



Pews News

United Benefice of Shenstone & Stonnall



Sunday 25th April 2021 The Fourth Sunday of Easter

**Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

As you know our public worship can now resume which is very good news! There are of course restrictions still in place regarding social distancing and wearing of masks.

We do look forward to seeing you at church, but we do ask that if you are feeling unwell or showing any symptoms of Corona virus, then please do stay at home and keep yourselves and others safe.

Rev Graham
01213 520899

Collect for Sunday 25th
Risen Christ,
Faithful shepherd of your Fathers sheep:
teach us to hear your voice
and to follow your command,
that all your people may be gathered into one flock,
to the glory of God the Father.

April Services

St John the Baptist, Shenstone

Easter Day Sunday 4 th April	10.45 am* Please note change of time	Easter Day Communion
Sunday 11 th April	10.45 am*	Communion Led by Rev Liz
Sunday 18 th April	10.45 am*	Morning Worship Led by Rev Graham
Sunday 25 th April	10.45 am*	Communion Led by Rev John A

St Peter's Church Stonnall

Easter day Sunday 4 th April	10:45 am	Easter day Communion
Sunday 11 th April	10:45 am	Morning Worship Led by Patsy Toulouse
Sunday 18 th April	10:45 am	Communion Led by Patsy Toulouse and Rev John P
Sunday 25 th April	10:45 am	Morning Worship Led by Rev Graham

These dates and times are subject to change at short notice should government guidance change. If that should be the case every effort will be made to communicate changes to you as quickly as possible.

APCM- Our APCM's are coming up! Here is a handy timetable with all the dates and deadlines:

APCM timetable	Shenstone	Stonnall
APCM date	20/05/2021	09/05/2021
Notice of meeting on door by	02/05/2021	18/04/2021
Nominations for PCC members to be received by	20/05/2021	09/05/2021
Nominations for Wardens to be received by	19/05/2021	08/05/2021
TAR circulated by	01/05/2021	18/04/2021
Accounts to be approved	30/04/2021	
Notice of ER	16/04/2020	09/04/2021
Electoral Roll on Board for review	05/05/2021	04/04/2021
ER taken down as complete		
Revised Roll displayed	12/05/2021	18/04/2021

Recorded Services- For the weeks of the 11th, 18th and 25th April our recorded services will be temporarily on hold and replaced with a link to the online Sunday service from Lichfield Cathedral.

Communion in church - We are really happy to be able to celebrate Communion once more. Communion will be in 'one kind' only, so that means only wafers will be distributed. This is to comply with Church of England instructions still in place. Masks must be worn inside church, singing of hymns is not yet permitted and social distancing restrictions should be complied with.

Please be aware that Stage 1 restrictions are still in place during April.

Here are extracts from the Church of England website;

"Public worship in church, churchyard or other premises where church services are routinely held Permitted as 'communal worship' provided that any person attending is:

- alone or
- part of a group all from the same household or from two linked households and must not join any other group or mingle with any person from another group. A statutory risk assessment must be carried out and all reasonable measures taken to limit risk of transmission of coronavirus."

"Communal (congregational) singing should not take place. This applies even if social distancing is being observed or face coverings are used, indoors and outdoors." - *As at 19th March 2021*

If you need any further information please do contact Rev Liz, Rev Graham or any of the Church Wardens. Phone numbers are at the end of this newsletter.

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 especially pray for the Queen and all of the family as they mourn the passing of Prince Philip.
- We pray for safety for all as we enter the next stage of the roadmap out of lockdown.
- We hold our clergy, Church Wardens and PCC members in prayer as they consider the situation and make hard decisions about church opening. We thank you Lord for all those who are assisting with recording and distributing of recorded services.
- We pray for both schools in our benefice Greysbrooke School and St Peter's School. We thank for all teaching and support staff. We particularly think of parents who are learning new skills with home learning. We ask for patience at this this time for all.
- We thank you for new life and we welcome Barnaby into our Early Birds church family. Thank you Lord for a safe delivery, pour your blessings onto Anna, Patrick and big brothers Edward and Joel.
- We pray for the roll out of the vaccine and all who are involved in the administration of this. Thank you for large venues such as the cathedral being made available for this.
- We pray for the recently bereaved and all who mourn, we particularly think of Maisie Birley and family at this time.
- We pray for the family of Richard Tearle, especially for Sam, Jamie, Molly and Alfie as they go through this difficult time.
- We pray for all of those mourning the recent loss of Joan Norton, especially her husband David.
- We pray for all those known to us in need of the Lord's comfort and strength we pray for all those known to us in need of comfort.
- We pray especially for Heather Fishwick who is still unwell.

Prayer Ministry and Chat

If you would like prayer for any reason at all, then there is an opportunity for someone to pray with you. Di Proctor is happy to pray with you over the telephone. You might just fancy a chat with someone and Di is very happy to do that as well!

Prayer and Chat time will be Mondays, between 10.00 and 11.00 am. You can reach Di on 01543 480442. The first time you call Di you will be asked to say your name, and there will be a short wait while you are connected. *(All prayers are in confidence; however Di is obliged to*

report any safeguarding issues, should they arise, to Rev Liz/Tina Powell, the Benefice Safeguarding Officer)

Holidays

Rev Liz will be on holiday from 12th – 26th April

Bible Readings for Sunday:

Acts 4:5-12

⁵ The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. ⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.'

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

John 10:11-18

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it

from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Sermon from Rev John Aston

Do you remember the hymn from Victorian times which began with the question “Will your anchor hold ? ” – referring to all those times when life is hard and things seem to be going wrong? The chorus (Mission Praise 770) reminds us that

‘We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour’s love’.

Peter addressing the Jewish leaders reminds them that they have rejected the stone or rock which God has made the ‘chief corner stone’, the sound basis for our faith and for the Church. ‘Christ is our cornerstone, on him alone we build’, and this is still true. The phrase comes originally from Psalm 118 as we found on Palm Sunday, but is also found in several other places in Scripture, including a hint in Zechariah 4. The only valid foundation we can have for our lives is the Lord Jesus Christ. Is He yours?

Which leads me on to our Gospel reading where Jesus tells us that He is The Good Shepherd. Earlier in the chapter He has told us that He is the Gate for the sheep. We have to remember that in Israel the shepherd would have led his sheep, almost certainly without the help of a sheepdog to coax the into the pen. As each sheep entered the pen he would have been able to check on each one to make sure there were no problems – all part of his care for them. And Jesus cares for us, each one, to the extent that He died for us on the cross. ‘Oh the deep deep love of Jesus.’ We need that love! Sheep do not always seem to have a good reputation in scripture – ‘all we like sheep have gone astray and need rescuing; one sheep strays away from the flock of 100 in Jesus’ story in Luke 15 and the shepherd rescues it. Now, what about us? Have you strayed from the flock? Why not let Jesus rescue you and be your Good Shepherd, and the firm foundation for your life as he is for us. Amen.

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