



Issue No 573 October 2026

Stonesfield Suppers

A weekly feast bringing the village together



A warm welcome at the heart of Stonesfield

Every Tuesday evening, as the clock edges towards five, the Stonesfield Village Hall begins to hum with life. The doors open, familiar faces drift in, new ones follow, and the aroma of home-cooked food fills the air. This is Stonesfield Suppers — a weekly, free, two-course meal offered to **every resident** of Stonesfield, no questions asked, no barriers, no cost.

In a time when communities can feel scattered, Stonesfield Suppers has quietly become one of the village's most cherished traditions: a place where neighbours meet, families relax, and friendships grow over good food and warm conversation.

Powered by volunteers, sustained by community

The magic behind Stonesfield Suppers is a dedicated team of volunteer cooks and kitchen helpers who transform ingredients sourced from the Oxford Food Hub in Botley into delicious, hearty meals. Their commitment is simple: reduce food waste, support local residents, and create a welcoming space for all ages.

Every Tuesday from 5–6.30pm

The Village Hall becomes a bustling, family-friendly dining room. Children chatter and take part in Craft activities, older residents catch up, newcomers find a seat and instantly feel at home. It's community in its purest form — inclusive, joyful, and nourishing in more ways than one.

Continues on p5

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.

Do you want to advertise?

An advertisement in *The Stonesfield Slate* starts from as little as **£3 per month**.

Please email **publisher@stonesfieldslate.uk** or call the Publishers on 01993 898841, for full details of availability, sizes, requirements and cost. We can also help with design if required.

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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, if appropriate, endeavour to correct them. Dates for your diary are always subject to change. Please check with event organisers.

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or contact the Editor by phone.

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Current and past copies of *The Slate* are available at
www.stonesfield.online or via QR code



Dates for your Diary: September

26	Combe WI Coffee morning	Reading Room	10.30am-noon
26	Henderson:Hooper 25th Anniv Conc	St James Church	3.30pm
26	The Adderbury Ensemble	Combe Community Hub	7.30pm

October

1,8,15,22,29	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
1	Open morning	Stonesfield School	9-11am
1- 11	Art exhibition: <i>Celebration</i>	Oxfordshire Museum	10am-5pm
1,5,8,12,15	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
1,8,15,22,29	Upholstery	Village Hall	9.30am-12.30pm
1,8,15,22,29	Hannah Bathe Strength & Condition	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
1-14	Pics @ The Pub:Paintings & Collage	The White Horse	Pub hours
2	Harvest Quiz Night	St James' Centre	6pm
2,9,16,23,30	Baby & Toddlers	Village Hall	10am-noon
3	Stonesfield Players Community Café	Village Hall	10am-noon
3	Chrissie's Owls Coffee & Cake	N Ox Crem	11am-3.00pm
4	Harvest Festival Service	St James Church	11am
5,12,19,26	Coffee morning	St James' Centre	10-11.30am
5,12,19,26	Baby & Me Postnatal Yoga	Village Hall	10-11.15am
5,12,19,26	Pickleball	Village Hall	12.30-2.30pm
5,12,19,26	Bump & Me Antenatal Yoga	Village Hall	7.30-8.30pm
5,12,19,26	Hannah Bathe HIIT	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
6,20	Quiz Night	The White Horse	8pm
6,13,20,27	Pickleball	Village Hall	12.30-1.30pm
6,13,20,27	Seniors Café	The White Horse	3-4pm
6,13,20,27	Stonesfield Supper	Village Hall	5-6.30pm
6,13,20,27	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
6,13,20,27	Zumba Strong	Village Hall	8-9pm
7	Lunch Club Coffee Morning	St James' Centre	11am-12.30pm
7	Stonesfield Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7-8.30pm
7,21	OM Curiosity Club	Oxfordshire Museum	2.30-4pm

Continued on p4

Dates for your Diary: October (cont)

7,14,21,28	Yoga & Relaxation	Village Hall	11-11.45am
7,14,21,28	Hannah Bathe Strength & Condition	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
7,14,21,28	Folk Dancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
9	Witney Music Soc: <i>Quartetto Noûs</i>	Witney Methodist Church	7.30pm
12	Stonesfield Gardening Club talk	St James' Centre	7.30pm
12	Combe WI talk	Reading Room, Combe	7.30pm
13	Folk Night	The White Horse	8pm
16	<i>Sounds Historical</i> Concert	St Laurence Church	7.15pm
16-31	Pics @ The Pub: Textile art & more	The White Horse	Pub hours
17	Ladies Breakfast	St James' Centre	9am
18	Wood Craft & Autumn Market	Combe Mill	10.30am- 4.30pm
19,22,26	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
20,21	<i>Kinder</i>	Soldiers of Ox Mus	See p10/18
24,31	Scriptwriting workshop (see p7)	St James' Centre	2-5.30pm
24	<i>Mercy of Sisters</i>	Pegasus Theatre, Oxford	7.30pm
24	Rock 'n Roll Bingo	The White Horse	8pm
27	Children's Halloween Movie	Sports & Social Club	11am
28	Bingo	Sports & Social Club	7pm
30	Film: <i>Àma Gloria</i>	Combe Hub	7.30pm
31	Shoe Boxes for Eastern Europe	Methodist Church	2pm
31	Fancy Dress Halloween Band Night	Sports & Social Club	8.30pm

November

10	Open morning	Stonesfield School	9-11am
12	Neighbourhood Plan referendum	(see p13)	



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.

**Please call or email to book transport
in October: Viv Kendall
01993 891803 or stonesfieldvts@gmail.com**

Notices & news

Stonesfield Suppers (cont from p1)

More than a meal

Stonesfield Suppers isn't just about food. It's about connection.

Residents often describe it as a place where they've met people they'd lived near for years but never spoken to. Others say it's become the highlight of their week — a moment to pause, share stories, and feel part of something bigger.

The organisers see it the same way: a simple idea that has grown into a vital social lifeline, strengthening the fabric of village life one plate at a time.

An open invitation

If you live in Stonesfield, **you're invited**. Whether you come alone, with family, or with a neighbour, you'll be greeted with a smile, a seat, and a freshly cooked meal. No booking, no cost — just community.

Stonesfield Suppers welcomes those:

- looking for an easy, friendly evening out
- wanting company and conversation
- hoping to get to know the village
- who enjoy good food and good people

If you've never been, come along next Tuesday. You might leave with a full stomach — and a few new friends.

If anyone would like to join our team of volunteers to cook or help in the kitchen contact Claire Cooke at stonesfieldfoodgroup2026@gmail.com

Stonesfield Suppers team

Stonesfield Village Hall News

We have been busy finishing the redecorating, not quite there yet, but we hope you agree it is looking much better than it did, the team will continue to spruce up the building with further work planned. Keep your eye out for the changes.

Don't forget the hall and club room are also a great hire for parties, events, training and meetings, with a well stocked kitchen to cater for up to 100 people, and alcohol licence. Available for hire from £9.20 per hour, please see our website, booking is easy, the calendar and booking is all online.

Also, Community Café slots for 2027 are available for local groups to fundraise on the first Saturday of each month.

Claire Renshaw

Stonesfield Village Hall Bookings

info@stonesfieldvillagehall.com

www.stonesfieldvillagehall.com

Guitar tuition

Learn to play the guitar in the comfort of your own home.

Complete beginner to intermediate.

Children and adults.

£20 per hour

No guitar? Don't worry, I can lend you one!

Call Matt: 07880 724708

White Horse News

The quiz is back at the pub every other week through October so why not come down and put a team together and see if you can become quiz champions. No need to book, just turn up and grab a table or contact us if you want to reserve one. Maximum teams of 6 and a chance to win a cash prize if you get the correct key to open the box. Next dates are 6 & 20 October.

Folk Music will return to the pub on Tuesday 13 October from 8pm so come on down, enjoy some light hearted entertainment and show your support.

We will once again be producing a Stonesfield dog calendar for 2027. This year's theme will be dogs in accessories. Whether you have a funny hat, scarf, bow tie or outfit for your dog the choice is yours. More details with dates of the photoshoot will be published around the pub and on our socials.

Our Christmas menu will also be out soon so keep your eyes peeled for what festive delights we have on offer this year.

Rock n Roll bingo will be making a return on Saturday 24 October. Book your table and join us for a fun evening. It will be an 8pm start.

Keep an eye on our socials and the next door app for more upcoming deals and events.

Facebook – The White Horse pub
Stonesfield

Instagram – thewhitehorsestonesfield14
Craig Tipper (01993 672059)

The White Horse

info@thewhitehorsestonesfield.com
www.thewhitehorsestonesfield.com

Pictures @ The Pub

Our exhibition of work by Fredrica Craig and Claire Fyfe-Jackson runs until Wednesday 14 October so our summer theme continues well into the autumn. This will be followed by a retrospective of Ann Lowe's *Journal Quilts* together with a selection of linocut prints, watercolours and collage by John Taylor, on show from mid-October to the end of November.

We will be rounding off the year with our third Midwinter Show and an invitation to participate will be extended to our past and present exhibitors. We look forward to showing a range of work by 20 or so artists to include paintings, etchings, collage, photography, textile art, drawings and prints.

As always, if you would be interested in showing your work at the Horse, we should be delighted to hear from you!

Trisha Williams for Pictures @ The Pub
trwynwil003@gmail.com

Team: Kerry Burniston, Jenny Lines, Ann Lowe
and Trisha Williams

Claire Renshaw for The White Horse
Community Pub

Harvest Quiz Night

It's time for another evening of fun and good company! Bring your family, friends, or come on your own - everyone very welcome. Buffet supper at half time - all free of charge.

It would be helpful to have an indication of numbers, so if you know you would like to come, please contact me.

Lindsey Sellar, Churchwarden (898757)
stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Stonesfield Players

Saturday 3 October Community Café

The Stonesfield Players are running the next Community Café at the Village Hall on Saturday 3 October from 10am till noon. Funds raised will go towards our productions so please support us if you can by coming along and enjoying delicious homemade cakes. Tickets for our November production, *Inspector Drake and the Perfekt Crime* will be on sale.

Save the Date update from the Stonesfield Players:

Inspector Drake and the Perfekt Crime.

Our next production is on the way - a gloriously silly detective caper full of chaos, clues and comic confusion. Performance dates are 26 - 28 November (Thursday-Saturday) in the Village Hall. Tickets will go on sale shortly, please look out for posters around the village very soon.

Scriptwriting workshops in October – book your place now

Ever wondered about how plays get from the written page and on to the stage? Or watched sketch shows on TV and thought you could do better? Book a place on a free scriptwriting workshop and give it a try in a supportive and friendly atmosphere. All levels of experience are welcome, including absolutely none! Using short writing exercises and working together in small groups, we'll be imagining characters and scenarios based on a theme of people meeting in a pub, then developing their stories to create sketches. This is an opportunity to experiment with scriptwriting and have fun finding out what we can develop together.

The workshops are free (funded by The Stonesfield Players) and take place on Saturday 24 October and Saturday 31 October from 2pm till 5.30pm at St James' Centre, Stonesfield OX29 8PU. You can attend one or both of the workshops. If you have any questions, please email or call me - please contact me by 10 October to reserve a place.

Nicky Holland (07791 110926)

nicky.holland@btinternet.com



More information on p15

Stonesfield Lunch Club

Lunch Club Coffee Morning

Do come along to the Coffee Morning at St. James' Centre on Wednesday 7 October. It will be open from 11am until 12-30pm. Hot and cold drinks will be served, biscuits too!

There will be a Bring and Buy corner and a fun Raffle. A great opportunity to spend time in the good company of members and visitors. Hope to see you there!

Driver appeal

Stonesfield Lunch Club operates every Weds to provide a hot meal and company to our senior neighbours. We have had a recent increase of those needing transport to the St James' Centre and urgently need some more volunteer drivers. This would only be once a month on rota and could just be drop-off or return if you can't do both! Collections at 11am and returns at 2pm. Please call me or email or call in to the centre any Weds and speak to the Day Organiser if you can help us. It will be so appreciated by our guests as this may be the only time they can get out in the week.

Kate Harris (07766 913117)

kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk

Ladies Breakfast

The Autumn Ladies' Breakfast is on Saturday 17 October in the St James' Centre starting at 9.00am. Come along and enjoy breakfast with others followed by a short talk. Our speaker is Peppy Rebello. The cost is £5.

If you would like to know more please get in touch with Bina (01993 891293), Kathleen (01993 891733), Muriel (01993 891479) or Suzy (01993 891552).

Muriel Barrett

Community and Repair Café



Thank you for all your fantastic support over the last few years. We are grateful for your appreciation of both the Community Café and the Repair Café which has run alongside for the last four years. It has enabled the Community Café to contribute to charitable activities in the village and with the Repair Café we've got to know you and saved over 900kg from being thrown away.

Due to Christmas activities there will be no December Café but we will be back again in the New Year - here are the dates for next year:

6 Feb 2027

19 June 2027

2 October 2027

We will be putting them in *The Slate* each time but you might like to put them in your diary now. We look forward to seeing you again in February.

Mike Sofroniou

Local Private Carer available

Monday-Friday, Hourly rate
Experienced, reliable, trustworthy and
kind-hearted

Victoria 07930 342087

Missing cats in Stonesfield

I am circulating an appeal regarding a concerning number of cats disappearing from local villages.

My own cat, Thomas, disappeared from Long Hanborough on 2 September. She is microchipped and normally stays extremely close to our home, but despite extensive searching, posters and enquiries we have had no confirmed sighting of her.

While searching for Thomas, we discovered that hers is far from an isolated disappearance. We have so far identified at least eight cats reported missing over approximately four months across Long Hanborough, Church Hanborough and Combe. We are now trying to establish how much further the pattern extends.

I have also been told that two cats may have gone missing in Stonesfield within the last few days. I have not yet independently confirmed the details of those cases, so I would particularly like to hear from their owners, or from anybody else in Stonesfield whose cat has recently disappeared.

What I am trying to do now is build an accurate, evidence-based record of missing cats: where each disappeared, the date last seen, whether they subsequently returned or were found and any relevant sightings or CCTV.

If you are missing a cat or have information about one, could you contact me? Any relevant information can then be collated and provided to Thames Valley Police under the existing incident reference.

Mark Harvey

markharvey149@gmail.com

Shoe boxes en route for Eastern Europe

At the Methodist Church on Saturday 31 October boxes will be prepared and waiting to be filled with all sorts of goodies for children. Their ages range from three years to twelve plus. The shoe boxes have been transformed into Christmas gift boxes and once filled they will be ready for their flight across Europe where children eagerly await their arrival.

If you need to know more, such as suitable gifts to send or information about the Charity, T4U, do get in touch. Stationary, small toys, hats, gloves, new socks/underwear, soap and toothpaste are just a few items on the needed list.

Offers of help to fill boxes and donations of gifts will be greatly appreciated.

Kathleen Albért (01993 891733)

k.m.albert14@gmail.com



Oxford traffic filters



From Monday 28 September 2026, Oxford's traffic filters trial will replace the congestion charge.

From this date, you'll no longer be able to pay the £5 congestion charge. If you drive through a filter while it is operating, you'll need a valid permit.

You can still drive to all parts of Oxford, but you may need to use a different route if you don't have a valid traffic filters permit.

If you already have a congestion charge permit, keep an eye on your inbox – we're contacting all current permit holders by email.

Find out more about permits, routes and what the changes could mean for your journeys.

www.blogs.oxfordshire.gov.uk/traffic-filters



More information on p18

Combe Connect

Combe Connect is the local magazine for your neighbouring village. You can read the latest issue at www.combeconnect.co.uk.

Editor@combeconnect.co.uk

STONESFIELD LUNCH CLUB

Stonesfield Lunch Club meets every Weds 11 till 2 (for members) at the St James' Centre. Lunch Club provides a social occasion, friendship and support for our more mature residents along with refreshments, activities and a freshly cooked 2-course meal each week. Volunteers are always welcomed for many roles and this is a lovely way to be involved in village life. Contact me if you would like more information on becoming a member or in volunteering.

Kate Harris 01993 898781 or kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk

Combe WI

Our new season got off to an excellent start with a fascinating presentation by Michelle Johnson on AI, online scams and how to stay safe on the internet. Without trying to alarm us, Michelle highlighted just how easily scammers can trick people and shared plenty of useful tips to help us stay safe. Her key message was simple: whatever the pressure, pause, verify the request and think carefully before proceeding.

Alongside our regular monthly meetings, we have a walking group which meets on an ad-hoc basis once a month and a social group which meets on the last Thursday of each month.

Our regular meetings are held on the second Monday of each month from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Reading Room in Combe.

If you would like to find out more about the WI please come along and give us a try. The WI is open to all women aged 18 and over and guests are warmly welcome to attend up to three meetings before deciding whether to join. Guests are asked to make a suggested donation of £8.

Our next speaker is Peter Baker who will be telling us all about Otmoor Nature Reserve. If you would like to visit as a guest please get in touch beforehand so that we can do our best to accommodate everyone comfortably, as space in the Reading Room is limited. We look forward to welcoming you!

Julia Sharpe (01993 891058)
Secretary, Combe WI
combewi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

Contacting *The Stonesfield Slate*

Do you have a story to share?

We hope you have enjoyed the news, history, nature, other articles and photographs which have appeared in *The Slate*.

We're hoping to find more Stonesfield residents who will contribute their own articles, poems, drawings or photographs to publish throughout the year.

If you have a story to tell, or anything to share, please send it to us.

A reminder of *The Slate* email addresses.

To submit an **article**, please email **editor@stonesfieldslate.uk**. – deadline 15th of the month for the next month's issue.

To **advertise** – deadline 10th of the month for the next month's issue, or for general enquiries please email **publisher@stonesfieldslate.uk**

No email?

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 appears on page 2 of each issue.

Paul & Diane Bates, Publishers
publisher@stonesfieldslate.uk
The Editor
editor@stonesfieldslate.uk

Politics & local affairs



September Update

The Parish Council met on 2 September with a busy agenda covering the Neighbourhood Plan, planning matters, traffic and speeding concerns and Parish Council land.

Neighbourhood Plan and Manor Field

There has been significant progress with the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan. Following independent examination, the Examiner has confirmed that the Plan can proceed, subject to the recommended amendments. These have now been incorporated into a revised version of the Plan and submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). WODC has identified two further minor amendments and the Parish Council agreed these at its September meeting. Once the final version has been signed off, the next stage will be the village referendum.

The Council also discussed the Manor Field planning application ahead of its consideration by WODC's Development Management Committee. Councillors remained concerned about aspects of the officer's report, including the consideration given to the Neighbourhood Plan and the village Housing Needs Assessment. The Parish Council agreed to support a letter to the Committee setting out these concerns

and to make a verbal representation at the meeting.

Planning Applications

The Council considered two new applications during the meeting. It raised no objection to proposed works at Hartage, Woodlands Rise and supported proposals for improvements to the White Horse, including accessible WC and baby-changing facilities, an enlarged bar and dining area and an outdoor kitchen/bar.

Speeding and Traffic

Speeding and increased traffic remain concerns for residents, particularly on Woodstock Road and The Ridings. The Council discussed the existing 20mph limit and Speed Indicator Devices, as well as the possibility of Community Speedwatch and the suggestion that The Ridings could become a designated Quiet Lane. No view has yet been taken on a Quiet Lane designation, as councillors would like further information before reaching a decision. The Council would, however, welcome volunteers interested in helping to re-establish Community Speedwatch. Training and equipment are available and residents interested in becoming involved are encouraged to contact the Parish Council.

Longore

The Council discussed the continuing issue of a vehicle parked on Parish Council-owned land at Longore. Further notices will be displayed making clear that the land is privately owned by the Parish Council

and that parking is not permitted. The Council will also seek legal advice on the appropriate options for dealing with continued unauthorised parking.

County Council Update

County Councillor Andy Graham updated the meeting on proposed changes to local government, including plans for new unitary authorities and a possible Mayoral Strategic Authority for the Thames Valley. Parish councils themselves are expected to remain, although their relationship with the new authorities will develop as the changes progress.

There was also an update on highways work at The Duke. The scheme remains budgeted for, with consultation on the proposed design expected ahead of anticipated delivery in 2027/28.

Councillor Vacancy

There is still a vacancy on Stonesfield Parish Council. The Council will be advertising again and hopes to encourage more residents to consider getting involved. If you are interested in helping to shape decisions affecting the village, please look out for further information or contact the Parish Clerk.

The next Full Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 October at 7.pm in Stonesfield Village Hall.

STOP PRESS

West Oxfordshire District Council has informed the Parish Council that the Regulation 18 documents for Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan have now been published and that a Referendum on the Plan will be held on Thursday 12 November 2026.

Kay Linnington, Parish Clerk (07517 204298)
clerk@stonesfield-pc.gov.uk

Have your say on West Oxfordshire's future

West Oxfordshire District Council has launched its final public consultation on its draft Local Plan, inviting residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders to comment on the document that will guide how the district grows and develops up to 2043.

The Local Plan is the Council's key strategic planning document setting out how West Oxfordshire will accommodate future growth, including new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities, while protecting the environment and responding to the climate and ecological emergency.

This consultation, known as the Regulation 19, pre-submission stage, follows four previous rounds of engagement and consultation carried out since 2022. It represents the final opportunity to comment on the draft plan before it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.

The draft Local Plan has been informed by extensive evidence gathering and public engagement, with more than 6,900 responses received throughout the process so far.

Cllr Liz Leffman, Executive Member for Planning and Infrastructure, said: 'This is an important milestone in the preparation of West Oxfordshire's new Local Plan.

The plan brings together several years of evidence gathering, technical work and public consultation into a single document that sets out our proposed approach to meeting housing needs, delivering infrastructure, supporting jobs and responding to climate change.

We encourage anyone with an interest in the future of West Oxfordshire to take the time to review the plan and submit their comments during this final stage of consultation.’

Cllr Andy Graham, Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council, said: ‘More than 6,900 consultation responses have helped shape the plan so far, making this the most extensively engaged-upon Local Plan the Council has prepared.

We recognised from the outset that the decisions contained within the Local Plan will help shape West Oxfordshire for decades to come, which is why it has been so important to hear from residents, businesses and stakeholders throughout the process.

This consultation represents the final opportunity to comment on the plan before it is submitted for independent examination, and we encourage everyone to have their say.’

As part of the statutory process for preparing a Local Plan, the Council is required to publish the draft plan in full and invite representations before it is submitted for examination.

The consultation platform can be accessed online: www.yourvoice.westoxon.gov.uk/en-GB/folders/west-oxfordshire-pre-submission-draft-local-plan-2043.

The consultation platform includes the full draft Local Plan and supporting documents, with the opportunity to submit comments electronically.

Hard copies of the consultation documents will also be available at the Council offices and a number of deposit locations including local libraries.

We have also created a virtual consultation room, providing an accessible way to explore the Draft Local Plan and its key proposals online:
www.wolp2043.exhibition.app/

West Oxfordshire District Council
Communications Team
communications@westoxon.gov.uk

.....
Neighbourhood Watch

Information on Neighbourhood Watch is available at: www.ourwatch.org.uk/

Anyone interested in joining the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme may find details and register at: www.member-registration.neighbourhoodalewrt.co.uk/30/join. Clicking on ‘Join a scheme’ and selecting ‘Stonesfield’ will complete the request.

Police and community support

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

Deanna Asplundh
Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch
Coordinator

Education, culture & more

Stonesfield Library

Note our new phone number: 01865
815181

Opening hours:

Monday 2.30-7pm
Wednesday 10am-12 noon
Thursday 2.30-5pm
Saturday 10am-12 noon

Val Phillips (891455)

Friends of Stonesfield Library

Home Library Service

The Home Library Service is free and there is no charge for requests or late returns. To register for this service or for further information, telephone your local library or the Home Library Service on 01865 810259, or email homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Mercy of Sisters

For anyone who missed the play *Mercy of Sisters* this summer, it will be performing for one night only at the Pegasus Theatre Oxford on 24 October. Tickets are now available on the Pegasus Theatre website, or by phoning the Box Office: 01865 812150 or in person at the theatre. Its seating capacity is limited, so early booking is strongly advised.

Chris Bartle

Stonesfield Primary School

As we begin another exciting year at Stonesfield Primary School, it has been wonderful to welcome our children back through the gates looking so smart and proud in their uniforms. The positive start to the term reflects the high expectations, enthusiasm and sense of belonging that make our school such a special place.

Throughout the first few weeks of term, children have been reflecting on Oliver Jeffers' beautiful book *What We'll Build*. The story has encouraged us to think about the future we want to create together and the importance of building strong foundations based on kindness, courage, imagination and community. As a school, we have been discussing our hopes and dreams for the year ahead and how each of us can contribute to making Stonesfield Primary an even better place to learn, grow and belong.

This year, we are particularly excited to be working with pupils and the wider community to redesign our school logo. We want our logo to reflect who we are today: a school rooted firmly in the heart of the community, proud of our heritage and ambitious for the future and we hope to share this with you all soon.

Over the coming months, we will also be hosting a number of open mornings for families considering school places for September next year. These will provide an opportunity to see our school in action, meet our staff and children, and experience

the warm and nurturing environment that sits at the centre of everything we do. If you have a child who is coming up to school age please do come along to one of the open mornings on either 1 October or 10 November. Please contact the school office for more information.

Our values of Ambition, Resilience, Kindness and Joy will continue to guide us throughout the year ahead. We are looking forward to enhancing our outdoor environment by planting new hedges along the school boundary, further developing our Forest School provision and creating more opportunities for children to learn in and from nature.

Mrs Hill and team

Combe Hub



Combe Community Cinema

Autumn has arrived, which means Combe Community Cinema is starting up again. But first, an important announcement. The business plan for the Cinema was submitted to the Hub Committee back in 2018: I've been doing this for quite a while

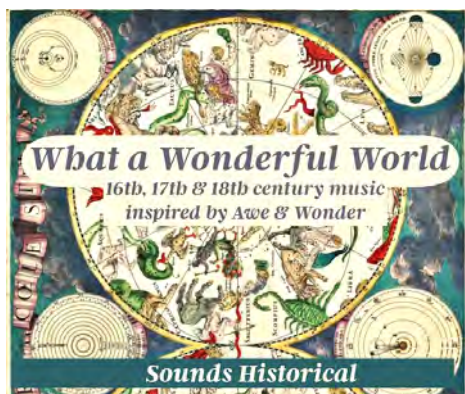
and feel it's time for a rest. The last screening in the season will be in February 2027 and there will not be a 2027 / 2028 season unless others take over running the Cinema. All appropriate training will be provided and the necessary licences will be arranged. If you feel you'd like to have a go at choosing and showing films (and running the bar) – you don't need to be a technical expert! – please contact me at combecommunitycinema@gmail.com.

We begin on 30 October with *À ma Gloria*, a 2023 French film remarkable for its performance by the six-year-old Louise Mauro-Panzani. Variety wrote 'a last summer of nanny-child togetherness is detailed in a debut made dazzling by an astonishingly intricate performance from a six-year-old star.' Doors open at 7.30pm, film begins 8pm; tickets £5 on the door, drinks available at our bar.



On 27 November we have another in our series of National Theatre Live presentations. We are screening a brand new production, *Golden Boy*: 'a searing revival of Clifford Odet's classic, a propulsive drama exploring ambition, identity and the high price of success.' The play stars Josh O'Connor whom you may remember from *The Crown* and *The Durrells*. Doors open at 7pm and the play begins at 7.30pm. Drinks available at our bar. Book tickets (£13 including booking fee) in advance online at www.ticketsource.com/combe-communityy-cinema/t-aaymnr1

Sounds Historical Concert



'What a Wonderful World' – a new *Sounds Historical* concert with music by JS Bach, Monteverdi and others, exploring aspects of 16th, 17th and 18th century life which people found wonderful and awe-inspiring. St Laurence Church, Combe, 7.15pm (doors open 6.45pm), 16 October.

To book, email:

combecommunitycinema@gmail.com or go to www.ticketsource.com/combe-community-cinema/t-glylyko or scan the QR code.



Byron Russell

combecommunitycinema@gmail.com

Combe Mill

18 October 'In Steam'.

Wood Craft & Autumn Market

Combe Mill is a late 19th century restored water mill on Blenheim Palace Estate by the River Evenlode. All machinery will be running 'In Steam' and volunteers will be on hand with lots of interesting information. Go in the forge and see the blacksmiths, you might just be able to make a poker.

We have invited Wood Turners Clubs along with vintage demonstrations, spoon carving, pole lathe and much more; come along and see how it was done in the day. There will be autumn market stalls with lots to browse and meet our regular stall holders.

Charlbury Morris Dancers will join us in the afternoon.

The tea room will be open as well as a food trailer, gift shop, raffle and tombola.

Dog on leads most welcome. Adults £9.50, seniors £8.50, accompanied children free. Ask about a season ticket. Open 10.30am to 4.30pm (last entries 3.30 pm.)

Sun 6 December

Annual Christmas Fayre

11am - 4pm with market stalls with lots to browse - get your Christmas gifts early. Bring the children along to the grotto, food trailer, tea room, gift shop, tombola and grand raffle.

Free parking and entry. Dogs on leads most welcome.

Margaret Gruber

Blenheim Palace Sawmills, Combe, OX29 8ET

Witney Music Society

The 2026-27 series of Witney Music Society concerts starts in October. Details of all the concerts are on the Witney Music Society website and in its new brochure, copies of which may be obtained via the website or from locations throughout Witney.

The opening concert of the new season will be given by the acclaimed Italian string quartet *Quartetto Noûs* who'll be performing works by Haydn, Shostakovich, Boccherini and Beethoven. The concert is at 7.30pm on Friday 9 October at High Street Methodist Church, Witney.

Tickets (£18, £1 for under 19s) will be available at the door from 7pm or in advance online. For more information, please telephone 01993 898020 or visit the Witney Music Society website: www.witneymusicsociety.org.uk

Mary Lou Scott

Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock

Open Art Exhibition 2026

Our annual art exhibition is back and features an eclectic collection of artworks by artists from across Oxfordshire. As this year is Oxfordshire Museum's 60th anniversary the theme is *Celebration* and our entries all meet the criteria in their own way! The exhibition is free and on display in our garden gallery from Saturday 19 September to Sunday 11 October.

The OM Curiosity Club

We've launched a brand-new wellbeing group for people aged 50+ who are living in the local area. The group is ideal for

those who want to connect with others, share stories and enjoy reminiscence and creative activities. The group is free and light refreshments are provided. If you'd like to come along the club meets at the museum on the following Wednesdays between 2.30-4pm.

23 September	7 October
21 October	4 November
18 November	2 December
16 December	

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

Smoking Apples Theatre



Kinder is brought to us by puppetry and visual theatre company Smoking Apples. Known for their work tackling complex subject matters to make bold, visually stunning theatre, Kinder is the company's first show specially aimed for teenagers (ages 9 -18) and they hope it will provoke important discussion around the current refugee crises we are facing today.

Developed with support from Little Angel Theatre, *Kinder* tells the story of a young Czech-Jewish girl escaping across Europe on a Kindertransport train, travelling from

Prague to Margate just before WW2. The story is inspired by the real life Czech Kindertransport, pioneered by Nicholas Winton. Over 600 Czech-Jewish children were evacuated by train to the UK and housed in seaside towns before the war. Many went on to grow up in the UK, battling with their identities and a sense of displacement. The Kindertransport events were groundbreaking in terms of the level of support that the UK offered to those fleeing persecution.

Smoking Apples have designed an innovative immersive giant box style set for this that the audience sit inside as the story unfolds through a series of playful hatches and openings.

See p10 for more details.

He was a resident

A Stonesfield Mandarin



Strang in 1938,
© NPG (x34887)

On 30 September 1938, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain emerged from the plane carrying him back from Munich after

his third meeting with Hitler in an attempt to resolve the Czechoslovak crisis. Addressing the crowd that had assembled to greet his arrival at Heston Aerodrome, he flourished the famous paper bearing Hitler's signature and stating the desire that Britain and Germany would never go to war with each other again. At Chamberlain's urgent request, the text had been put together over breakfast that day as an effort on the Prime Minister's part to return from the meeting with some evidence of success, despite the obvious failure of his talks with Hitler. The senior Foreign Office civil servant who drafted it after only a few hours' sleep that day was William Strang.

I first came across William Strang when reading files in the National Archives as I worked on policy in the British Zone of occupied Germany. I was intrigued to learn that he had lived in Stonesfield, at the house called *Evenlode* in Churchfields, for some twenty years from around the time of his retirement in 1953. He was born in 1893 to parents who came from a long line of tenant farmers in Scotland and who had relocated to start farming in England. He was educated at a good local grammar school and at University College, London, where he read English.

Strang served in the First World War and on demobilisation originally thought about an academic career. Instead, he successfully took the diplomatic service examination and was quickly posted to Belgrade, returning to the Foreign Office in 1922 to work mainly on Soviet policy. He later (1930-1933) served in the British Embassy in Moscow. It is said that he was treated sniffily by the predominantly public school- and Oxbridge-educated FO staff of the day: he was 'cruelly labelled a

suburban diplomat', as Anne Deighton puts it. But he rose quickly through the Foreign Office ranks and was to reach the highest office by virtue of his superior diplomatic abilities.

In 1937, Strang became head of the central department of the FO where his long involvement with German affairs developed. He held this post until 1939, and it was in that capacity that he had accompanied Chamberlain to his disastrous meetings with Hitler that resulted in the Prime Minister's stubborn faith in what he called 'peace with honour' and 'peace for our time'.

Strang was again enmeshed in highly complex negotiations in Moscow early in June 1939 when he took part in discussions with the Soviet government. The aim was to establish a policy of mutual assistance between the UK, France, and Russia in the face of German aggression. The talks were fraught with difficulty and ultimately failed. Strang called the negotiations 'a humiliating experience'.

Churchill wrote later, unfairly, that it was a mistake to entrust 'so subordinate a figure' with such a 'momentous mission'. The talks were suspended on 2 August. The Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was concluded just some three weeks later, on 24 August.

The Russian negotiator at the Three Power meeting had been Foreign Minister Molotov. In the autumn of 1943, in the course of a banquet organised at an Anglo-American-Russian conference in Moscow, Strang was told that Stalin wanted to see him. Stalin 'was pointing the finger at Molotov as the man who had failed to reach agreement with the Western Powers and had made a deal with Ribbentrop in

1939'. He asked Strang, alarmingly, to confirm that it was all Molotov's fault. Strang drew on his finely-honed diplomatic skills and suggested to Stalin that 'in those days everybody had been at fault'.

In 1943, Strang was appointed British representative on the 'European Advisory Commission', with the rank of ambassador. Throughout the Commission's work on planning for a post-war Europe, he was drawing up plans ('control machinery') for the occupation of Germany by the Allies, listing the terms that were to be imposed on Germany after the end of hostilities and negotiating the boundaries of the eventual four zones of occupation and the four sectors of Berlin. The EAC was dissolved when the Allied Control Council was established at the Potsdam Conference of August 1945. Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery became the first Military Governor of the British Zone and Strang was chosen to be his Political Adviser, a role he fulfilled with his usual total commitment until 1947. Strang disliked the grandeur that went with his rank: his assistant spoke of his indifference to attempts to increase his 'comfort, prestige and dignity' in the harsh conditions prevailing in Germany.



With Montgomery in Berlin in 1945, ©(BU9926)

From 1947 to 1949 Strang was Permanent Under-Secretary of the FO German Section and from 1949 until his retirement Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office and so its most senior civil servant, responsible first to Ernest Bevin and then Sir Anthony Eden as Secretaries of State.

When Strang died in 1978, his obituary in *The Times* was headed ‘Civil servant at centre of crises in Europe’. In his 34-year career in the Foreign Service, Strang certainly found himself in the thick of some momentous decision-making. His achievements were regularly recognised through the honours system, including a knighthood in 1943 and culminating in his elevation in 1954 to the House of Lords where, as **Lord Strang of Stonesfield**, he was very active, becoming a Deputy Speaker and convenor of the crossbench peers.

Eden wrote of him: ‘I found him always diligent, patient and well-informed, a



Strang in diplomatic uniform

master hand at any draft’. Lord Annan called him ‘a connoisseur of the well-reasoned case’. His close contemporary Gladwyn Jebb described him as ‘irreproachable if somewhat unapproachable’ and recalled waspishly the ‘William Strang Society’, members of which had to have ‘dared to call Strang William to his face’. Some considered him dull, but he was focused, extremely able, and absolutely reliable, mastering the essential task of a senior diplomat which was to provide the best possible reasoned advice on the basis of which ministers and others could make informed decisions.

Strang said that he ‘adhered ... to the school of [Sir Eyre] Crowe’, the Permanent Under-Secretary of the FO when he joined the service. Like Strang, Crowe came from an unconventional background for the Foreign Office of his day. Strang listed Crowe’s qualities. He was:

- ‘a prince and paragon of bureaucrats’
- ‘a superb craftsman’
- ‘a man of the most complete personal and official integrity’
- a skilful and luminous draughtsman’
- ‘a creator and a powerful operator of the official machine’

and he ‘would fearlessly confront a situation’. With these words, Strang might have been describing his own superlative qualities as a diplomat.

David Phillips

Sources: Strang: Home and Abroad, ‘The Moscow Negotiations, 1939’; Deighton: ODNB entry; Ricketts: Peace Makers; Gladwyn: Memoirs; Cadogan: Diaries; Yule-Smith: ‘A Supremely Good Chinovik’; Churchill: The Gathering Storm; Phillips: Educating the Germans; National Archives, Kew; The Times, 29.5.78; 9.6.78; Who Was Who 1971-1980.

Nature Notes



Feathered Gothic moth

Most years in the summer we get an influx of wildlife from the continent; this year has been exceptional busy particularly for moths coming over, no doubt avoiding the exceptional temperatures in Europe.

I hope you have seen the Humming bird hawk moths (Hummers) in your garden; this is almost certainly the highest numbers we have ever had. They are day flying moths, wings going at 80 beats a second, a tongue nearly as long as its body, taking nectar in flight. With a body temperature that can reach 45 degrees in comfort. They have a life span of up to 7 months and are increasingly overwintering in the UK. This year the earliest one in Oxfordshire was seen in Stonesfield on the 24 February. They have been seen as an omen of good luck; on D-Day the boats were met by Hummers heading for England!

Clouded yellow butterflies (from the continent) have also had a great year around Stonesfield.

Moths recorded on and around the Brook Lane meadow have now reached 247 species. In early September the moth trap

had 23 species and 148 moths overnight. Four new species were seen including the Feathered Gothic, a smartly dressed moth. It is a September moth and scatters eggs while flying over grass land. It overwinters as an egg, the caterpillars munch grass over the spring and summer. We now have 22 moths from the meadow and surrounds that depend on grasses, details that help the development of a mosaic of habitats.

The meadow has been scythed with the help of the Wychwood flora group, improving the habitat for the year ahead. Many thanks to all who took part.

Trees on the Stonesfield Straight

Unexpectedly most of the trees look to have survived the drought and heat; we will be more certain by next spring. We didn't do a late spring clearance so that surrounding growth could give the trees some protection from direct sunshine and heat. More red ribbons have been attached to protect from trimming.

What a summer for the Evenlode river

Very low water levels, higher temperature and cloudy water. Our Stonesfield Citizen scientists are testing the water on a regular basis for nitrate, phosphate, turbidity, E-Coli and riverfly . Results are shared across the Evenlode catchment partnership, the data is then available for research and monitoring the length of the river. Recent research has shown the cloudy water to be associated with chlorophyll-a which is related to the phosphate discharged into the river from sewage treatment works.

If you would like to get involved do get in touch.

John Sampson
john.sampson9@btinternet.com

Home of your own

Going Green or Greener

Going green at home is increasingly important for households seeking to lower energy bills, improve comfort, and reduce carbon emissions. Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes delivers long-term financial and environmental benefits and has never been more relevant.

The most effective way to make a home greener is to reduce draughts by draught stripping all windows and external door openings and letterboxes, followed by insulation in lofts, walls, and floors. Loft insulation is usually the simplest and most cost-effective upgrade, after which cavity wall insulation can provide quick gains in many post-1920s homes. Older properties with solid walls benefit significantly from internal or external wall insulation, both of which greatly enhance comfort and reduce energy demand. Insulating suspended timber floors cuts draughts and heat loss. Upgrading from single glazing to double or triple glazing improves heat retention, reduces noise, and eliminates draughts. Where replacement windows are restricted, secondary glazing provides an effective alternative.

Heat pumps, either air or ground source, provide low-carbon alternatives to traditional boilers and work best in well-insulated homes, particularly with underfloor heating or larger radiators. While installation costs can be high, running costs are typically lower and government grants may be available. Where heat pumps are not suitable, upgrading to a modern condensing boiler, installing smart controls, and zoning heating to match room use can significantly reduce gas consumption.

Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels are increasingly affordable and generate electricity for use in the home. Adding a home battery allows excess energy to be stored and used later, improving self-consumption and resilience during power cuts. Solar thermal systems can also provide renewable hot water. Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) captures heat from outgoing air to warm incoming fresh air, reducing heat loss and improving indoor air quality, especially in airtight or renovated homes.

Water-saving measures further reduce environmental impact. Low-flow taps and showers, dual-flush toilets, and efficient appliances cut consumption without compromising comfort. Rainwater harvesting can supply water for gardens or toilet flushing.

During renovations, choosing sustainable materials such as recycled insulation, FSC-certified timber, lime plasters, and low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints lowers environmental impact and improves indoor air quality.

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc
www.jlda.co.uk

Clubs, societies & sport

Stonesfield Football Club

The Footie is back after a long baking-hot summer and our lads are looking forward to the new season. However, before I fill you in on how they are doing, I'd just like to put it on record that The Firsts added The Ted Young Senior Cup for a league and cup double at the end of last season. In the final they beat East Hendred 4-1, with goals from Raffy Rice (2), Louis O'Keeffe and Carry Rice (pen). Pre-season has seen cup success already, with them winning The Henry Hawtin Memorial Trophy beating Charlbury for the second successive year, this time it was 3-0 with goals (again) from Raffy (2) and Cary Rice. Nice to see our boys getting into the habit of winning big games and filling Cilla Clarke's mantelpiece with silverware! They opened their league account for season 2026-27 with a hard-fought away win (3-2) at Hanborough, once again the Rice brothers notched the goals (Raffy (2) and Cary). With a good pre-season under their belts, I'm hopeful that they can have another successful season (3 leagues-in-row would be nice and doing well in their various cup competitions would be a bonus).

Following league reconstruction, The Reserves were placed in Division 2 again this season, which is probably about right for them. They have gradually made progress and I'm forever hopeful that they will add to their success after winning The Jack Busby Memorial Trophy last season. Mind you, if their start to the league

campaign is anything to go by, it could be a tough season. They started with a hard local derby at Charlbury and were well-beaten (5-2). Let's hope that poor result was just a glitch and they get back to winning ways next time out.

This month's Fredo Award is not a usual one, but the house it goes to is no stranger to the odd Fredo. Step forward Ursula Rice you have earned this award in some considerable style! Ursula offered her professional services, as a lawyer (pro bono), and successfully defended one of our players in an 'online' tribunal at The FA (Wembley). It was a pleasure to watch from the sidelines as Ursula played a blinder! As a gesture of sincere thanks, a sum of £100 was donated, in Ursula's name, to her favourite charity, Seesaw, which provides grief support to bereaved children.

Finally, a big shout out to any newcomers to our Wee Village who are looking for a team to play for, then please get in touch. Our club provides a clear player pathway from kids to adult football with a safe, nurturing and welcoming ethos at its core.

Tom Flanigan (891979)

Stonesfield Food Group

Emergency Food help

One of the aims of the Food Group is to support Stonesfield residents who are struggling to afford nourishing food. We are able to do this using the funds raised by the Community Cafés run alongside the

Repair Café, and through other generous donations.

We are currently able to offer food parcels or emergency supermarket vouchers. If you, or someone you know, could benefit, contact Kate Harris, on 01993 898781 or via email at kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk.

If you are able to, you can support the food parcel initiative by donating tinned meat pies, hotdogs, meatballs, chicken, or ham. They can be left in the brown box on the doorstep of 6 Brook Lane.

Julie Curran (07973 730907)

Stonesfield Gardening Club

The wine lovers of the gardening club gathered together in the middle of September for a tasting of South African wines, guided by the engaging figure of Dr Andrew Wood, who last visited us three years ago.



We were treated to a total of five wines, ranging from a sparkling rosé, then a Chenin Blanc, two lovely deep reds and finally a sweet dessert wine. A great evening with an interesting background into wines and wine making in this region of the world.

Andrew's latest book, *Noble Nine*, is about the nine grapes that define our wine world telling the stories of a whole industry as it grapples with huge changes. It is due to be



published on 5 November 2026. He has promised a return session on English wines, so we will hold him to that!

This month we have a welcome return from villager Dan Betterton, who will be talking to us about his company, The Kitchen Garden People, who grow vegetables at FarmEd nearby.

Hope to see you there and, don't forget, if you are not a member we are very happy to welcome anyone who would like to pop in to see what our meetings are like.

Diane Bates

Secretary Stonesfield Gardening Club

www.stonesfieldgardening.info

Stonesfield Tennis Club

The Wychwood league and tournament have drawn to a close but we have played some really good tennis with lots of fun and terrific teas along the way. Unfortunately we came last in the tournament but we came a very good 4th in the league. Congratulations to the clear winners Chipping Campden. Of note the other 4 teams all came within 15 games of each other after a total of 1,320 games played. The Stonesfield ladies doubles component was undefeated and

Stonesfield were only 11 games from coming second! So we are eagerly looking forward to next year.

Miles, Andrew, Lindsey and Jane after the last home match



A huge thank you to all who played in the matches and tournament (and made lovely teas) including Lindsey, Paula, Amanda, Jim, Miles, Rob, Johnnie, Paul and extra special thanks to Andrew and Jack for rallying their racquets and playing their first matches for Stonesfield. Thank you too to our supporters who have come to watch our home matches - it is very much appreciated.

The courts remain open for use all year round and membership can start at any time during the year. Please find information at: www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/StonesfieldTennisClub

Alex Dillon continues to provide coaching as follows:

Junior Tennis Programme:

Monday:

Orange ball 4.30 - 5.30pm, ages 8-10

Tuesday:

Red ball 3.35 - 4.20pm (£7.50 per 45min session), ages 6-8

Orange ball 4.20-5.20pm, ages 8-11

Yellow ball 5.20-6.20pm, ages 12 upwards

No commitment is necessary, everyone is welcome to come and try a session. Rackets are available to borrow. Ages are approximate depending on experience. Unless otherwise stated sessions are £10.

Adult coaching:

Tuesday 1-2 pm - all welcome, particularly those playing tennis for the first time and improvers.

There is availability for private sessions if of interest. Please contact Alex directly on 07876 194008 for any further questions /enquiries.

Jane Rust

Megalosaurus Society

The Society's visit to Witney Blanket Hall on 9 September marked the start of a busy autumn. Twenty-six members enjoyed an early supper of home-baked pies before climbing to the Assembly Room for an entertaining and informative talk from Richard Martin on the history of the woollen industry in general, and Witney blankets in particular.

October's talk will be a time-travel visit to Stonesfield's Jurassic past, with Rod Theodorou, and then in late November we turn our attention to the lost villages of Oxfordshire with Deborah Hayter. And we have an extra surprise event coming for December...

If you'd like to be part of this but are not yet a member (and we have a fascinating programme planned for 2027), do contact us at Megsoc25@gmail.com. If you join in the autumn, your membership will cover you for the whole of next year!

Viv Kendall and Trisha Williams

Church news

Church of England Worship at St James the Great, Stonesfield

(Benefice of Stonesfield with Combe Longa)

www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org

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

Churchwarden: Lindsey Sellar
stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

St James' Centre bookings:
sjcsbookings@gmail.com

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

From the Rector – Faith

A cartoon shows a man and his partner, with the man looking out of the window anxiously. 'I'm not worrying' he says, 'I'm warding off tragedies by constantly anticipating them.'

In worrying times there is plenty of work for prophets of doom. These are rarely religious preachers prophesying judgement. Our contemporary prophets of doom are warning of judgements which are all too human. Computer experts warn that the AI we have created could destroy us all within a few years. Climate scientists warn that we are at a global tipping point, after which the earth's climate may oscillate wildly. And political commentators warn of the threat of catastrophic war in Europe, as the consequence of Putin's and Trump's disastrous actions.

People in other lands already live with the outcome of some of these horrors. Without faith in a God of love, it must be difficult to face such dangers. Trust in a just and loving Creator cannot change human nature or prevent the consequences of human activity, but it certainly helps us to find the peace we need in a challenging and fast changing world.

Christian faith teaches the path of peace, forgiveness and justice, but recognises the reality of human brokenness. The New Testament knows Jesus of Nazareth as God's living presence in our messy world, not overruling, not controlling, but sharing in human woe. Unjustly slandered, targeted, arrested and executed for challenging the status quo of religious corruption and occupying force, Jesus died in Palestine, as have so many other innocent women, men and children over the ages. His life and death assures us of God's presence alongside us, with us, in our darkest places. His resurrection gives us hope for the future, not only in a world to come, but in the transforming power of human love, forgiveness and generosity, which we can see around us when we look for it.

As Christians we pledge ourselves to working for peace, safety and freedom for all the people of the world, and healing for God's creation, with a firm hope that God is with us today, and always.

Revd Ralph Williamson, Rector

Church Services

Sunday 4 October [Trinity 18]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	Harvest Festival – All Age Worship (donations to WaterAid)

Sunday 11 October [Trinity 19]

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

Sunday 18 October [Trinity 20]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion
5pm	Combe	Evensong

Sunday 25 October [Last Sunday after Trinity]

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

Wednesdays

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion (every week)
11am	Combe	Holy Communion (7th), Morning Prayer (21st)

Stonesfield Methodist Church

Preachers for October

Sun 4	11am	Nunu Moyo. Harvest Service
Sun 11	11am	Peter Allen
Sun 18	11am	Reverend Andrew Biggs Holy Communion Service
Sun 25	11am	To be Arranged

Harvest Spirit

And yet again we greet the harvest! Come once more to serve, whatever the weather.

Honest toil and God's good grace are able to bring an abundance of food to our fingertips, even when heat waves appear to triumph. This beautiful verse from a hymn written by the late Fred Pratt Green speaks of the harvest we so gratefully welcome.

For the fruits of all creation, thanks be to God;

for the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God;

for the ploughing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,

future needs in earth's safe keeping,
thanks be to God.

Shoe Boxes for Children in Eastern Europe

The shoe box filling day is planned here on Saturday 31 October at 2pm. Help with packing and gift donations will be much needed and appreciated.

Come to a Service soon.

Kathleen Albért

Roman Catholic Worship

Autumn: A Time for Reflection and Renewal

January and the New Year is the traditional time for new resolutions to set us up for the fresh year ahead. It is, however, in the autumn that farmers plant their fields and schools and universities start their new year. In other words, the new year, its spring and the fruitfulness of the summer are planted and prepared in the autumn. The bible is full of references to the cycle of the seasons and what we may learn from how the earth is renewed and replenished:

‘While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.’ Genesis 8:22

The psalms are full of references to the bounty of God through the richness and variety of the seasons: ‘He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knows its time his going down.’ Psalms 104:19, and ‘And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.’ Psalms 107:37. In particular, Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us that ‘To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven’.

Just as autumn prepares us for the dormancy of winter, ready for the generosity of spring, we too may pause in our busy lives to reflect on the past months and think about how we might re-centre our lives to be more fruitful and enriched in the time ahead.

‘Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives until it

receives early and late rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand’ James 5:7

Holy Mass at St Teresa’s, Charlbury

Sunday 9.15 am

Wednesdays and Fridays 9.15 am

For parish updates, any further information and further support, www.stteresaschurch-charlbury.com or contact Fr. Clive Dytor, parish priest: fr.clive.dytor@rcaob.org.uk

The Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield

New Church thought

Because I’m getting older, naturally my remaining time in this world is getting shorter, and I’m pondering what impact I might have had through the years. These quotes from Swedenborg are worth considering in that context:

‘We each carry with us into the afterlife whatever we have instilled in our heart by the way we lived in the world.’

‘We are not born for our own sakes but for the sake of others; that is, we are born not to live for ourselves alone but for others. Otherwise no society could hold together, nor could there be any goodness in it.’

‘Every least detail of everything we have thought and said and done, as well as what we have heard and seen, is inscribed in our inner memory. That memory is our book of life.’

I think I have at least ‘earned my keep’. And as far as I can tell, there’s still some time to go ...

Dale Morris



Bespoke massage treatment and products using essential oils for women and children from my relaxing aromatherapy room in Stonesfield

- Parking
- evening appointment
- personal service
- loyalty scheme

For help with anxiety/depression/sleep problems and hormonal issues

Contact Lucy Martin 07552 653000

Lavenderend8@gmail.com

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