

Keeping everyone safe at our services

Covid numbers may be passing their peak but we still need to make coming to church as safe as possible.

- Every one aged 12 and over will be asked to wear a mask in church
- Doors may be left open - so please wrap up to keep warm
- Please keep your masks on for singing (yes it is difficult but safer)
- We strongly advise that everyone takes a LFT test before attending any of our services, and we ask that you stay away if you have a +ve result.

If you are in doubt as to whether you should attend, please keep yourself safe. We have services on our [YouTube](#) channel.

Week of prayer for Christian unity

This runs from 18th – 25th January and this year special prayers have been written by the churches in the Middle East. You can download resources [here](#).

At the time of writing though the news has just broken about the undersea eruption of a volcano off the coast of Tonga, and a tsunami that has hit these islands. There are also concerns for the Eastern coast of Australia and Tasmania, Fiji, and Samoa. Many parts of Tonga are experiencing near total blackout of power, phone lines, and internet services.

Tonga is predominantly Christian from a Wesleyan Methodist heritage, although other denominations are also represented. Let us unite in prayer for them.



*O Lord we pray for the people of Tonga today.
Those islands are very far away from us, around the other side of the world, but they are held close by you in your heart.
We ask that you will calm the seas and restore stability to the homes and livelihoods of all who have been affected.
Bring comfort to those who are grieving or afraid, and may the people of your church shine your love into their hearts.
Amen*

Choir practices

Choir practices start again in the Chapel this week – Tuesday at 7:30pm and Saturday at 10:30am. We are a friendly group. There is no audition and you do not need to be able to read music. You just need to enjoy singing – so give it a go!
Chris Ashbridge tel no: 01296 748777



Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell



Churches of: St. John Baptist, STONE; Ss Peter & Paul, DINTON; Assumption of St. Mary the Virgin, HARTWELL

www.stonedintonhartwell.com

St. John the Baptist STONE Sunday 16th January

9:00am **MATINS**
(Prayer Book Service)

David Pickup

10:30am **MORNING WORSHIP**

David Pickup



Looking ahead

Tuesday 18th	7:30pm	Choir practice at the Chapel
Saturday 22nd	10:30am	Choir practice at the Chapel
Sunday 23 rd	10:30am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 26th	8:00pm	SJB committee meeting online
Sunday 30th	11:00am	Morning Worship with our Methodist friends AT THE CHAPEL in Eythrope Road. This is the first time we have worshipped together since early 2020. The choir will be singing.

Excerpts from Bishop Steven's blog

"O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth;
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song."
(Psalm 100)

The words of Psalm 100 are familiar to all of us and set for Morning Prayer in Epiphany. I guess I'm not the only person who has found them more difficult to say than usual this year. They are words which are challenging and stretching me as I journey through this season – and I'm thankful for them. The call to joy is not always easy, for many different reasons.

Many thousands of families across the diocese have been affected by Covid in the last two years and particularly the last six weeks, my own among them. I had a positive test on 11 December..... All in all it's been a difficult experience but nowhere near as hard as many have found this journey.

I've discovered a new podcast: Desperately Seeking Wisdom by Craig Oliver – a series of conversations with those who have learned hard lessons. Oliver quotes Viktor Frankl, a holocaust survivor, and Frankl's resolution in the midst of the concentration camp, in the most difficult circumstances, to choose life and joy each day:

"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way".

This is the summons for joy I've begun to hear in the words of the Jubilate: as we say the words we say them to ourselves, we encourage one another but most of all we speak to the world.

Our calling as a Church remains to call the world to joy and love and hope and peace even in the midst of sorrow, sickness and suffering. We are all of us tired now; some of us more weary and stretched than we have ever felt in our lives. For some of us our faith, the centre of our vocation, is attenuated and thin: many of the things which sustain us have been stripped away. The outward demands continue, and it's harder to find the inner resources to rebuild and grow stronger.

We will all navigate this journey in different ways. For me, in this part of the journey, reflecting on this summons to joy is life-giving and sets my compass for the year. For any Christian, this search for joy in the midst of suffering leads to Jesus Christ and to Christ's passion and resurrection, to the new wine of the kingdom. In this season of Epiphany we celebrate Christ's first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee: the changing of water into wine. Never have we needed its message more.

Bishop Steven

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE

Jesus Changes water into wine

¹ On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ² and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

⁴ "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶ Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

⁸ Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, ⁹ and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside ¹⁰ and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

¹¹ What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

John 2:1-11



Lord, you have the power to make all things new and to use them for your glory. Bring us joy in our hearts we pray, and may the transforming power of your Spirit be at work in our lives today. Amen

New Curate

We are delighted to announce that we will have a new benefice curate arriving in the summer. Clare and her two children will move to the house in Cuddington in June, and she will be ordained at Christ Church Cathedral in July. We are very much looking forward to welcoming Clare and working with her in God's mission through our churches.

Cassa

Cafe in the Park



Despite dreadful weather, the January Cafe went really well with friends new and old. If you have not been recently, do join us when you feel safe. A proposal to run a weekly cafe on a Tuesday morning will come to our church committee on January 26. To find out more please talk to Naomi or Phil.

Phil Groves

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