



Pews News

United Benefice of Shenstone & Stonnall



11th Sunday after Trinity – 23rd 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 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 –
11th Sunday after Trinity**

God of glory,
the end of our searching,
help us to lay aside
all that prevents us from seeking
your kingdom,
and to give all that we have
to gain the pearl beyond all price,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Please note
Rev Liz and Ray are on
holiday from 15th August to
25th August.**

Opening Times and Services - St John the Baptist, Shenstone

Sunday 23 rd August	10.30 am to noon 11.00 -11.30	Church Open Communion led by Rev John
Sunday 30 th August	10.30 am to noon 11.00 – 11.30	Church Open Morning Worship led by Curate Graham Wigley

Opening Times and Services - St Peter's Church Stonnall

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.

St Peter's Church – booking in

If you've attended worship at St Peter's Church Stonnall this week (23rd August) and intend to come next week (30th August) please 'book your place for next week' before you leave church today. If you forget to do this please call or email Curate Graham Wigley on

Telephone 0121 352 0899 or

Email; curate@shenstoneandstonnall.co.uk

At the risk of sounding like a theatre box office 'the booking line will close Friday 28th August'.

Joyfully, we are at capacity at St Peter's Church. We want to be able to welcome all who would like to worship with us, and we are very willing to run a second service if this is required.

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 14th August 2020

- Public acts of worship within church are now allowed to take place, subject to certain conditions.
- It is mandatory that worshippers wear a mask while inside the building.
- 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>
- APCMs need to be held by 31st October, more details and dates will follow shortly.

Our Prayers – current as at 14th August 2020

- 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.
- We pray for the people living in Beirut, and all affected by the recent explosion.
- 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 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.

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 12:1-8

12 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters,^[a] by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual^[b] worship. **2** Do not be conformed to this world,^[c] but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.^[d]

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. **4** For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, **5** so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. **6** We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; **7** ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; **8** the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah,^[a] the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter,^[b] and on this rock^[c] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was^[d] the Messiah.^[e]

Songs for today

All my days, 10 000 reasons

Thoughts for today – by Rev John Aston

We have been having readings from Romans for several weeks now and today reached the section where Paul tells us how to put into practice what we have learned.

He urges us to offer ourselves to God as a living sacrifice – seemingly a contradiction in terms. Paul would know full well that sacrifices in the Old Testament ended up with death.

When we turn to Christ we turn our back on the past and focus in Jesus so that we live as he would want us to live. For some people this can be a sacrifice, but worth making. We become part of the body of Christ. As in our own bodies there are many parts, so there are in the body of Christ, each of us with our own specific task to perform. Are we doing the task God has for us?

One of my favourite Bible verses comes to mind – in John 15 Jesus says to his disciples 'You did not choose me but I chose you and placed you that you may bear much fruit' – he wants us to be useful in his world and in his church.

Our reading from Matthew's Gospel poses another question for us. Jesus is at the stage when he needs to prepare his followers for what we know as Holy Week. So he asks first 'who do people say he is?' They answer 'some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets'.

King Herod had thought Jesus was John come back from the dead but then John's death was very much on his conscience. Elijah was very much the archetypal prophet who was expected to return – and no book named after him!

Jesus then asks his disciples who do they think he is, very much putting them on the spot. Impetuous Peter gives a spirit inspired answer which he doesn't understand the implications of – 'You are the Christ (messiah) the son of the living God. A few days later God's voice was heard on the mountain – Listen to Him! Do we listen to Him? Who is Jesus for us? May it be Peter's inspired answer that we give inspiring us to fulfil the tasks God has for us.

Vicar – Rev Liz Chamberlain, 01543 480286 vicar@shenstoneandstonnall.co.uk
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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
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