



**Stretton Parish**

**CONTACT**

News for weekend beginning Friday 23rd February 2024

Parish Website: [www.strettonparish.org.uk](http://www.strettonparish.org.uk)

Parish office: 01694 724224 [office@strettonparish.org.uk](mailto:office@strettonparish.org.uk)

The next Contact will be issued on Friday 8th March 2024

## Diocesan Year of Faith 2024



Following on from Hereford Diocese' Year of Prayer in 2023, this year the churches and congregations across the diocese are being asked to consider how to be more Christ-like by growing confidence in our faith.

[Click here to read about it and to watch a video of Bishop Richard](#) introducing the Year of Faith 2024.

I attended the Bishop's Teaching event in Ludlow a couple of weeks ago and benefited both from the teaching and also meeting and talking to people from across the diocese. Despite our diverse church and community situations we all shared similar challenges and opportunities. It was a blessing to feel part of God's family in this part of the world.

There are a range of different Year of Faith events, held throughout the year at various locations across the diocese. The upcoming events are:

The [Hereford Passion Play](#) in Hereford Cathedral on Friday 8th March at 7:30pm - [click here to book](#) and Saturday 9th March at 9pm - [click here to book](#)

### [Bishop's Study Day 1](#)

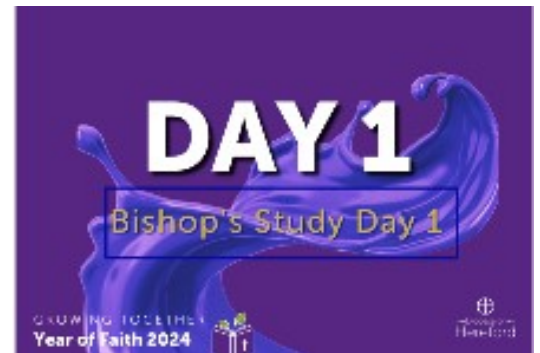
at Craven Arms Community Centre  
on Thursday 14th March, 9:30am – 3pm,

This event gives the opportunity to connect with others who share a passion for the Christian faith; engage in thought-provoking discussions and listen to inspiring talks.

Speakers include:

Paul Williams CEO Bible Society and  
Rev Andrew Ollerton Presenter of The Bible Course.

[Click here to listen to Paul Williams introduce the Study Day.](#)



I would encourage all to check the events list and sign up through the links above or from the Hereford Diocese website. As this first Study Day is being held so near to the Strettons, I hope that a number from our Parish will be able to attend. I shall be there.

*Marion Shuttleworth*



## Winter Warmer Update

The Winter Warmer is a café style 'drop in' and takes place in the Parish Centre each Saturday morning from 10am until 12 noon. Each week so far we have welcomed 50 to 60 people of ages from 2 to 92 who enjoy a choice of hot drink and food free of charge, friendly conversations and a relaxed morning amongst friends.

We have found that members of the parish and wider community have found it a valuable way to get to know others and also to bring friends and neighbours. It has been wonderful to hear what it has meant for some people to be able to mix socially and for families with young children to have a safe and welcoming place to relax together.

Our team of volunteers is also enjoying being part of the occasion – chatting with guests, discussing food and drink choices (from the menu on the table!) and making everyone welcome.

Please do come and join us on a Saturday morning – you and anyone with you will be made very welcome.

We originally planned a 12 week pilot project, finishing on the 30th March, Easter Saturday. We have already had 6 weeks and so will be engaging with the guests and volunteers over the next few weeks to help us decide what to do next. We don't want to lose the momentum we have, nor the good will of the community we are serving, but also need to be mindful of the volunteering capacity within the Parish. We trust that God will steer us on the right course.



### Welcome

The **Winter Warmer** is open

Saturday mornings  
10am – 12 noon  
at the  
St Laurence  
Parish Centre,  
Church Stretton

Please tell your friends  
and invite anyone who  
you think would enjoy  
company, a friendly chat  
or somewhere  
comfortable to be on a  
Saturday morning.

You will always find  
breakfast,  
games  
& a warm welcome  
on a rainy day!

This week (24th Feb) at the  
**Winter warmer**  
we will have  
a **cake stall**  
to help raise funds for the  
**Motor Neurone  
Disease Association**



Please drop-in and  
help young people raise funds  
for family and friends  
living with MND

*Everyone Welcome*



## 'Bethel programme' on-line survey

At the end of last year, the Bethel team asked Parish members for their ideas and opinions on ways that we could help to meet community needs, how our premises could be adapted to help with this and to offer any relevant skills and knowledge in support of our outreach.

We want to thank all those who completed the online survey form (over 40 responses). It was clear that members had given very careful consideration to their responses and several have offered their skills in support of the work. Several consistent themes emerged regarding both our local community and our church and parish centre buildings. The main themes were:

### Community:

- A greater focus on teenagers and young families including housing, mental health, bereavement and financial challenges.
- Supporting our members who carry out voluntary roles in the wider community (prayer, training).

### Premises:

- Accessibility and inclusion, including w.c.'s and a small servery in the church building.
- Improving the acoustics in the Parish Centre.
- Environmental sustainability is a crucial factor as we plan improvements to the premises.

The detailed responses will be presented to the PCC and are already being used by the Bethel team in planning and prioritising for the future.

# NOTICEBOARD



## LENT LUNCHES



St Michael's Church, All Stretton

**Every Tuesday**  
**20th February - 26th March**  
**12.30 - 1.30pm**

**Homemade soup & roll/ fruit**  
**tea or coffee**  
**£4.00 for the church funds.**

Our next Stretton Feast is  
**Saturday 2nd March at 5.45pm**  
in the Parish Centre.

Come and enjoy a delicious freshly  
cooked two-course meal, enjoy a  
warm welcome and friendly conversations.

Donate-what-you-can on the night; any surplus funds after costs  
have been deducted, will be donated to parish funds.



Pre booking is either via the [website](#) or through the Parish Office  
on 01694 724224. Do advise us of any food allergies/  
preferences. **Please book in by Thursday.**

All Saints' Church  
Little Stretton

## Choral Evensong

with the Stretton Parish Choir

Sunday February 25th at 4pm  
with refreshments to follow



**CAMEO: Wednesday**  
**6th March 2.30pm in the**  
**Parish Centre:** Come along  
for an afternoon of  
friendship, sharing,

encouragement and a cup of tea and cake.

This month Michael Carding will give a talk called  
"An Amusing Afternoon" - do come along and see  
what that's about!. To book transport with Ring  
and Ride, please ring Rhoda on 01694 724197.

## Ring and Ride on Sundays

If you are still thinking about offering to drive or assist  
passengers or want to know more about what it entails,  
we would love to hear from you. Do contact Jo on  
01694 724224 or email [office@strettonparish.org.uk](mailto:office@strettonparish.org.uk)

## Riding Lights Theatre Company

present the Passion Play

"The Narrow Road"

Saturday 2nd March, 7.30pm,

Christ Church, Bayston Hill.

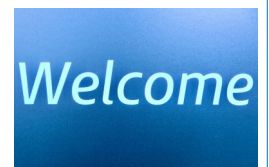
For details and to book tickets [click here](#)

## Exploring Welcome Part 2

24<sup>th</sup> February, 9.30am to 12 midday in the

Do come even if you didn't make  
the first session.

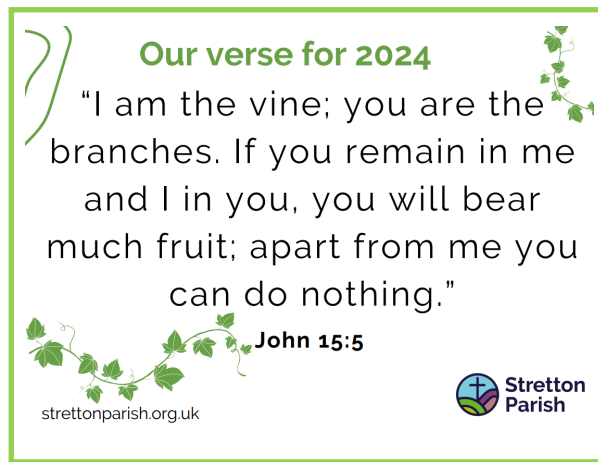
Welcome



**The Well** provides an opportunity for ladies to meet informally, chat, enjoy each other's  
company and to support each other. We meet in the back room at Jemima's Kitchen on  
the High Street in Church Stretton.

This month we will be meeting at 2pm on Friday 8th March. We hope you will be able to  
join us. Contact Chris Hargraves on 01547 550311 or Anne Braddick on 01694 723311 if  
you have any questions.





## World Day of Prayer 1st March 2024

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice.

This year's service has been written by an ecumenical group of Palestinian Christian women, with the theme "I Beg You... Bear with One Another in Love" based on Ephesians 4.1-7.

The Palestinian Christian women who wrote this worship service have invited the world to pray for peace, justice and freedom of religion and freedom of movement. Their prayers specifically call us to pray with women, refugees, persons experiencing homelessness, and all who are sick, dying and grieving. They also call us to confess to our collective role in causing the climate crisis, and to commit to repairing what we have destroyed. Finally, they call us, the global church, to be united in treating all with justice and love.

**The service in the Strettons will be held at 10.30am in St Laurence Church and is open to everyone.**



## Keeping People Safe

The Bible speaks clearly about the church caring for those who are vulnerable and for children. As society has changed over the years, how we best protect children and vulnerable adults who are amongst us has had to change. We know that the church fell considerably behind many other organisations in doing this and, sadly, this resulted in children and vulnerable adults experiencing abuse which has a very serious and lasting impact on them.

Following national reviews and listening to survivors of this abuse, the Church of England (along with most other denominations) are implementing best practice to do all we can to avoid this happening in the future. This means we now have a standard practice of Safer Recruitment for all volunteers who are helping support children or vulnerable adults, also for those in a position of leadership. As part of that we ask people to undertake a short training course which will help them recognise and know how to respond to abuse. We also ask people to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Both are updated every three years. The DBS check helps to ensure that people who may present a risk to vulnerable adults or children aren't invited into that area of work in churches. We understand that these changes may feel strange to some, however, we move forward in recognising that our biblical call to care for others extends to doing all we can to prevent future abuse of children and vulnerable adults.

We hope that you will join us in supporting this effort to do all we can to keep ourselves and others safe. If you have any questions or want further information or clarification please contact our Parish Safeguarding Officer, Chrissie Pepler, at [Chrissie.Pepler@strettonparish.org.uk](mailto:Chrissie.Pepler@strettonparish.org.uk) who would be happy to speak to you.



# DIARY

## **Sunday 25th February** Readings Psalm 66.16-20, Acts 4.1-22

St. Laurence's	8.30am	Holy Communion, Order 2
	10.30am	Altogether, led by the Youth Life Group
St Michael's	10.30am	Holy Communion
All Saints	4pm	Choral Evensong
Parish Centre	5pm	Young People's Life Group
Online Service	10am	Online via website

## **Tuesday 27th**

9.15am Parish Prayer Meeting, St Laurence

## **Wednesday 28th**

10.15am Banner Group, Children's Room

## **Thursday 29th**

10.00am Parents and Toddlers, Parish Centre

10.30am Holy Communion, Order 2, St Laurence

## **Friday 1st March**

8.30am Prayer Meeting, St Michael's

10.30am World Day of Prayer, St Laurence

5.00pm Choir Practice, St Laurence

## **Saturday 2nd**

10.00am Winter Warmer, Parish Centre

5.45pm Stretton Feast, Parish Centre

## **Sunday 3rd March** Readings Psalm 104.24-35, Acts 17.16-34

St. Laurence's	8.30am	Holy Communion, Order 1
	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Deeper
St Michael's	10.30am	Morning Worship, Iona
All Saints	11am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
Parish Centre	5pm	Young People's Life Group
Online Service	10am	Online, via website

## **Tuesday 5th**

9.15am Parish Prayer Meeting, St Laurence

10.15am Ministry Team meeting, Parish Centre

6.30pm Bellringers AGM, Children's Room, Parish Centre

7.30pm St Michael's ECC

## **Wednesday 6th**

2.30pm CAMEO, Parish Centre

## **Thursday 7th**

10.00am Parents and Toddlers, Parish Centre

10.30am Holy Communion, Order 1, St Laurence

## **Friday 8th**

8.30am Prayer Meeting, St Michael's

2.00pm The Well, Jemima's Kitchen

5.00pm Choir Practice, St Laurence

## **Saturday 9th**

10.00am Winter Warmer—Parish Centre

# Pause for Prayer

- Give thanks to God for all the signs of his work in nature as we enjoy the spring flowers and the bird song.
- Pray that each of us may show the love of Christ by our actions and words to all we meet.
- Pray for God's healing touch on our Rector Steve at this time and may the family feel loved and supported.
- May those who are trying to bring peace to the Middle East be given wisdom and sensitivity and patience.
- Give thanks for the numbers coming to Winter Warmer, may the contacts and friendships made be used by God to introduce people to Jesus.



## A Prayer for Lenten Simplicity

**Free me, Lord Jesus, from anything that obstructs my way to you.** Clear away the clutter of petty grudges. Remove smudges of resentment and bitterness. Cleanse me of thoughts filled with anger, envy, or self-pity.

**Create space in my life** for more kindness and less spitefulness, greater generosity and stronger compassion.

**Enlarge my heart with a spirit of gratitude this Lent,** so that I recognise the simple gifts that lay in abundance all around me.

In your sacred name, I pray. Amen.

<b>Rector</b>	Rev Steve Johnson	steve.johnson@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 722585
<b>Curate</b>	Rev David Andrews	david.andrews@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 721355
<b>Associate Minister</b>	Rev Christobel Hargraves	chris.hargraves@strettonparish.org.uk	01547 550311
<b>LEP URC Minister, St Michaels</b>	Rev Hazel Allen	hazel.allen@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 751400
<b>Children &amp; Families Worker</b>	Sally Clilverd	sally@strettonparish.org.uk	07985 943 906
<b>Readers</b>	Gillian Taylor	gillian.taylor@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 722956
	Chris Lear	chris@barcombe.net	07514 738 653
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Steve King	steve.king@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 722694
	Julie Lawton	Julie.lawton@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 723750
<b>Deputy Wardens</b>			
St Laurence	James Foster	James.foster@strettonparish.org.uk	07736 324 160
All Saints	Maira Matthews	moiraemathews@gmail.com	01694 723045
St Michael's	Malcom Forbes		01694 723439
<b>Pastoral Coordinator</b>		Please contact the office for pastoral care or if home communion is required	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Graham Vince	graham.vince@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 328478
<b>Rector's PA</b>	Jo Aze	jo.aze@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 724224
<b>Rector's Day Off</b>	Fridays	<b>Church office hours:</b> 9am-12.30pm Monday to Friday	