# **Stonesfield Slate**



Issue No 525 June 2022

# Stonesfield celebrates the Jubilee – and its history

Cliff Godfrey at Stonesfield Coronation celebrations. 1953

Cliff Godfrey drove this splendid Union Jack bedecked tractor, pulling a float for the Coronation Carnival in 1953. It marked the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, mirroring the celebrations that took place in villages and towns all over the country.

This June marks the Queen's Platinum Jubilee – 70 years from 1952 when Princess Elizabeth became Queen. Stonesfield will celebrate again, and this issue outlines the great variety of special events organised by many different groups and individuals throughout the village.

*The Slate* has been looking for people's memories of village celebrations at the time of the Coronation, and this issue's centre pages show some of the results. We extend our huge thanks to those who came forward with these treasures; especially to Hebe Godfrey for the picture of her husband. You

might like to check out this issue on the village website (stonesfield.online) so you can see the pictures in their full glory, in colour.

At the same time the village website has been collecting historic photos of Stonesfield and has already started a webpage for them as a permanent archive, with many more photos to come. Here you can find pictures from the 1800s of a very different Stonesfield, more recent photos showing the village as some residents will remember it, and a 1987 recording of residents' recollections.

During the research, we have found many interesting stories and pictures of life in Stonesfield in the past, and we hope to share these in future issues of *The Slate*. If you have any you could share, and also of this Jubilee, please do contact the Editor (details on p2).

#### Do you want to send in an article but have no email?

Just call the editor (see below) who can arrange to collect your handwritten copy.

#### Disclaimer

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Articles are solely the responsibility of the writers and their opinions do not necessarily accord with those of the editors or publishers.

Whilst we strive to ensure all information is correct, we are not responsible for anything that happens as a result of you using the information. If you find any errors or omissions then please contact the Publisher and we will endeavour to correct them.

Dates for your diary are always subject to change. Please check with event organisers.

The editor and the publishers reserve the right to edit, shorten or omit any article submitted.

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Waterloo Barn, Laughton Hill,	(891803)	Please email copy to
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## Stonesfield's Jubilee Celebrations

Stonesfield Jubilee Celebrations Stonesfield groups have joined together to create a month of celebrations. Dates and details of all Jubilee events are on page 5.

#### Dates for your diary: June

•	•		
1	Parish Council meeting	St James' Centre	7pm
1,15,22,29	West Oxon Community Choir	St James' Centre	7.30-9.30pm
1,8,15,22,29	Gatehouse Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.30am
1,8,15,22,29	Hanna Bathe HITT Class	Village Hall	7.15–8pm
1,8,15,22,29	Folk Dancing	Village Hall	7.45–10pm
2,9,16,23,30	Book Break	Library	12.30-2pm
2,6,9,13,16	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30–6.30pm
2,9,16,23,30	Hanna Bathe HITT Class	Village Hall	7.15–8pm
3, 17, 24	Baby & Toddler Group	Village Hall	10-12pm
6,13,20,27	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	8.45-11.30am
7, 21	Carers Café	Village Hall	10-12pm
7, 14, 21, 28	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
7, 14, 21, 28	Strong Nation HITT Class	Village Hall	8.15-9.15pm
9,16,23, 30	Little Squirrels Sensory Play	Village Hall	9.30-10.30am
10-12	Folk Dance Weekend	Village Hall	
11	Stonesfield Players' Safari Supper	The Old Bakery, Bo	oot St 7pm
12	Roman mosaics open	Roman Villa	11am-5pm
12	Open Village Gardens	Chadlington	1-5pm
18,19	Open Days	Bridewell Gardens	11am-4pm
19	Village Garage Sale , Café and Stalls	Village Hall	11am-3pm
19	Steaming Day – Wheels	Combe Mill	10.30am-5pm
20,23, 27, 30	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30–6.30pm
26	Stonesfield Open Gardens	St James' Centre	2-5pm
29	FoSL (Library) Open Meeting	SSSC	7.15-9pm
July			
2	Community Café and Repair Café	Village Hall 9.	30am-12.30pm
3	St James' Summer Party	Manor garden	3.30-5pm

# Notices & news

#### **Margaret Hales**

We would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for all the messages of love and kindness, cards and flowers we have received after the sudden loss of Margaret, wife, mum and nanny.

A special thanks to Jerrams Brothers and Roy Turner for guiding and supporting us as a family over the past weeks

Bernard, Zena, Ric and Kate

## Peter (Pops) Harris – Pete the Plumber

I would like to say a huge thank you to all of my friends and neighbours who have been such a huge support to myself and my family since Pete passed away. He is such a huge loss to me and all of our relatives and friends.

After being diagnosed with mesothelioma (asbestos-related lung cancer) just before Christmas, Pete's health deteriorated very rapidly and he fell asleep on 22 April.

He was such a vital member of the community, with all the years he spent fixing up tap washers and leaks in Stonesfield and the surrounding villages, and in later years making bird tables, bandsaw boxes and other bits in his new workshop, and also through his love of playing bowls at the bowls club in Charlbury. He will be greatly missed by us all.

## Contributions to The Slate

The editorial team and publishers are conscious that not everyone has access to email and/or a computer.

If you are in this situation and would like to submit something for publication, please get in touch with the Editor in order to make alternative arrangements. We are happy to collect something handwritten from you or to take it down over the phone.

The Editor's name and contact number appear on page 2 of each issue.

The Editors

## Stonesfield Pre-School & Daycare

We are pleased to announce our 100 Club winners for the May draw.

1st Prize - Number 6 - Hilary Armale: £25.00 2nd Prize - Number 43 - Ben Brooks: £10.00 Congratulations to you both!

Zena Rozee

Debbie, Ricky, Iain, Tracey, Mel and Lawrie

#### **Stonesfield's Jubilee Celebrations**

Stonesfield groups have joined together to create a month of celebrations. Please add these dates to your diaries.

#### Running throughout June

Red, White & Blue Planters at every house! Please create your jubilee planters to add to your bunting to brighten Stonesfield. Send your photos to stonesfieldjubilee@gmail.com

Photo Competition – Photos of Stonesfield Old and new photos in the themes of nature, buildings or village life. Under 10's, 11-18 & Adults sections. Please send your photos by 25 June to stonesfieldjubilee@gmail.com. Judging will be on 26 June.Winning photos will be displayed in the Village Hall.

#### Calendar of Events

#### 2 lune Lighting the Jubilee Gas Beacon

Scouts will be leading the lighting of the Jubilee beacon at Glebe land - off Brook Lane.

#### 3 lune **Stonesfield Toddlers' Jubilee Party**

Open to all the toddlers (up to age 3) in and around Stonesfield. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Face painting, party food, music and games at Stonesfield Village Hall.

#### 3 lune **Them Combe Boys**

Local live music at the Stonesfield Sports & Social Club.

#### 3 & 4 June Wedding dresses through the decades

A celebratory display of wedding dresses and photographs from the decades of the Queen's reign at St James' Church.

#### 4 June Jubilee Community Café

Serving teas, coffees, luxury hot chocolates, cakes and sweet treats at the Village Hall. We'll also be hosting a Jubilee themed cake competition – entry is open to all ages and abilities. Please bring your cakes to the Community Café for 10am on the day.

#### 4 June **Village Idiots**

Local live music at the Stonesfield Sports & Social Club.

#### 5 Iune Jubilee Tea and Cake

Everyone is very warmly invited - do join us at the St James Centre, followed by...

#### 5 lune Service for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Service of thanksgiving at St James the Great Church.

#### **The Stonesfield Players Actathon** 18 June

The Stonesfield Players present an afternoon of off-the-cuff readings, sketches, one-act plays and extracts exploring the decades of this Elizabethan era. Join in or just be entertained and eat cake at the Village Hall. See separate item on page 7.

#### 19 June Village Garage sale

Garage sales at Stonesfield Village Hall and around the village; buy your map  $(\pounds I)$  & refreshments at Village Hall. Indoor stalls and car boot spaces available at the Village Hall - please enquire about booking and register your 'garage' at stonesfieldjubilee@gmail.com **by 4 June** to be included in the information pack. Registration is £5.

#### **Stonesfield Open Gardens** 26 June

Tickets (£5 per adult), maps, teas and plants on sale at St James' Centre.

For further information, please look out on Nextdoor and the Stonesfield Village Hall Facebook page. Flyers will be in the shop and distributed at all events. If you would like one emailed to you please request one at stonesfieldjubliee@gmail.com.

9pm

9pm

10am – noon

10am – 5pm

#### Ilam – 3pm

2pm – 5pm

## 10am – 2pm

9pm

#### 5pm

2 – 5pm

3.30pm

#### White Horse for sale again!

The owner of our village pub has notified West Oxfordshire District Council that he intends to sell, rather than re-open the pub.

Spurred on by the support shown at our AGM last month, we are relaunching the BacktheWhiteHorse campaign to try to buy the pub and open it as a member-owned, community business. We want to see Stonesfield and the surrounding area benefit from a vibrant pub in our village and will be making an offer.

This time the campaign has a head start. As we reported at our AGM, the majority of our members have very generously left



their money in our trust. We have also had a number of messages of support from friends and neighbours already who want to invest, increase their number of shares or make donations. We are working with Plunkett and the Share Mark Scheme to reopen our share scheme so that we can raise the amount we think we will need. By the time you read this we should be well progressed with that, so please watch our website for further updates.

We hope we will be successful this time. Even if we are not, it is crucial that we continue to show strong community support for the pub, as that will help stop any redevelopment of the site into housing. Our AGM also re-elected Steve Callaghan as our Chair, Pete Smyth as Treasurer and newly elected Susan Rudlin as Vice Chair. The other members of our committee have kindly agreed to stand again and their details can also be found on our website.

Stonesfield Community Pub committee www.backthewhitehorse.com

## Village Hall News

As we come into June, we are filled with excitement for all the Jubilee events that will be going ahead in our fabulous little village over the next few weeks.

Big thanks yet again to all who turned out in support of the Preschool's Community Café in May. We are so proud of how the Community Café idea has been embraced, organisations that need it, as well as an amazing source of treats for the community.

The Community Café runs on the first Saturday of each month. The next one is scheduled for Saturday 4 June in aid of CJ's Mission, a non-profit organisation founded in 2019 which supports families with a child living in hospital. The founder is a lovely lady, living in our community, whose daughter was born very unwell and she herself had to live in Oxford Children's Hospital with her daughter for six months after she was born. During this time she realised, while there was incredible care available for the child, the patient, there was minimal-to-no support for the parents whose lives had just turned upside down.

She founded CJ's Mission to support families (parents and siblings especially) who are experiencing life with a child living in hospital. They provide weekly food deliveries to Ronald McDonald House in Oxford, which allows families to live on the hospital premises to be close to their child. They also provide other home-from-home comforts, treats on special occasions (e.g. pancakes on pancake day, afternoon tea on Mother's Day), and emergency admission care packages and more. Do take a look at www.cjsmission.org to find out more, or pop along to the café and speak to Acacia, who will be happy to answer any questions you have.

On the day they will be running the café, in the main hall there will be additional seating and some children's Jubileethemed crafts and colouring free of charge, so that parents can enjoy a hot drink while it's hot for once!

The Jubilee Themed Cake Competition is free to enter; all that is required is that cakes are brought to the Community Café by 10am for judging. The cakes will then be sold by the slice at the café.

Along with many Jubilee celebrations this month, Stonesfield Folk Dance Club are also holding their 50th Folk Dance Weekend on 10-12 June. This year the weekend opens with an Evening Dance, 7.30 – 10.30pm, with callers Frances Richardson and Ivan Aitken, and the band will be Keeping Thyme. It will be a mixed programme of English Folk Dances, so something for everyone.

On Saturday & Sunday we will work through some interesting dances, new to most of us. The sessions start at 10am and on Saturday evening we have a dance from 7.30 – 10pm. Wychwayz Border Morris will dance for us at Saturday lunchtime. On Sunday we conclude with an afternoon dance, finishing about 5pm. This weekend is one of the major folk dancing events in the UK and we expect dancers from Cumbria to Cornwall. See www.stonesfieldfolkdance.danceorg.uk for more information.

If you are hoping to attend the Garage Sale in the Village on Sunday 19 June, the location maps will be on sale for £1 on the day from Stonesfield Village Hall, where there will also be refreshments available, more stalls in the hall and a car boot.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

Jacqueline Carthew (898919) Secretary & Booking Clerk for Stonesfield Village Hall

stonesfieldvh@gmail.com facebook.com/stonesfieldvillagehall

#### The Stonesfield Players' Actathon

The Stonesfield Players present an afternoon of unrehearsed readings, sketches, one-act plays and extracts exploring the decades of this Elizabethan era to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Our aim is to keep going for three hours without a break in the action. We invite everyone in the village to join us, either to take part or provide us with an encouraging audience. People are welcome to come and go during the afternoon. Advance booking is not required but any donations are welcome and refreshments will be on sale. Do come along, join in or cheer us on, or just enjoy some cake.

The Actathon will be at the Village Hall on Saturday 18 June, from 2-5pm.

Andy Tacon (07795 441986) andrew.tacon@outlook.com

#### Stonesfield Players' Safari Supper

After a long break the Stonesfield Players are having another Safari Supper on 11 June. Please come and join us for lots of fun, good food and a thoroughly enjoyable evening. The gathering begins at The Old Bakery, Boot Street for a selection of starters, and then we take off 'on safari' around the village in small groups for our main course and then again for pudding. Finally, we gather together again for cheese and coffee at the end of the evening. All you need to bring is a bottle and a torch!

Tickets needed; £15.00 from Ros Mengech; if you would like to join us please book by 5 June. Also if anyone is happy to act as a host for either a main course or pudding for six people, please let Ros know.

Ros Mengech (898276)

Ros\_mengech@yahoo.co.uk

#### .....

#### North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank

The Foodbank has two plastic boxes in Stonesfield Church, one inside and one in the porch, and a single box just inside the village shop. Food placed in these boxes is collected on Friday mornings and driven by a rota of drivers to Kidlington Baptist Church, where it is sorted and distributed to families in financial difficulty.

All long-life food placed in the boxes will be gratefully received, particularly tinned ham, tinned fish, tinned frankfurters and tinned vegetables or fruit, but also pasta, teabags and coffee. Unfortunately the Foodbank is not equipped to handle fresh food. Food can be placed in the boxes at any time convenient to donors. When the church is closed, the box in the porch is still accessible and the box in the shop can be reached during opening hours:

Monday to Friday: 7am – 8pm Saturday and Sunday: 8am – 8pm Please give anything you can. Thank you.

Peter Hughes (891018)

#### Stonesfield Lunch Club

The Lunch Club needs a volunteer Day Organiser for one or two Wednesdays per month, from about 10am to 2.30pm.

The Lunch Club provides a place for older members of our community to enjoy company and a home-cooked meal each week. This involves a group of very friendly volunteers who help to make it all work. The Day Organiser opens up St James' Centre, takes responsibility for the smooth running of the day, and is supported by several helpers. It's a great way to be part of the Community and you will work alongside the other Day Organisers until you feel confident to go it alone. Common sense and reliability are the main requirements and it is a lovely way to get involved in a long-standing village club.

Please call Kate Harris (898781) for a chat.

#### We also need volunteers...

If you drive and wouldn't mind giving a Stonesfield resident a lift perhaps once a month, would you think about joining our Voluntary Transport Scheme as a driver? Your expenses will be reimbursed.

We give people lifts to medical appointments in Charlbury, Woodstock, Witney and also to the Oxford and Banbury hospitals and other medical centres. Our clients find this invaluable if they don't have their own transport, or if their family and friends are unable to help.

We have a team of drivers and try to share the requests out evenly so that no-one is asked to give a lift too often. But a few of our drivers have left us recently so we need to build our numbers again.

COVID safety precautions are still in force and guidance will be given on procedures. Please do give me a call if you could help – our lifts are such a help and so much appreciated.

Viv Kendall (891803)

#### **Churchfields allotment social**

Thank you to all 'Allotmenteers' who were able to make it down to the Churchfields allotments for drinks and nibbles on Sunday 24 April. It was exceptionally well supported in attendance, by contribution and (as we often note as gardeners) by that most fickle participant, the weather.



Special thanks once again to Kate for cutlery, crockery and consumables (most especially the spring cocktails!) and to Lucy and Jon for hosting the social on their plot.

I look forward to seeing you all over the coming months and catching up on everybody's progress, or otherwise, throughout the coming season.

#### Open days at Bridewell Gardens

Bridewell's Open Days are on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 June (with another on 11 September).



Bridewell Gardens provides a mental health recovery service for West Oxfordshire, supporting people who have experienced severe and enduring mental illness, through gardening and working with nature.

A pop-up café in the garden offers tea and cake, and there will be plants for sale, juice, home-produced jams and chutneys and our organic sparkling wine. Make a day of it, bring a picnic blanket and relax in the vineyard with friends and family. Dogs on leads are very welcome.

We look forward to sharing our beautiful gardens with you this year. No booking is required; suggested donation is £5 per person.

Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden, Wilcote, Oxfordshire OX7 3DT

Deanna Asplundh

#### North Leigh Roman Villa

Following a very successful Easter holiday opening of the Roman mosaic, we are very pleased to share the dates of future mosaic openings over the Summer.

The mosaics will open between 11am – 5pm on:

Sunday 12 June

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 July

Wednesday 10, Saturday 20 August and Sunday 21 August

Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 September – mosaic clean in action this weekend.

For more details about openings and access to the site (which can be arduous if you have mobility issues), please visit https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/ places/north-leigh-roman-villa/.

The mosaics re-opened to the public in September 2019 for the first time in almost 30 years, thanks to the efforts of North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers, a local group working with English Heritage. Since then more than 3,600 visitors have seen the mosaics, in spite of COVID restrictions in 2020 and 2021.

The efforts of the two dozen volunteers were recognised by a Heritage Alliance Commendation Award for volunteering in 2020. In 2021 the Blenheim Bursary fund awarded the group £5,000 to support renovation of the site's Custodian's Cottage. And at the start of 2022 North Leigh was one of just 4 English Heritage sites to be supported by a £1m Michael Bishop Foundation donation. Visitor donations made at the site now exceed £1,650.

#### **Chadlington open gardens**

Chadlington village gardens are opening for the first time under the National Garden Scheme, on Sunday 12 June from 1-5pm, in support of multiple medical charities. Entry is £5 and prebooking is recommended, at https://ngs.org.uk/viewgarden/43552.



Please share with friends and family – everyone is very welcome!

Jane Bell (01608 676669)

# Woodstock Museum: Children and military lives

Opening on 2 June and running until 24 November 2022, Woodstock Museum's new exhibition will tell the stories of children of serving British Armed Forces personnel and their experiences of living life in the military community, as well as stories of children who become victims of war, experiencing the effects of military conflict - from Second World War evacuees to today's refugees and asylum seekers.

The exhibition has a focus on Oxfordshire people, so visitors can see and hear what living through conflict is like first hand, from recordings of evacuation memories to present day accounts and art from children

North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers



who arrive in the county and experience a new culture here.

The exhibition will not only run throughout both Armed Forces Day and Refugee Week, but also the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. To mark the Jubilee, SOFO Museum will highlight the Queen's own 'military childhood' and her Second World War service in the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service). It has gathered toys from the 1940s to the present day, taking a look at our enduring relationship with toys that depict war, from tin soldiers of yesterday to remote control drones of today.

#### Combe Mill Steaming Event – Wheels

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We are hoping for another great turnout at the latest Steaming Day at the Mill on Sunday 19 June, 10.30am-5pm. We have many wheels to see, made of many different materials. Come and speak to our volunteer experts at the Mill and learn about the everyday and the special use of wheels over the centuries.

We had a fabulous opening day in March and we were very happy to welcome back our old supporters alongside many visitors who had never visited before. The sun shone and it was particularly noticeable on the shiny chrome of visiting Morgan Sports cars – so beautiful – 4 wheelers, 3 wheelers and one only big enough for teddies. These were much enjoyed and coveted, filling the top area of the car park nearest the Mill. Just a reminder that we can accommodate all sorts of groups to the Mill, for socials, for meetings and school groups with tailored learning needs.

As usual on Steaming Day, we will have a full range of delicious refreshments both hot and cold, sweet or savoury on offer.

**New for 2022**: Steaming Sunday 17 July – Birds, Bees and Badgers – a celebration of British Wildlife.

Tony Simmons (891851)

#### St James' Summer Party – Advance notice

Everyone is welcome to come to the Manor garden on Sunday 3 July from 3.30-5pm, for teas and to enjoy the gardens. There will be a bouncy castle (supervised) and plenty of space for children to run around. It's a time to relax, meet with friends and get to know new local friends.

Come to the doorway in the Manor wall, near the Cross. For anyone needing car transport, come via the drive on the untarmacked road opposite the War Memorial, but please leave the car further back off the drive.

The weather will kindly do its best to stay fine, but there will be an unusual design of large marquee to take refuge in if the rain wants to enliven our party! See you there on the day.

Charlotte Oakeshott (891222)

## Charity bike day: Advance notice

This motorbike event is being held on 13 August at Stonesfield Playing Field, in support of the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research and local charities FoSS, Stonesfield Scouts and Chrissie's Owls.

Any village charity or organisation that would like to have a stall, car boot stall, run a raffle, tombola etc to raise funds for their own organisation will also be very welcome. For any local businesses wishing to have a stall there will be a donation charge, to go to the above charities. Please let the organisers know as soon as possible if you would like to participate. We will give further details in the next issue.

Access to the field will be from 10am, with the event starting at 12 noon.

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Contact: Roger Evins (891715) or Andy Gillam (898123 or 07443 596324)

### **Cold callers**

Police Community Support has reported a rise in 'cold callers' or 'Nottingham knockers', particularly in Burford, Taynton and Swinbrook. Although this is some way away from Stonesfield, it is as well to be aware and to take some precautions.

The police advise that you do not deal with these people, do not pay cash on your doorstep and never allow them into your home. It is not rude to say no. Be aware of cold calling activity and report it immediately to the police.

Call 101 in a non-emergency, or 999 in an emergency.

#### Be water aware

As the warmer weather arrives, Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service has issued advice on safety near the county's waterways and lakes. Drowning is among the leading causes of accidental death in the UK, with ten lives lost between 2020-22. Even on a warm day, open water in a reservoir, quarry or lake can remain very cold. Falling into water while walking or running on uneven paths alongside, or intentionally jumping in can result in a cold shock response, disorientation and hyperventilation. There are also other hazards under the surface: river currents, rocks and submerged rubbish or fishing lines.

The advice if you should fall into cold water is to lean back and float until you can control your breathing.

Anyone witnessing someone in trouble in the water should call 999 or 112 and shout for help. Do not enter the water yourself but throw in something that floats.

## Police and community support

For information or advice on security concerns, please contact woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or call 101.

### Another reminder



Please take your dog's poo bags home or bin them!

People do not welcome filled dog bags left in their hedges.

# Politics & local affairs

#### **Stonesfield Parish Council**

The Parish Council's May meeting was held on 18 May; later than normal due to the Council being required to avoid meetings around the time of elections. An update from the Council following the May meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting will follow in the July Slate and will also be on the village website. The June meeting will be on 1 June at 7pm, in St James' Centre.

The Parish Councillors are in the process of choosing an aerial photograph of the village which will be printed and framed for the Queen's Jubilee. Thanks go to Frank Huddleston for providing us with some drone images.

The annual audit of accounts to the end of March 2022 is in progress. The Clerk is currently working on this, and details of the finances will be published on the website for easy viewing. It is expected that internal audit by an independent auditor will be completed in June, and the external audit by external governance by the end of September.

The Parish Council wishes to alert residents to the planning application relating to the expansion of Marlborough School (see separate item under **Education, culture and more**), as many children in the village will plan to attend the school.

Karen East, Parish Clerk clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk https://stonesfield.online

### From our District Councillor

It has been a steep learning curve during my first year as a District Councillor. Despite having quite a bit of local government experience, the role was quite different from what I expected.

West Oxfordshire, over the past year, has succeeded in many areas, from major, international contributions such as the aid project to home Ukrainian citizens, to the slightly smaller project of the introduction of Hedgehog Highways.

In my view, one of the more long-term successes has been the introduction of electric vehicle charging points in Woodstock car park, looking toward a more sustainable and environmentally friendly future.

I couldn't, of course, write about the past year without bringing up the 'C' word, COVID. While this forced many West Oxfordshire District Council projects to be shelved, the Council did manage to keep many local businesses afloat with support to town centres, financial contributions to 1,712 local businesses and the planning regulation support for outdoor dining, aiding our hospitality industry.

Finally, an unprecedented cross-party motion to openly question Thames Water's actions in recent years may prove to be the beginning of a historic monitoring process that could hopefully improve the biodiversity within our rivers. Looking forward, it seems we may have slightly more influence over decisions in West Oxfordshire in the coming year. I would encourage anyone and everyone to continue to contact me.

Thank you to everyone for your support over the last year and I look forward to achieving more in the next.

#### Mathew Parkinson

Mathew.parkinson@westoxon.gov.uk

## News from West Oxfordshire

#### May local elections - 5 May

In West Oxfordshire District Council, a third of the Council's seats were elected and the Conservatives lost control for the first time in 22 years, winning four of the 16 seats available. Two cabinet members, including the authority's long-serving deputy leader David Harvey, lost their seats to Labour and Liberal Democrat candidates respectively.

Labour retained control of Oxford City Council but lost some ground to opposition parties. Half of its 48 seats were elected: Labour won 15, the Greens four, the Lib Dems four and an independent won one. The Labour councillors returned included leader Susan Brown and deputy leader Ed Turner. Labour now have 32 seats, the Lib Dems nine, the Greens six and an independent one.

The Conservatives retained control of Cherwell District Council, though the Greens, Labour and Lib Dems all gained seats. In the Vale of White Horse, a byelection was held in the Steventon and the Hanneys ward won by Lib Dem Sally Povolotsky. There were no district council elections in South Oxfordshire.

## West Oxfordshire District Council changes

At its Annual General Meeting on 18 May, the Council voted in a new leader and administration for West Oxfordshire District Council.

This follows the local elections on 5 May 2022 which left no political party with an overall majority. A total of 25 of the 49 seats are required to form a majority and no one individual party reached this number.

The split of councillors by party following the election was:

Conservative	20
Liberal Democrats	15
Labour/Labour and Co-operative	9
Independent	3
Green Party	2

The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups have now agreed to form a new administration to run the Council and will be known locally as the 'West Oxfordshire Alliance'.

The new Council Leader is Councillor Andy Graham and the Deputy Leader is Councillor Duncan Enright (who will also take on the Economic Development portfolio). The new Cabinet members for the Council also include: Cllr Dan Levy (Lib Dem) - Finance Cllr Carl Ryatt (Lib Dem) - Planning and Sustainable Development Cllr Mathew Parkinson (Lib Dem) -Customer Delivery Cllr Joy Aitman (Labour) - Stronger, Healthy Communities Cllr Geoff Saul (Labour) - Housing and Social Welfare Cllr Lidia Arciszewska (Lib Dem) -Environment

Cllr Andrew Prosser (Green) – Climate Change

Councillor Andy Graham, the new Leader of the Council, said: 'I am incredibly excited to form this new cabinet with colleagues from across our West Oxfordshire Alliance and to be Leader at West Oxfordshire District Council.

'We will be starting work straight away with officers to set the priorities for this administration and deliver on behalf of all the residents, communities and businesses across West Oxfordshire.'

#### From our MP – Robert Courts

#### **HSBC Safe Spaces**

HSBC has now launched Safe Spaces in each of their branches. This means that anyone experiencing domestic abuse can walk into an HSBC UK branch and access a Safe Space, where they can seek support and advice from specialist trained staff. There is now a Safe Space at the Witney HSBC branch, and I would encourage anybody who may want to, to visit and access the specialist support provided.

## Government plan to tackle storm overflows

The Government has launched its consultation on the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan, which proposes transformational changes to our sewage system, ensuring a significant reduction in the use of storm overflows. Responses to the consultation will be taken into account and the Discharge Reduction Plan has to be published by the Government by September.

Under the plans, water companies will face strict limits on when they can use storm overflows and must completely eliminate the harm any storm sewage discharges cause to the environment. The consultation outlines how water companies are expected to achieve these targets, including mapping their sewer networks, reducing surface water connections and engaging in longterm collaborative planning.

It also details a new monitoring and reporting framework as legislated for in the Environment Act, which will significantly improve the ability of both Ofwat and the Environment Agency to take enforcement action where needed.

In the meantime Wolvercote Mill Stream has become only the second river site in the country to be granted bathing water quality status, which means that weekly water quality reports will be published.

#### **Fly-Tipping**

New measures published by the Government to combat fly-tipping have been welcomed – it's a crime which poses a risk to public health and the environment, and costs up to £392 million a year.

The plans include ensuring that recycling and correct disposal of rubbish is free, accessible and easy for households, including free disposal of DIY waste. New grant funding will enable Local Authorities to clamp down on fly-tipping, and some Councils in England will be awarded grants to tackle fly-tipping through innovative trial projects, including CCTV to target hotspots. A consultation will also be launched on the use of booking systems at recycling centres, and the Environment Agency will gain extra funding to tackle waste crime and new powers to force rogue operators to clean up their waste.

Robert Courts MP robert.courts.mp@parliament.uk

# Education, culture & more

#### **Stonesfield Primary School**

I have made the difficult decision to step down as headteacher of Stonesfield Primary School at the end of the summer term. It has been an honour and privilege to lead the school during the last four years.

I am proud of the journey the school has been on during my headship, and leave knowing Stonesfield Primary School offers an excellent education to our pupils. Our culture of high academic expectations and standards, coupled with our unrivalled pastoral and SEND support, benefits all our children. It has been a pleasure to see pupils thrive and flourish, both in and out of the classroom. Our team staff are skilled, dedicated and compassionate, and see everything through the eyes of our children. Every decision made at Stonesfield Primary School is taken with children's best interests at heart. Empathy, kindness and respect are the foundations this school is built on and the values we promote passionately.

Personally, headship has been both rewarding and challenging in equal measure. The last two years have been unprecedented while leading the school through a pandemic and the job has consumed my life. My wife and two young children deserve to spend more quality time with me and an improved work-life balance is at the forefront of this decision, along with the desire to pursue new professional challenges. Governors are working with Oxfordshire Country Council to recruit Stonesfield's next head teacher and I have every confidence the school will continue to be a wonderful asset for our village.

Finally, a huge thanks to all who supported our recent summer fete. Friends of Stonesfield School (FoSS) did a brilliant job of organising and raising much-needed funds for the school. Money raised is going towards a new outdoor classroom, and our outdoor environment for our youngest children is having an exciting revamp.

Ben Trevail Head teacher

#### The Marlborough School, Woodstock – Consultation closes 10 June

The Governors of The Marlborough C of E School have opened a consultation on a proposal to permanently expand the school by 30 children in each year group (years 7 to 11, 150 students in total), starting from September 2024. Additional pupils would be annually admitted into Year 7 only, to increase the capacity of the school gradually.

The expansion is needed to meet the additional demand for school places from new houses in the area and would require a new building on the school site, which would be subject to a planning decision. The school is popular and oversubscribed, and this expansion would meet the needs of local families who might find themselves unable to access a place at the school as they are displaced by new housing that is more local to the school site.

Details of the consultation are available on www.marlborough.oxon.sch.uk. Comments on the proposal are invited via the online form on the same website, or can be sent to the governors at: Shipton Road, Woodstock, Oxon. OX20 1LP. The consultation will close on Friday 10 June 2022.

The Department for Education will make the final decision as to whether the school can expand. If the proposal is agreed, a building project will start with an intended completion date of September 2024.



## **Stonesfield Primary School**



Learning together to achieve our best.

Looking for a friendly, inclusive, local school for your child? Stonesfield Primary School has places in all year groups - we would love to show you around.



Tel:01993 891687 Office email: office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk Headteacher email: head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

#### **Stonesfield Library**

The Library is open as follows:		
Monday	2.30 – 7pm	
Wednesday	10am – 12 noon	
Thursday	2.30 – 5pm	
Saturday	10am – 12 noon.	

Stonesfield Library telephone: 898187

Have you been to the library lately? Did you know that you have access to upwards of a million books through the library lending service? It's a fantastic resource which we don't want to lose, so please use! We also now have a jigsaw swap box, so bring your jigsaw along.

We are having a meeting for Volunteers, sixteen of us at the moment, at the Sports and Social Club on Wednesday 29 June 29, 7.15-9pm. Please come along to find out what we do. There's no obligation to become a volunteer, but of course we'd love to have more!

Val Phillips (891455) Friends of Stonesfield Library

#### FoSL: Friends of Stonesfield Library

Open to anyone who wants to help keep our village library open.

We have been providing voluntary cover for half of the existing library hours (about 6 hours a week) since the library service was cut back.

For further details, or to join us, please contact Mike Pollitt

01993 891856, mikepollitt@btopenworld.com

#### I'm a Reader...

Another in the series: the Friends of Stonesfield Library (FoSL) thought it might be interesting to interview visitors to the library, to give everyone a sense of the library as a living part of the community and to give this vital village facility more of the attention it needs.

#### Lauren Normanton, 38

Lauren grew up in Stonesfield. After years abroad, including 13 in Calgary, Canada, where her three children were born, she returned to the village five years ago. While the family's return was not solely prompted by Lauren missing the library, no one should doubt the tug on the heartstrings of the old place.

'I've been using the library for as long as I can remember,' says a wistful Lauren. 'I remember being old enough to go on my own on my bike.' She became obsessed with the young adult thriller series 'Point Horror': 'They were all the rage, but they cost five pounds each, two weeks' pocket money, so it was great to get them free in the library'. The series was very popular with teenage girls but, as so often, did not meet with great critical approval, with one literary historian pointing out that readers expected female characters to be 'upset, killed or dumped'. No doubt this only added to the thrill.

In the sixth form, Lauren admits that time at the library was gradually displaced by time in the pub. Then, one gap year turned into three and she wound up studying zoology at the University of Calgary. She belonged to libraries in Canada, and they were excellent: 'big and new...but much less personal. Because the Stonesfield library is so small, people talk to you when you're in there. The smell of the library, the combination of the books and the village hall is very nostalgic to me.'

A favourite recent book was one she spotted on the quick read section: 'Anatomy of a Scandal' by Sarah Vaughn. 'I'd heard nothing about it, but I thought it was excellent, then, just a few weeks later, I heard it was being filmed by Netflix with Rupert Friend as the male lead, which is always strange for me, as he was in my brother's year at school.'

She is part of an online book group and takes part in the 52-book challenge, the goal being to read a book every week in the vear. However, she stormed past this - last year she read 98 books and this year is hoping to hit triple figures. With three children, Alice (15), James (11) and Mimi (9) to look after, her partner Gerrod working in Canada, plus part time work, you might wonder where Lauren finds the time. However, as a parent carer (her son has special needs and wakes frequently in the night and usually is up by four in the morning), she admits: 'my life is stressful and there is a lot of chaos; to sit and read fiction is my way to relax. I read first thing in the morning. Otherwise,' she shudders, 'I'd just be scrolling through the phone'.

**Eleanor Bailey** 

# Blenheim's sweet conservation project

The Blenheim Estate is joining forces with Rowse Honey on a major conservation project to create a sustainable nectar source for local wild bees and other pollinators, as well as introducing new habitats for insects and birds, in and around the Oxfordshire estate. At least 50 acres of pollinator-rich meadows will be created over five years on agricultural land, and new research funded into the role that pollinators have in farmed landscapes. Over 70 different species of native wildflowers will be introduced and 200km of hedgerow will be planted.

Dozens of wild honey bee colonies have been discovered living in the ancient woodland at Blenheim. It is hoped the wildflower meadows will enable the existing population of wild honey bees and other invertebrates living in the ancient woodland to expand and colonise surrounding areas.

Reports conclude that approximately 97% of wildflower areas and approximately 118,000 miles (c.50%) of hedgerows have disappeared in the UK since World War II, due largely to intensive farming methods. This loss of habitat and forage supply, along with disease, have caused populations of pollinating insects to dwindle.

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# Nature Notes: Elm trees around Stonesfield

The humps, bumps and holes of the Stonesfield slate industry are easily seen. Less easy to see are the elm trees in our landscape, marking sites where majestic elms once stood. (Check the paintings of John Constable for mature elm trees.)

Since the 60s and 70s, the bark beetle has spread a fungus which killed about 25 million elm trees. A few have been immune to the fungus and give hope that more immune trees can be grown.

Setting off down the Combe road, this is an ideal time of year to spot the wych elms

growing on the right hand side just after the entrance to the manor. Wych elm is the true native, with a softer wood than the common elm. It flowers in early spring, with clusters of red and purple along twigs and branches. It is seeds from these early flowers that will produce the next trees, growing to about 30 feet before they succumb to Dutch elm disease. The young wych elm trees (not old enough for flowers) can look like young hazel, but look closely at the leaves as all elm leaves have an asymmetric base.

It is thought that common elms were introduced in the Bronze Age. The harder wood is water resistant; it blunts chainsaws and has even been used in the past for water pipes (found in Bristol and Reading).

Keep going and turn right in the dip, taking the path above Bagg's Bottom. Pass the old slate mines in the field on your right, and on the left you will begin to see the elm tree suckers, growing away until the trunk reaches a good log size, when the fungus gets a grip and the young trees die off before they are old enough to produce seeds.

Downhill to the river and into Stockey Bottom – here we have a considerable number of wych elms. They are along the bottom and top edges of the wood, mainly young ones. If you take the path along the top of the wood, there is one magnificent wych elm with several stems, flowering profusely, just before you get to the dell. I guess it will succumb to Dutch elm disease in the next year or two. Let's hope more seeds sprout for the next generation to mark where their ancestors grew.

John Sampson



#### Local history: From the Oxford Journal – Saturday 16 January 1858

#### 'STONESFIELD.

Discovery of Remarkable Fossils: Some very remarkable fossil bones have recently been discovered in the slate pit of Mr. Michael Osborne, at Stonesfield, 60 feet from the surface. One consists of an enormous thigh bone, 2 feet 2 inches in length, and 1 foot 1 inch in circumference. It was discovered in four distinct parts, and the marrow, which is 2 inches in diameter, is perfectly white, while the bone is perfectly black, and at the extremities the muscles appear quite perfect. This bone evidently belonged to some extinct animal. The other fossils consist of some vertebrae, probably of the same animal, as they are very large, four of them measuring 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches in length, and in width they vary from 3 to 5 inches. All these fossils, and some others of less importance,

possess considerable interest to the antiquarian, and may be seen at Mr. Osborne's house.

Miraculous Escape. A few days ago a boy named Abel Davis, aged 10, accidentally fell into a well 25 feet deep, the water at the bottom being about 3 feet deep. A younger brother saw him fall in, and ran for assistance; his eldest brother soon came to the well, and, letting down a rope, soon pulled up the young prisoner, who thus escaped with only a ducking.'

Douglas Rudlin





# Clubs, societies & sport

#### **Stonesfield Gardening Club**

Our May meeting was very well attended for a talk by Harriet Rycroft entitled *Summer Luxuriance in Pots,* which informed us how to achieve and maintain a good show with our pots and planters throughout the summer months. Harriet's talk covered a wide range of issues including choosing suitable plants and the combining of shapes, textures and colours, as well as addressing issues of microclimate, plant protection and irrigation.



Membership of the club is thriving, with over 75 members from Stonesfield and the surrounding villages. Nevertheless, we used a presence at the school fete to raise our profile further and to offer the chance, on the day, to join the Club for the remainder of 2022 at a reduced subscription of £5 per person or £10 per couple.

This month sees the welcome return of our Open Gardens event on Sunday 26 June. This event is planned to take place every two years but was cancelled last year due to COVID-19 restrictions. At the time of writing, we will have nine gardens to visit; some will be 'old friends' and others are being shown for the first time. The gardens will be open from 2-5.30pm.



Admission is £5 per person (accompanied children free) and tickets and maps are obtainable from the start point at the St James' Centre. Teas and homemade cakes and bakes will be available there at our pop-up café until 5pm and there will be a plant sale on the forecourt. We hope to see you there!

Trisha Williams www.stonesfieldgardening.info

#### Stonesfield Sustainability Groups

#### The Food Group

We are all about food, growing, making, sharing!



We have been discussing local food producers and took a little road trip to investigate. The ones we know of are The Orchard in Combe, The Veg Shed on the road to Church Hanborough and Worton Kitchen Garden. All are worth looking at if you are trying to source your food locally and it would be great to know if you have found any other producers... do get in touch!

We are planning our events over the next few months, including a one-day bread baking course at the Village Hall. We are also going to be out and about visiting some of the local organisations that are innovating in food production – we will give more details in the next Slate and please do come and join us to find out more. We will also be working alongside The Repair Café at The Village Hall, serving teas and coffees and delicious home baking.

We meet fortnightly on a Tuesday on Zoom; next meeting is on 7 June, 7-8pm. Just turn up you and will be very welcome. Mail me!

#### The Environmental Group

Earlier this year, a small group of residents started talking about their shared passion for the environment in and around Stonesfield. This quickly accelerated, and we have now formed ourselves into the Stonesfield Environmental Group. We have strong links to SUSTO and a number of other groups in the village, but with our own distinct focus. Our aim is to carry out projects and campaigns that will protect, maintain or improve the woodlands, rivers, hedgerows, wildlife and biodiversity in and around the village. We also hope to become a coordination point for the many people in the village with conservation expertise.

The beauty of the natural environment is one of Stonesfield's greatest assets; highly prized by village residents and visitors, but it is under threat from pollution and a loss of biodiversity and habitat. We have identified a number of projects that we want to pursue immediately. We want to address the terrible sewage dumping and water quality in the Evenlode; we want to plant a new tree for every Stonesfield resident over the next three years to improve biodiversity, and we have offered our support in the development of the environmental aspects of the new Neighbourhood Plan.

We believe that raising community awareness about what is going on in our local environment is important to preserving it for the future, so we will report our activities here in the Slate on a regular basis. Anyone interested in finding out more about our projects or in joining our group – please contact me.

Julie Curran juliecurran0@gmail.com

## Stonesfield Scouts

#### Parents' Social and AGM

The Group will be holding the 2022 Annual General Meeting at our Group camp. This will be at Youlbury Scout Adventures, Boars Hill, Oxford, OX1 5HD on Friday 10 June at 7pm (just after the drop off for Group camp); all parents are invited to stay for a drink and to hear about the plans for the Group. This will be our first Group camp for over five years. There will be tea, coffee and even a campfire; all are welcome. Please let the Group Scout Leader know if you wish to attend at gsl@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk.

The AGM agenda is posted on our website at stonesfield-scouts.org.uk and on our Facebook page. We are really looking for people to get involved in the Scout group; this is such an important time for us, so if you want to see the group continue to thrive and are interested in hearing how you might get involved (even as little as four times a year as a parent rep, or maybe to run a fundraising event) then come along to the AGM and/or let Ben Whitworth know: chair@stonesfieldscouts.org.uk.

#### **Duck Race and BBQ**

On 16 July at 5pm, the Duck Race and BBQ is back again! This is our largest annual fundraising event to support the building of the hut and the delivery of the scouting sessions. Come down to the river, have a drink and a burger, and cheer your ducks on to victory! Ducks will be available from the shop and from your local Beaver, Cub or Scout in the weeks before the race. Come down and support a great cause, in a great place, with a great event.

#### Jubilee Beacon

The Group will be burning a beacon of light for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Thursday 2 June at 9pm. This will be on the Glebe Land in Stonesfield. The Queen is the Scouting patron, so please join us in celebration.

#### Section Update - Scouts

So far this term we have been honing our camp craft skills, ready for our Expedition Challenge Badge (equivalent of Bronze D of E expedition) which will be part of this summer's Group Camp activities, learning how to use different stoves and cooking methods, as well as improving our map reading and navigation skills with a couple of walks. We're also working on our climber badge, with our second trip to Northleach coming soon.

#### Stonesfield Scouts Fundraising Team

A huge thank you to the Stonesfield Parish Council for supporting our fundraising campaign. We are extremely grateful! We are still waiting to hear the outcome of the other grant applications submitted.

The I<sup>st</sup> Stonesfield Scouts chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk



#### **Stonesfield Repair Cafe**

The Repair Cafe is holding its first event in conjunction with the Community café on Saturday 2 July in the Village Hall, from 9.30-12.30.



Come and have a coffee, and bring all those things that need mending. We'll have a look at small electrical appliances, portable items of furniture, china, computers and phones, clothes and material items that need alteration or attention, bikes which need repair or maintenance or anything that needs some TLC. We can't promise to mend everything, but we'll certainly have a go, and spare you expense and the environment more waste.

If you are handy and would like to be a repairer then please contact me.

Mike Sofroniou mikesofroniou@gmail.com

# Women's Cycling Tour of Britain

On Saturday 11 June, over a hundred professional women cyclists will compete on the final day (Stage 6) of the Women's Cycling Tour, in Oxfordshire.

The Women's Tour is the UK's first international stage race for women.



With a start at Chipping Norton, the race will pass through Charlbury, Burford and Carterton before the finish in Oxford. More details are on womenstour.co.uk.

Information provided by West Oxfordshire District Council Communications Team

## **Stonesfield Football Club**

See Tom Flanigan's report on page 28

## STONESFIELD VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Our volunteer drivers are available to take you to local medical appointments or to the hospitals in Oxford and Banbury.

We make no charge but welcome a donation towards expenses;

safety precautions are still in place.

Please call Viv Kendall (01993 891803) to book transport in June.

# See separate post for centre pages

# See separate post for centre pages

# Clubs, societies & sport (cont)

#### **Stonesfield Football Club**

As the curtain falls on yet another football season and we get ready to welcome 'the silly mid-off' boys to the cricket crease, I can hear the 'what ifs?' being uttered by our lads in The Firsts. The Senior Cup semi-final saw our boys come back from being a goal down to win 2-1, following a beautiful strike from Jack Barker and a lovely 'calmness personified' penalty by young Cary Rice to set up a final showdown with Hailey.

The final will always be remembered as the 'what if' Cup final. What if the Hailey penalty had been missed instead of being scored from the rebound? Or, what if the ref and linesman had spotted illegal encroachment? Also, what if Stonesfield had scored their penalty and what if the linesman had signalled for a goal in our favour after the ball crossed the Hailey line by at least a foot? Truth is, we'll never know but that won't stop our boys howling at the moon: 'We woz robbed'. The silly mid-off season will give them a chance to reflect on their season where they finished third in the league and runners-up in The Senior Cup. Room for improvement? Of course, but they can be proud of their performances this season and look to get back sharper, fitter and more determined to land silverware next season.

As far as The Reserves are concerned, maybe the only 'What if' would centre around a lack of 'old heads' to help guide our youngsters as they took their first, tentative steps into the world of men's football. Still, finishing ninth in the league, with 22 points from 20 games, and getting some vital experience under their belts isn't a bad start for the youngsters. They'll know what to expect next season and have a real go at winning promotion!

It's the final Fredo Award of the season and I know this is going to sound like a 'copout' but it was a unanimous decision to award it to The Firsts for their heroic but ultimate failure in The Ted Young Senior Cup Final. They played 80 minutes and battled well despite being down to 10 men, and to limit their opponents to a single goal (and could easily have won it), was genuinely heroic! I know it will be scant reward for their efforts, but it is welldeserved, and they did our wee village proud.

Finally, a big thank-you to all our supporters for your encouragement throughout the season and thanks also to the Sports and Social Club for their continued sponsorship and generous hospitality on match days ... there's always a warm welcome from Ben and Sam for the home and away teams. Thanks, also to everyone at The Slate ... you're all unsung heroes. I'll be back next season with more tales of heroics and drivel about dramatic wins, fine margins and the vagaries of 'what if?' Have a great summer, everyone!

Tom Flanigan (891979)

# Church news

#### Church of England Worship at St James the Great, Stonesfield

#### (Benefice of Stonesfield with Combe Longa)

www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org

**Rector:** Rev Ralph Williamson, rector@scbenefice.org, 01993 891872

Churchwarden: Lindsey Sellar stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

For any enquiries or help, including pastoral support, please do contact us.

## From the Rector: A time for everything

I was recently asked to read at the funeral of a dear friend, and the reading his family had chosen was a familiar one from the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes, chapter three:

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;

a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up;

a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance;

a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to throw away;

a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to keep silent and a time to speak;

a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.

The Book of Ecclesiastes has contributed some well-known phrases to our culture, including 'vanity of vanities', 'chasing after wind', 'eat, drink and be merry', and 'under the sun', but the phrase 'a time for everything' has particularly captured the imagination of writers and musical storytellers. I remember partying to 'And a Time to Dance' by Los Lobos, and there are novels such as 'A Time to Kill' by John Grisham, music such as Stevie Wonder's 'A Time to Love', and films 'A Time to Love and a Time to Die', and 'A Time to Live'.

The passage above is a very helpful reading for a funeral, when we may have thoughts of gratitude as well as feelings of sorrow, as we reflect on a life lived and lost. The writer of Ecclesiastes takes a philosophical view - they do not offer easy answers to life's difficulties, but neither do they despair. Sun comes after rain, laughter after sorrow, and sometimes when a door closes another will open. Pleasure and opportunity should be enjoyed when they present themselves, but all of life is to be lived with God in mind too, remembering that wisdom is greater than folly, and light greater than darkness.

Three or four hundred years later, the early church offered another view on this

wrestling of good and bad in human life. The followers of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth agreed that light overcomes darkness, and recognised that bad things can be followed by good. We often find ourselves longing for this: longing for an end to war, or for something to change for the better. But the great insight of Christian faith is that God is not far off, but ever present, and working to turn brokenness into healing, sorrow into joy, hatred into love, and death into life. The celebration each Sunday of the raising of Jesus from the dead is a declaration that life is not vanity, but filled with meaning and purpose, even though many difficult times are an inevitable part of the human lot. Our participation in the death and resurrection of Christ at Holy Communion affirms that life is to be lived and enjoyed abundantly, and expresses the Christian faith that even death will be transformed into life.

Revd Ralph Williamson - Rector

#### Services

#### Sunday 5 June [Pentecost]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Service of Celebration for HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship
5pm	Stonesfield	Service of Celebration for HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

with Jubilee tea & cake from 3.30pm in St James' Centre.

#### Sunday 12 June [Trinity Sunday]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

## Sunday 19 June [First Sunday after Trinity]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

## Sunday 26 June [Second Sunday after Trinity]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion
		[BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

#### Mondays

8.45-11.30am	Monday Coffee in St
	James' Centre

#### Tuesdays

- 8.45-10am Coffee and biscuits
  - in the Reading Room, Combe

#### Wednesdays

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion
11am	Combe	Morning Prayer (8th & 22nd)

#### **Stonesfield Methodist Church** Services for June

Sunday 5	10.30am	United Service at Charlbury
	(No Se	ervice at Stonesfield)
Sunday 12	11am	The Reverend Stephen Bywaters
	Holy	Communion Service
Sunday 19	11am	Ian Prince
Sunday 26	11am	The Reverend Ian Worrall

The latest Methodist Connexion magazine has arrived, and its theme is 'Doing Justice'. The articles are written by people whose lives have been touched by the justice system. Local Circuit Minister and a former police officer, The Reverend Jason Cooke, writes on the 'complexity of justice', and his difficulty to sometimes understand it.

Like me, you may remember a time when you found a justice issue hard to understand, and after looking at the pros and the cons, you still dithered. Jesus never dithered, He spoke for justice in its every form, clearly and without hesitation, including words of love and care, understanding and making things right. His resounding words are simple: 'Do to others as you would have them do to you' Matthew 7:12a.

The Connexion magazines are available at High St. Methodist Church, Witney.

Come to a Service soon!

Kathleen Albért (891733)

#### **New Church thought**

The Ladies' Breakfast in the St. James' Centre in May featured the singer/ songwriter Rachel Chai from Chipping Norton. She told us a bit about her life, and how she's reached her current contented state of mind. Her songs conveyed parts of that journey. I spoke to her afterwards – though we come from different faith backgrounds, we agreed that all genuine religions have truth in them; any individual's journey is unique, and depends on life experiences.

It reminded me of a principle of the New Church – that there is a 'church specific', i.e. any particular religion or church body, and a 'church universal': the worldwide presence of God within the hearts and minds of people. Here is a quote about the church universal taken from newchristianbiblestudy.org; an organisation of the New Church:

'We as individuals are who we are based on what we love, not what we know. We will go to heaven or to hell based on what we love, not what we know. Knowing, thinking and seeking truth are important things, but their purpose is to shape, guide and serve our loves: love is ultimately what matters. The Writings [of Swedenborg] make it abundantly and repeatedly clear that it is the same with churches: they are ultimately based on love, not knowledge, on their determination to serve the neighbour, not their external forms of worship. And if churches share that common purpose of serving the neighbour then they are in essence one, with doctrinal variations being of little consequence.'

Dale Morris (898210)

#### **Roman Catholic Worship** How happy are you?

Happiness has replaced health as our most desired human condition (in the West). Good health is generally more accessible for most of us now, but happiness is much more elusive in our material world. We compare ourselves to others, and are enticed by images that promise beauty, wealth and a better self, but this is ephemeral happiness. Real happiness – contentment of the soul and spirit, are not beyond reach.

In The Letter to the Hebrews, we are told: 'Be content with what you have, for He has said: 'I will never leave you nor forsake you' (Hebrews 13:5). This proposal that contentment with what one has, plus that reassurance that we are never alone, and always loved, is echoed by St Paul: 'For I have learnt in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need' (Philippians 4: 11-12).

Wise words from 2,000 years ago tell us that to be happy, we should accept what we have, rather than strive after the unattainable, especially material things. Remember that God loves us despite our endless faults and failings, and that God is always with us if we chose to let God into our hearts and lives. *'The Lord is close to the broken-hearted'* (Psalm 34).

#### Holy Mass

Sunday Mass at 9.15am

Weekday Mass times:

Monday and Tuesday at 9.30am

Wednesday at 7pm

Thursday at 9.30am

Friday at 9.30am, followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

For times of confession: see the weekly newsletter on stteresaschurchcharlbury.com

#### Prayers of spiritual communion

O my divine Jesus, how great is my desire to receive your sacred body! Oh, come now into my soul, at least, by a spiritual communion! O Jesus, my divine Saviour, save me. O my God, hiding myself with a humble confidence in your dear wounds, I give up my soul into your divine hands. Oh, receive it into the bosom of your mercy. Amen.

#### The Synodal Pathway

The Holy Father called for the Synodal Process to begin in the Dioceses of the world on 17 October 2021. The Holy Father highlights the importance of 'mutual listening' and that this will be at the heart of the synodal process throughout the Church and beyond the boundaries of the Church.

For further information about the Synodal Pathway and how St Teresa's is approaching this, please visit our website (see below).

St Teresa's, Charlbury is supporting ACN's Emergency Appeal for the Ukraine to raise funds to support various religious denominations' priests and members of religious congregations to continue their mission. If you wish to know more or donate, please contact Suze Mathews (01993 891720 or email suzemathews899@btinternet.com)

Please check St. Teresa's website for details of Confession times etc: https://stteresaschurch-charlbury.com/.

Fr Tony Joyce can be contacted on holytrinityrcchippy@gmail.com or 01608 642703.

For parish updates and any further information, please visit https:// stteresaschurch- charlbury.com/, or contact Clive Dytor on chair.stteresaschurchcharlbury@ gmail.com.

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