all who are weary and I will give you rest. Let him take care of it. Over the last few weeks and months, we've all needed someone to take care of things haven't we, and Jesus makes that promise.

That promise of carrying our burdens is one to uplift and hold us, to give us a sense of peace in a world that sometimes at the moment doesn't make a lot of sense. Come to me all who are weary and I will give you rest.

Folks that's one thing that isn't a conflict or a contradiction, Jesus will give us all rest and peace.

St Peter's Church Wardens: - *Peter & Patsy Toulouse 361778*

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