

Feb/March 2016

# The Link

Stoneleigh Methodist Church Magazine



*A Beautiful display by Lesley*

Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh, Epsom, Surrey KT19 0RT

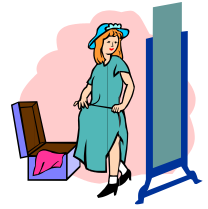
Minister: The Revd. Dr. Martine Stemerick

020 8393 2322

[www.stoneleighmethodist.church](http://www.stoneleighmethodist.church)



# JUMBLE SALE

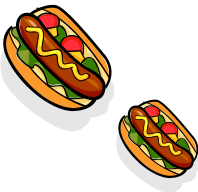


**Saturday 5th March,  
12 – 2pm.**

**Stoneleigh Methodist Church  
& 3<sup>rd</sup> Stoneleigh Scout Group**

**Stoneleigh Crescent, KT19 0RT**

**Refreshments available**



**Entrance 40p**



## A Benedictine Lifestyle for Lent

It seems facile to try and reduce Benedictine spirituality and a monastic view of life to a list. Still, there are certain Benedictine values that act as guideposts on a long, narrow road. See if one in particular fits your life right now. Concentrate on it during Lent. Sometimes one will speak to us at a certain time of life, others will appear more meaningful at a later period.

### Listen

It has always intrigued me that the first word of The Rule of St. Benedict isn't pray, or worship or even love. It's *listen*. And St. Benedict takes it a step further. He asks us to listen with "the ear of the heart." We tend to talk at and over one another. Just watch any cable news channel. What is needed is more listening - to the youngest voice as well as the voice of experience.

### Prayer and Praise

Work and pray, *Ora et Labora*, is the Benedictine motto. And prayer is the main work of any monastery. Monastic men and women begin the day with the moving gesture of running their fingers across their lips in the sign of the cross. They pray, "Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise." These are the first words they utter each morning and it's a call for praise. For me, it's a reminder that our days are made not for grumbling, self-criticism or worry, but for praise. How can we make all of our actions a form of praise? Can we make of our day one extended prayer?

### Silence

In the age of 24-hour TV, silence is a disappearing commodity. E-mail, Facebook and Twitter are a form of visual noise. The Rule encourages esteem for silence. Before you open your mouth to speak, ask yourself three questions: is what you are about to say true, is it kind, and is it necessary? In the silence, everything begins to connect.

### Humility

Interestingly enough, the longest chapter in The Rule of St. Benedict is on the practice of humility. The very word runs counter to our instincts. But humility isn't the same as humiliation. It derives from

the Latin root *humus*, which simply means “of the earth.” At the beginning of the day, before they pray, the sisters bow to one another. The bow says, “I recognize the gifts in you, and I acknowledge my own limitedness.” There was also an old and beautiful custom in which a group of sisters, assigned to a task, would first bow to one another and ask, “Have patience with me.”

### Balance

Like many people, I suffer from trying to do too much. My life becomes fragmented and fraught. That is why I’m so drawn to another Benedictine motto, *succisa virescit*: cut back, your faith will grow stronger. Jesus taught his disciples a parable about a vineyard. Grapevines are wonderful plants. They will grow and grow without much outside help. But they won’t produce much of value without the careful attention of the vinedresser, who must periodically radically cut back the vine’s branches. For someone like me, always trying to accomplish five tasks at once, it’s a reminder to regularly survey my life and cut back on excess activities so I can re-focus on what’s essential.

### Hospitality

There was a lovely tradition in ancient monasteries that whenever a stranger appeared at the door, the gatekeeper was to respond, “Your blessing, please.” Visitors received this greeting regardless of whether they were perceived as friends or suspected of being enemies. Of all the mandates in The Rule of St. Benedict, the call to treat all guests as Christ is one of the clearest. No matter what our politics, The Rule calls us to respect the immigrant, the refugee, and all of society’s marginalized people. Hospitality in The Rule also extends to a compassionate concern for the sick. But hospitality does not end with works of mercy. The Rule also calls us to a hospitality of spirit and of mind. Can I be hospitable to ideas that don’t fit neatly into our established world view? Can I listen with the ear of my heart to people with whom I don’t usually agree?

### Community

In asking to become a part of a Benedictine monastery, members left their wealth and pedigree at the door. Age and education didn’t matter. What mattered was that a person was willing to join hands

with others within community in seeking God. Each was to receive according to his need, bearing each other's weaknesses with patience.

### Contemplation

Contemplation is hard to define. "Living mindfully, looking beyond the obvious" is how the Benedictine writer Joan Chittister once defined it. Contemplation is a lived life. It's a promise of not arriving at your death bed wondering what your life was all about. "Be where you are and do what you're doing"; be present to God whatever you are doing, whether it's peeling the potatoes or doing the dishes. Contemplative prayer is being open to God.

### **Study**

During Lent, we are going to be using the new USPG Lent course on ***Migration and Movement***. Please join us on Mondays at noon for soup and crusty bread and our Lenten Bible study. *Martine x*

**Lent Course 2016 'Migration and Movement'**  
**A study course exploring migration and the global movement  
of people,  
with stories from the world church**

Ash Wednesday falls on Feb 10th, and our John Bell weekend is Feb 13th - 14th. I suspect we will all be worn out, so we will begin our Lenten Bible study course Feb 22nd.

22 Feb	Study 1	<i>Nowhere to lay his head</i>
29 Feb	Study 2	<i>Where is my home?</i>
7 Mar	Study 3	<i>The struggle to survive</i>
14 Mar	Study 4	<i>Against our will</i>
21 Mar	Study 5	<i>Life on the margins</i>

The Lenten studies will begin each week at noon with soup and crusty bread. At 12:45 we will move to the New Room for an hour of study and reflection. All are welcome!

## Stewards' Notes.

I'm writing this at the beginning of the year with Christmas and New Year fresh in our memories. The advent services went well. Martine took the toy service; lots of toys and a collection were taken for Whitechapel, and Gopal was presented with a special award – a certificate for 30 years' service to Scouting. It was so nice to see Gopal and Sundhar worshipping with us, just like old times. Sadly, Carols by Candlelight was Martine's last Carol Service with us, but it was a good Christmas sing. The crib service was well attended. It is lovely to see the children in charge of the Church and people returning year after year.

On Christmas Day we led our own service as Martine was on a plane over the Atlantic visiting family. David Eagle took the Sunday after Christmas and the Rev Christine White from St Mary's, Cuddington, was with us for the first service of the New Year.



The weather during Advent was so mild that by the 1st January daffodils were showing their faces, but what could be nicer than looking into the garden and watching the birds feeding, though I'm not sure about the squirrels and the fox helping themselves to my bulbs.

2016 will be a year of change, especially for Martine who as you know will be retiring next summer, and for ourselves as we welcome our new minister, Emma Aikins, next September. We must also remember all those people who quietly week by week give



their time for our benefit, working the sound system, power point, our music and after service coffee etc.; while we are being refreshed in the service, they don't have the same experience. Our weekly meetings continue; Conquest Art, Fellowship, Knit and Natter (you don't have to knit but nattering's good) and all the people who run meetings in Guiding, Scouting and Toddlers etc.



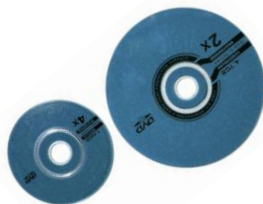
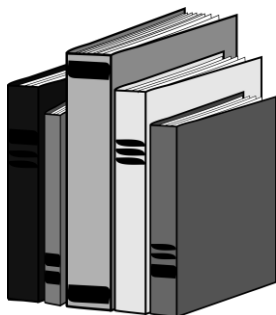
If you're not able to go to Ruxley on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> Feb. for John Bell, we hope to see you on the Sunday afternoon 14<sup>th</sup> Feb for the Big Sing. Please bring friends, neighbours and family to the Church.

Our jumble sale is on the 5<sup>th</sup> March All help is very welcome. Please put aside your jumble. The Church and the Scouts share the money so we must share the fun of helping.

It's a bit late to wish the many old members who receive the Link through the post a Happy and Healthy New Year, but many of you are recalled in conversations and you will always be a part of Stoneleigh.

For the Stewards, if you have any queries or problems please speak to any of us. It's your Church and we're only here to help it run smoothly.

*Valerie Farley*



**The Annual Giant Sale** of second-hand books,  
DVDs and Music  
18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> February

At Epsom Methodist Church, Ashley Rd, Epsom, KT18 5AQ  
[www.epsommethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.epsommethodistchurch.org.uk)

Thursday 18, Friday 19<sup>th</sup> – 10am till 8pm

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> 10am – 4pm

Entrance 50p (Children and students free)

Refreshments and light lunches

If you wish to donate books, they can be received at Epsom  
Methodist Church, between 9am and 8pm  
from Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February till 4pm on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February.

No magazines or videos please.

Enquiries, please ring 01372 728535, or email  
[office@epsommethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@epsommethodistchurch.org.uk)

*The Church's One Foundation  
is Jesus Christ our  
Lord,*

*By Samuel John Stone*

**If you would like an item to be in  
'The Link' please send it to**

**Vivienne Ridgway**  
vivienne@ridgworld.com

**Articles for inclusion in the next  
LINK should be with Vivienne by  
March 10<sup>th</sup> 2016**

*The right to edit or omit articles is reserved to  
SMC, The Minister and Stewards*

*The views expressed in this magazine are not  
necessarily those of SMC as a whole*



## Services

7 <sup>th</sup> Feb 10.30	Holy Communion	Rev'd Dr. Martine Stemerick
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb 10.00	<b>Service at Ruxley Church with John Bell</b> <b>No Service at Stoneleigh</b>	
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2.00pm	BIG SING	John Bell
21 <sup>st</sup> Feb 10.30	Morning Worship	Rev'd. Dr. Martine Stemerick
28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 10.30	Morning Worship	Brenda Cannon
4 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2.00pm	WW Day of Prayer	Local Arrangement
6 <sup>th</sup> Mar 10.30	Holy Communion	
13 <sup>th</sup> Mar 10.30	Morning Worship	
20 <sup>th</sup> Mar 10.30	Palm Sunday	
24 <sup>th</sup> Mar 7.30pm	Maundy Thursday	Meal and Communion Link Room
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> 10.30	Good Friday	David Eagle
27 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Easter Communion	Rev'd. Dr. Martine Stemerick

## Rota Duties

	<u>Stewards</u>	<u>Welcome</u>	<u>Sound/Projection</u>
7 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Denise/Debbie	Jack/Margaret	Tom
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	No Sunday Morning Service		
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2.00 <b>BIG SING</b>	Marion/Ernie	Val/Vivienne	Denise
21 <sup>st</sup> Feb	Geoff/Catherine	Ken/Brenda	Tom
28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Val/Gloria	Jeff/Doris	Norma J

## Tuesday Fellowship

2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	Rev'd Mark Borley	<i>Stall</i>
9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Emperor Constantine - Richard Crook	
16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	<b>Meeting cancelled due to electrical works</b>	
23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	Rev'd Dr. Martine Stemerick	
1 <sup>st</sup> March	Rev'd Paul Timmis	<i>Stall</i>
8 <sup>th</sup> March	<b>ANNIVERSARY with Margaret Watson, Harpist</b>	
15 <sup>th</sup> March	London Ambulance Service - Tina Cox	
22 <sup>nd</sup> March	Easter Week with Rev'd Dr. Martine Stemerick	
29 <sup>th</sup> March	Nonsuch Ringers	

**Please note that Tuesday Fellowship will not be meeting on 16th February due to the essential electrical works that will be taking place during that week.**

Prayers: - **Ancient**

Give us grace, O Lord, not only to be hearers of the word, but doers also:

not only to be lovers of your gospel, but also those whose lives are transformed by it;

not only to be those who profess our faith, but also those whose lives proclaim it,

day by day; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thomas Brecon . ( 1513-1567 )

and **Modern**

God, on our journey  
help us constantly to centre all that we seek to do  
on the message of your amazing love  
demonstrated to us on the cross.

Help us to believe that Christlike love  
has the power to transform ourselves  
and the communities we seek to serve.  
*Amen.*

Harold Agnew, former Belfast District Supt.  
(C) Methodist Church Purposes.

*Prayers submitted by Hazel Eagle*

## **From the Finance & Property Committee**

### **Property Maintenance**

**Last month, in Stewards' Notes**, Catherine mentioned the SMC Hot Line (the centre blue button on the payphone in the kitchen) which could be used to report problems. It's free, and you get straight through to someone on the Property team – usually Denise or Robin.

I wanted to emphasise that this is the second element of 'looking after' the premises. The first part is that 'someone' notices a problem and passes the information on. Most problems can be solved, or at least mitigated quite quickly, but it takes longer, and more people are likely to be affected if, for instance, a user notices a light flashing in the Link Room and doesn't pass the information on. You can be sure that light will still be flashing until it's fixed!

So please be our 'eyes' and use the Hot Line if you spot anything that doesn't seem right, if you lose anything at church, if you feel the heating is not set as you'd like it for your regular meeting, or indeed anything you'd like to report – it's quicker than an email or dialling a number, and it gives us the chance to sort things before anyone else notices.

**Periodic Electrical Testing.** You probably know (from the little green labels on plugs) that all our portable electrical equipment is tested each year. Our Insurers also expect us to test the fixed wiring (lights, sockets etc) about every five years, looking for any problems that old age may have created. At our last Quinquennial inspection we were reminded that our last test was in 2004, since when there have been a number of changes made to our wiring.

This is a big job, and is planned for next half term, 16<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> February. It involves turning off all circuits, identifying them, opening junction boxes and testing for proper earthing etc. By its very nature it is difficult to predict how long will be spent in which areas and so, regrettably, there can be no access to the premises at all during the work – it will be a designated work site. *Denise Gould – Chair*



## **Covenant Service**

It's time for our annual pruning. That time when we prune bushes hard back so that new growth can flourish. Gardeners know this technique, and to produce beautiful and fruitful gardens, they use it willingly.



The Gospel reading for the Covenant Service was from John 15, where Jesus likens us to a vine. Martine spoke both of pruning, and being rooted in our Heavenly Father. I quite like the prospect of being rooted in God, but, Oh dear, the pruning. I could probably also cope with that summer light prune of cutting a little off the edges. But a hard prune?

Our response in services is always 'With God's help, we will' and so we have to open ourselves to the gardener's work and pray for His help.

*Vivienne Ridgway*

## **Conquest Art**

Stoneleigh Group's Exhibition.



We will be holding our annual open afternoon and exhibition on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 from 2 – 4pm. We invite you all to come along and see the work of our Members and enjoy refreshments and a chat.

If you or anyone you know are interested in joining a Conquest Art group why not come along and find out more about us, you would be very welcome.

*Lesley Lee 020 8393 4116*



## **Food Bank Update**

2015 was a wonderful year for the Epsom & Ewell Foodbank. We have launched a new cooking course, and fed many more people. Following a successful Harvest festival, and collection at Tesco and with continuing generosity of our local community, our warehouse is now full. We currently cannot accept any general donations until the end of January / mid-February. If you would like to continue to support us over the next months or so, any donations towards the running of the foodbank would be greatly appreciated - please use the 'Donate' button on our website

<http://epsomewell.foodbank.org.uk>



I have been volunteering with the Trussell Trust Food Bank for about two years now with the combined churches of Epsom and Ewell. Initially I was surprised that all donations had to be checked in and out, weighed or counted and listed. When it was pointed out that donations should be considered as cash, it made more sense. We all underwent an initial training. Due to my mobility issues my role is simply to welcome voucher holders, check through their needs, offer refreshments and chat with them, whilst others make up the food donations. After they have received their emergency supplies (enough for three days) for which they sign, they are then invited to share in a prayer. Some refuse, others join in and find some comfort in our words.

*Helen Quaife*



Some more quotations of Bertrand Russell

1. No one gossips about other peoples' secret virtues.
2. What is wanted is not the will to believe, but the will to find out, which is the exact opposite.
3. Mathematics takes us into the region of Absolute necessity to which not only the real world, but all possible worlds must conform.
4. Why is propaganda so much more successful when it stirs up hatred than when it tries to stir up friendly feeling?
5. The most savage controversies are about matters as to which there is no good evidence either way.

*These quotations were submitted by Tom Turner last year and I've had them on file waiting for space to use them. Thank you Tom for your interesting submissions. Helen*



Joan Price received a Christmas card from Barbara and Rev. Cecil Smith in which Barbara says -

'Cecil is not very well. His leukaemia is more aggressive and it seems to be affecting his eyes. Please pray for us.

We have very happy memories of Stoneleigh and I often think of Barbara Lock and Pam and all the "Young Wives!"

# **Celebrating the Church's Song**

**Singing workshops and worship led by John Bell\***

**13 February 2016**

**10:00- 4:00pm at Ruxley Church, Epsom**

**Songs for Lent and Easter.**

**Rediscovering the Psalms**

Reservations required - £15 includes a ploughman's lunch,

Tickets: Anne or Brian Cockram (020 8397 5809)

or

Ruxley church office (Tuesday-Friday 9:00-11:30am)

[www.ruxley-church.org.uk](http://www.ruxley-church.org.uk)

**14 February 2016**

**10:00am morning worship at Ruxley Church**

**Parking on Saturday and Sunday morning**

**is at Riverview School, KT19 0JP**

# **Big Sing!**

**at Stoneleigh Methodist Church KT19 0RT**

**Sunday 2:00 - 4:00pm**

**contact Denise Gould 020 8393 2155 or**

**[bigsing@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:bigsing@stoneleighmethodist.church)**

*\*John Bell of the Wild Goose Resource Group ([www.wildgoose.scot](http://www.wildgoose.scot)) of the Iona Community is a hymn writer, Church of Scotland minister and broadcaster and travels the world teaching on worship, spirituality and social justice" John will be doing this event in his capacity as a member of the WGRG and not, primarily, an Iona Community member.*

[www.stoneleighmethodist.church](http://www.stoneleighmethodist.church)

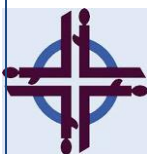
## **SMC Knit & Natter**

Well, the 'natter' is certainly correct! To this title perhaps we should add a welcome cup of tea or coffee, biscuits and any craft work you wish to bring along to work on or get advice on. Sometimes, though, it is nice just to take a couple of hours out of the day, doing nothing more than relaxing, chatting and catching up.



Recently we have welcomed ladies stitching 'Pillowcase' dresses for young girls in Kenya. We will be in the Link Room on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from ten to twelve noon. Do join us whenever you are free and able to pop in, we shall be delighted to see you.

*Rita and Pat.*



## **WW Day of Prayer**

Friday 4th March at 2.00 pm

*"Receive children. Receive me."*

The above theme, based on Mark's Gospel 10: 13 - 16, is the focus for this year's Women's World Day of Prayer, using an Order of Service prepared by the Christian women of Cuba.



The Service is at SMC with Rev Christine White as the Guest Speaker. This is not a prayer day only for women. Everyone is welcome. Further information is on the website: [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk).

On the Friday before (26th February) there is to be a Bring and Buy sale at SMC from 10.30am to 12 noon in aid of charities supported by WWDP. Refreshments will be available.

Please come and support either or both events.

*Gloria*