



Pews News

United Benefice of Shenstone & Stonnall



8th Sunday after Trinity – 2nd August 2020

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

We live in an ever-changing world at the moment with guidelines changing along with it. Following very recent changes to comply with the latest guidelines, we actively encourage you to wear a mask during public worship. However from next week (9th August) it is mandatory for you to wear a mask while you attend public worship. You will of course be already used to wearing a mask while you shop so wearing a mask in church may not cause you any issues, but please speak to me or one of the wardens if you are exempt from wearing a face mask.

With all Blessings

Rev Liz

01543 480286



**Collect Prayer –
8th Sunday after Trinity**

Lord God,
your Son left the riches of heaven
and became poor for our sake:
when we prosper save us from
pride,
when we are needy save us from
despair,
that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Opening Times and Services - St John the Baptist, Shenstone

Sunday 2 nd August	10.30 am to noon	Church Open
	11.00 am – 11.30 am	Communion led by Rev Liz
	12.15 pm – 12.45 pm	Baptism of Cecily Cox
Sunday 9 th August	10.30 am to noon	Church Open Morning Worship led by Di Proctor
Sunday 16 th August	10.30 am to noon	Church Open Morning Worship led by Carol Law
Sunday 23 rd August	10.30 am to noon	Church Open Communion led by Rev John
Sunday 30 th August	10.30 am to noon	Church Open Morning Worship led by Curate Graham Wigley

Opening Times and Services - St Peter's Church Stonnall

Sunday 2 nd August	10.00 – Noon 10.30 – 11.00	Church Open Communion led by Rev John
Sunday 9 th August	10.00 – Noon 10.30 – 11.00	Church Open Communion led by Rev Liz
Sunday 16 th August	10.00 – Noon 10.30 – 11.00	Church Open Morning Worship led by Patsy Toulouse
Sunday 23 rd August	10.00 – Noon 10.30 – 11.00	Church Open Morning Worship led by Alan Bateman
Sunday 30 th August	10.00 – Noon 10.30 – 11.00	Church open Communion led by Rev Liz and Rdr Ray Chamberlain

Communion in our churches

We have now been given permission to celebrate Communion in our churches as long as we follow the guidelines about these services. The documentation for this is quite detailed and some careful thought and preparation has been undertaken to enable Communion to be offered from 2nd August. The Communion services will look and feel very different to the services you have been used too.

Whenever possible Communion will be offered at our churches on alternate weeks. In line with guidelines only Communion wafers will be distributed, the priest leading the Communion service will take both wine and wafer.

Due to the restrictions on space and to ensure the safety of all concerned it is not possible for Communion to be taken at the Communion Rail in Stonnall, Communion will be brought to you while you remain in your pew. Communion will take place during the half hour led worship times.

Dates of Communion services during August

2 nd August	11.00 am St John the Baptist Shenstone, led by Rev Liz 10.30 am St Peter's Stonnall, led by Rev John *
9 th August	10.30 am St Peter's Stonnall, led by Rev Liz*
23 rd August	11.00 am St John the Baptist Shenstone, led by Rev John
31 st August	10.30 am St Peter's Stonnall, led by Rev Liz and Rdr Ray Chamberlain*

Midweek Church Opening.

During July both our churches have been opened for a few hours each Wednesday. Both churches have had stewards on duty during these hours however very few people have visited either church, and some sessions no visitors have come to the churches. Our PCCs have prayerfully considered mid week church opening and have made the decision to cease this from August onwards.



News from the Church of England – current as at 31st July 2020

- Public acts of worship within church are now allowed to take place, subject to certain conditions.
- Worshippers are strongly encouraged to wear a mask while inside the building. Wearing a mask during public worship becomes mandatory from 8th August (first Sunday after will be 9th August).
- Weddings, funerals and baptisms are now permitted to take place within churches, subject to certain conditions.
- <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

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. Protect us and help us to make the right choices.
- Many couples who expected to get married this year have moved their weddings till next year. Ian and Lisa are still planning for their wedding to take place in August and we hold them in prayer.
- We give thanks for the families that worship in our churches and we particularly think of Cecily Cox as we prepare for her baptism; to take place today at 12.15 pm, at St John the Baptist Church
- 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 thank you for all key and frontline workers. Protect them Lord
- We give thanks that Jean Tidman is now back at home.
- We hold families recently bereaved in prayer and ask for comfort and strength for them in their time of need. In particular we think of Jean Bishop's family. We hold Pauline Tipton in prayer following the death of her daughter in law.**
- We ask for healing for Joan Terry falling a fall, and continued healing for Kylan.

** This was noted as 'daughter' in error last week. Apologies have been made to Pauline Tipton

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, Tuesday 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.

UCB Bible Study Notes – are available from Rev John, please collect from 4 Fotherley Road, Shenstone.

Our readings for this Sunday are;

Romans 9:1-5

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit— ²I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people,^[a] my kindred according to the flesh. ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; ⁵to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah,^[b] who is over all, God blessed forever.^[c] Amen.

Matthew 14:13-21

¹³ Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵ When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶ Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷ They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸ And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Songs for today

All who are thirsty, Mighty to save

Thoughts for today – by Rev Liz

Those of you who have ever invited someone round for a meal will have had the dilemma 'what on earth can I give them to eat?'. Today we are of course, and rightly so more aware of dietary needs and requirements and sometimes we can end up making a number of variations of a meal, can't we? This person doesn't touch dairy, this person is a vegan, this

person is allergic to shellfish and so on. So if someone said to you, when a group of people were due to arrive, 'oh you give them something to eat' you might be forgiven, but only might, for having a small melt down. 'What can I give them?'

I wonder then what the disciples thought when Jesus said exactly those words to them 'you give them something to eat!'

This account of the feeding of the 5000 appears in all four gospels. In this account we hear today, Jesus has withdrawn in a boat to a deserted place so he can pray and grieve in private. He's just heard that his cousin John the Baptist, has been brutally beheaded, on a whim. Jesus needs, wants to be alone. But his plans don't work, he can't find that space, that quiet, that peaceful place to ...well just be and think. As he sails across the lake, the crowds rush around on foot and get to the other side first and meet him there, with all their needs and wants, their needs for healing, their problems. He arrives to a great crowd. Now unlike you or I, he's not irritated, or cross, impatient, Matthew's account says he has compassion on the people. He sees people who are in need, who need help, he sees individuals, not a crowd of people encroaching on his personal time and space.

When they become physically hungry even then he does not send them away, he reaches out with compassion and feeds them with abundance. In all of the bible every encounter with Jesus, is filled with compassion. This compassion is what draws people to Jesus.

The disciples in contrast want to send people away to nearest village to buy food for themselves. Jesus commands them to feed the people but how? They're not equipped they have no idea how to feed this huge amount of people. But Jesus does, he uses the picnic packed for a little boy, 5 loaves and two fish, to feed this huge amount of people. In Jesus' hand this small amount of food, goes a long way and is more than enough. He had compassion and acted. He changed the 'not quite enough' into 'more than enough'.

Sometimes when we're faced with need and want, we can get overwhelmed can't we? How can I help all those who need? I don't have enough to do everything. Thankfully God can take our 'not enough' and turn it into 'plenty', all we need to do is have compassion just as Jesus always did and does. It doesn't matter how much you have; what matters is what can God do with what you have.

During lockdown donations to the foodbanks both our churches support has been immense, much more than was usual. We have had

compassion for those in need, and while individually we perhaps cannot feed many, collectively and with compassion and God prompting our generosity we can feed many.

During this coming week, you will at some point see a person or come across a situation where compassion is needed. You will know in your heart that God needs you to express compassion and that he has chosen you to show it. And as you wonder what can I do? Is it enough? Remember your 'not enough' can be 'more than enough' in God's hands. Be bold, be brave, be compassionate.

Amen.

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Curate:- Graham Wigley, 0121 352 0899 curate@shenstoneandstonnall.co.uk

Associate Minister: Revd John Aston, 480388, bradston@btinternet.com

St John the Baptist Church Wardens: - Bonnie 480278 & Bill Whitney 480652

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

Parish Administrator: - 480286 admin@shenstoneandstonnall.co.uk

St John's Hall Bookings & Administration: - 480286 admin@shenstoneandstonnall.co.uk

Website: www.stjohnthebaptistshenstone.org.uk Facebook: St John the Baptist Shenstone and St Peters Church
Stonnall