



Stretton Parish

CONTACT

News for weekend beginning Friday 15th November 2024

Parish Website: www.strettonparish.org.uk

Parish office: 01694 724224 office@strettonparish.org.uk

The next Contact will be issued on Friday 29th November 2024

The Rector writes....

As I sit and write this as Rector of this Parish, I must admit that I feel very sad and disappointed. The last few days in the life of the Church of England have been very stormy following the release of the Makin Review, resulting in the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury on Tuesday.

First and foremost, my feeling is anger as we acknowledge the abhorrent and horrific abuse that many suffered at the hands of John Smyth, abuse that has left scars that never will heal.

If you find the individuals' stories and information coming out of this review resonate with you and is personally affecting you, we would like to offer support. Please do be in contact with me, Chris or David or Chrissie our Parish Safeguarding Officer—see contact details on final page of this Contact.

You can also contact *Safe Spaces helpline* on 0300 303 1056 or visit safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk

Yet as I reflect, I find myself pondering the report and acknowledging my wider feeling of exasperation at the state of the Church of England at present and I find that I feel ashamed and angry.

I feel ashamed that we are once again sat with the failures of humans and the institution.

I feel ashamed and angry that once again we have failed to learn lessons about people's misuse of power and the collusion, manipulation and silence at all levels of Church.

I feel ashamed and angry at the way, as Christians, we continue to treat each other.

A few weeks ago, I preached on Mark 12.28-34, in which we hear Jesus responding to the question about which is the most important commandment; ³⁰*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength* ³¹*The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself" There is no commandment greater than these.*

These are the two commandments on which everything hangs.

You can't have one without the other.

They are two sides of the same thing.

If you want to know how well or how much you love God, look at how you are or how you are *not* loving your neighbour.

And during my sermon I asked some questions around the responsibility of each of us - as the Church- to be a welcoming, caring and safe place for everyone. The questions were around how do our behaviours, attitudes and actions show that we, as His church, follow Jesus and his commands?

What a continuing challenge for us as the Church as we move forward from this point, particularly as we reflect on the past week and the report, but also as we look to Safeguarding Sunday this weekend. The report and following fallout should serve as a reminder that at the heart of our failures in safeguarding we find people who have been immensely hurt and it is the responsibility of us all, whatever our role, to ensure God's church is as safe as it can be.

And this is why as a Parish we take safeguarding very seriously and why we also follow the Church of England's guidelines in all areas of our mission and ministry. There is no apology for that- it's at the heart of what we do and everyone involved in some way with children *and* vulnerable adults is recruited using the 'safer recruiting' Principles - this includes completing a DBS and undertaking safeguarding training. We follow these because we should all be seeking to work together to protect children and vulnerable adults in our churches.

And so, amid all our bewilderment, anger or whatever we are feeling at present, let us each recommit ourselves to the task of Loving the Lord and Loving our neighbour as ourselves and we pray that as we do, we look out for each other and love each other, making sure that each and every one is cared for and safe.

And I finish with a prayer for Safeguarding Sunday.

Loving God, we pray that this Parish may be a place of welcome, security and compassion. Keep us watchful yet caring, trusting yet ready to question, that all who worship here may do so in safety and in the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With my continued prayers as we continue to navigate these choppy waters,

Steve, Stretton Parish Rector.

A Reminder of two events this Saturday, 16th November

St Laurence Maintenance Party

We would like as much help as possible to do lots of jobs around the church and churchyard before the winter sets in. Please come along any time between 9.30am and 12.30pm, wearing old clothes and gloves. Coffee and bacon sandwiches provided.

Ways of Praying—a Prayer Workshop

9.30am-12.30pm St Michael's Church

What to expect? A quiet space to relax into exploring different ways of praying - biblical, poetic, artistic and creative. Some structure, ideas and suggestions will be provided for those who like that but there will also be time for you to experiment in a safe place.

[Book a space](#), or if you've only got 15 minutes in your day, just pop in and see what's around.

Tea & coffee provided.

A New Year Appeal for Help!

If you've visited the Winter Warmer this Autumn you'll have felt the warmth of being amongst friends, old and new from our local community. It has been a joy to see how God has brought us together; to listen, to talk and to serve each other. We have welcomed people visiting the town, others who are passing through and every week there are those who have been prompted to walk through the door for the first time. They are surprised by the warmth of the welcome and come back again, for many it has become a regular highlight of their week!

We are already thinking about 2025 and planning how we can offer WW through the winter months of January to March. We have a wonderful team of regular volunteers, but we will need some extra people to help us cook and serve up to 80 sausage/bacon baps each week!

There are some specific roles we need to fill from January onwards (particularly to replace Louise & Graham who will be away until March 2025).

Kitchen Cook (Hygiene Certificate Lvl 2)

We can help you access the certificate and tell you the routine!

Set up/ Clear up Team

We set up on a Friday evening or it can be done on Saturday morning. It takes two people less than an hour!

Help with weekly shopping.

We have a regular list and usually collect it from Sainsbury's.

Oversight role (Enhanced DBS)

Due to the wide mix of people, our risk assessments and safeguarding policy we need someone who has 'oversight' during the morning and who can 'manage' any situation that could arise.

Servers

Volunteers who meet, greet and serve with a smile!

If you are interested in finding out more, please come along on a Saturday morning over the next few weeks to see what we do or catch any of us at church. We plan a rota for each 10 week cycle, so you can volunteer as often as you like (weekly, fortnightly or monthly) for any Saturday mornings from January to March 2025. You can contact me for more information: louise.jackson449@gmail.com

If you haven't been to WW then please do come and see for yourself. We are in the Parish Centre every Saturday morning until 7th December. Winter Warmer is inclusive, accessible, you will find a great buzz and it is grounded in the love of Christ – it's a privilege to be a part of and a joy to see!

Many thanks,

Louise Jackson
Project Coordinator

Events for Advent



Messy Christingle: On Saturday 30th November it is the Town's Christmas Light event and, as part of this, we will hold a Messy Church-type Christingle at 4pm in St Laurence.

Thank you to all of you who have volunteered to help at this event and also at the **Experience Advent** week beginning Monday 25th November where the children from the Primary School classes will be invited to reflect on the true meaning behind Advent and how it is relevant to them.

If you have verbally offered help to me thank you very much, but please send me a quick email as I don't think I have everyone written down!! If you have not yet volunteered but are able to do so there are still roles available!

If you are able to help in any way please do get in touch: sally@strettonparish.org.uk or 07985 943906.

Sally Clilverd
Children and Families Worker

Wreathmaking Demonstration & Workshop



Saturday 7th December

2-4pm at All Stretton Village Hall

Materials provided, just bring scissors & secateurs.

Tickets are £20, phone 01694 723427

Advent Carol Service— From Darkness to Light

Sunday 1st December, 4pm
All Saints Church



CAMEO Carols and Tea

Wednesday 4th December, 2.30-4pm
St Laurence Church.

Please join us for a traditional Carol Service and a Christmas tea served in the church.

For further information please contact

Nancy Cleaton on 01694 328132 or

Email nancy.cleaton@strettonparish.org.uk

A prayer for Advent

*Lord Jesus, as we enter this Advent season,
help us cling to the hope You bring.
In a world that feels heavy with need,
remind us of Your promise to come again
and make all things new.
Let our hearts be filled with the light of Your
presence,
leading us closer to You each day.
Amen.*

Advent Quiet Time

Thursday 5th December
2-4.30pm or 8pm-9.30pm
St Laurence Church

Come and experience the peace of God in St Laurence's Church. Do come for either the afternoon (2pm-4.30pm) or evening (8pm-9.30pm) sessions which will be led and follow the same format. Or if you've only got 15 minutes in your day, just pop in and see what's around.

What to expect? A quiet space held for you to relax into being with your God with stimulus material provided if wanted - biblical, poetic, artistic and creative.

This session will be flavoured for Advent.

Tea and coffee provided. Book in for a full session via the [website](#), or contact Sarah Lear via sarah@barcombe.net

Christmas Dinner

We will again be holding a Christmas Dinner for those in our community that may be on their own at Christmas or will struggle to afford a traditional Christmas dinner. This will be hosted at the Parish Centre on Christmas Day.

We are looking for offers of help leading up to the day, on Christmas Eve to prepare and on the day itself. We have a list of roles below that we are looking for people to fill. Thank you to those who have already offered, we have your names on our list. We are also looking for donations of items to help make the occasion special for those attending. If you can let us know what you can do, we will coordinate with you nearer the time .

One area we always need help with is fridges, so if you have a spare fridge you are able to loan for a few days over Christmas, this would be very helpful as it allows a lot of precooking to happen. The more the better!

If you can offer your help in any of these roles or by committing to donate items listed, please contact the office at office@strettonparish.org.uk or 01694 724224. Further information on how to book a place will be announced in the coming weeks.

Roles to fulfil:

- Helping cook in the kitchen on the day
- Preparing food on Christmas Eve
- Help decorate the Parish Centre/Setting Up on Christmas Eve, including one person willing to go up a ladder to hang decorations!
- Washing up & clearing away on the day
- Making table centre pieces

Items that can be donated:

- Christmas Crackers
- Christmas cake
- After 8's
- Brandy butter
- Cranberry sauce
- Sherry
- Wine
- Soft drinks
- Decorations for the hall
- Christmas pudding



Thank you.

James Foster, organiser



Stretton Feast—Saturday 23rd November

It's a while since we had a Fellowship Feast but the cold dark evenings are with us again. What better excuse to come and enjoy a sociable evening with a three-course meal provided! Lorraine and Isabel are organising a freshly cooked meal on Saturday 23rd November in the Parish Centre at 6.30pm. This is an ideal opportunity to bring along family and friends.

Pre booking is essential and please advise of any food allergies/preferences when you [sign up](#).

There is no fixed charge for the meal; instead donations are welcomed to cover the cost of food. All surplus funds after costs have been deducted will go to parish funds.

A few volunteers to help prepare the meal or to help clear up afterwards would be welcomed. Also any offers of entertainment! Please contact Lorraine, Isabel or Jo.

NOTICE BOARD

Christmas Singing!

We're looking for some extra singers to join us this December. Come along and enjoy some festive singing with our lovely Parish choir. Rehearsals are each Friday 5-6 pm, ready for the Carol Service at St Laurence's on 22nd.

Contact Ru for more details, or just turn up!

Collection for The Ark, Shrewsbury

The last day for donating to The Ark is Sunday 24th November. Please bring items to St Michael's or St Laurence's Churches, or to the Parish Office during the week. Items requested are sleeping bags, chocolate, tea, coffee and sugar, hats, gloves and scarves, tinned soup and biscuits and toiletries for both men and women. Many thanks for your generosity.



We have a **Parish stall** at the town's Christmas Lights event on Saturday 30th November.

We will be giving out our **Christmas cards** with details of all our Christmas events and services, and also a flyer detailing the **Living Advent Calendar** which we have organised for the community this year.



The Girl Guides are having a training session by the bellringers on Monday 18th November so you will hear the bells ringing that day instead of the usual Tuesday bellringing practice on 19th.

If you have a **Children's Society box**, please bring it to the office in the **Parish Centre** for emptying.

If you're unable to do that, please contact Graham Vince on 01694 328478 or email

graham.vince@strettonparish.org.uk and he will arrange to collect them from you.

**The
Children's
Society**

A Thank You note from Open Doors

Dear Friends at Stretton Parish

Thank you so much for your kind gift of £329.68 and £25.00 via cheque to strengthen our persecuted church family around the world who are risking it all to follow Jesus. Thanks to your prayers and support, our brothers and sisters know they are not alone and can stand strong in their faith.

May the Lord fill you with His Spirit and surround you with His love.

Your sister in Christ,
Henrietta Blyth

CEO, Open Doors UK and Ireland

Eco News

[This YouTube video](#) features a local couple, sharing the measures they have taken to reduce their carbon footprint—it makes inspiring viewing!



Christmas Cards from Churches Together

There are Christmas Cards from the Churches Together in the Strettons to be delivered to all the streets in the Strettons. If you have some time, please take a pack from the churches to deliver. Thank you.

DIARY

Sunday 17th November - Readings: Hebrews 10.11-25, Mark 13.1-8

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

Tuesday 19th November

9.15am Parish Prayer Meeting, St Laurence

Thursday 21st

10.00am Parents & Toddlers, Parish Centre
10.30am Holy Communion, Order 2, St Laurence
7.30pm Alpha, Parish Centre

Friday 22nd

9.00am Prayer Meeting, St Michael's
5.00pm Choir Practice, St Laurence

Saturday 23rd

10.00am Winter Warmer, Parish Centre
6.30pm Stretton Feast, Parish Centre

Sunday 24th November, Readings: Daniel 7.9-14, John 18.33-37

St. Laurence's	8.30am	Holy Communion, Order 1
	10.30am	Altogether
St Michael's	10.30am	Holy Communion, with baptisms
All Saints	11.00am	Holy Communion, Order 2
Parish Centre	5pm	Young People's Life Group
Online Service	10am	Online, via website

Monday 25th-Friday 29th November—Experience Advent, St Laurence's

Tuesday 26th

9.15am Parish Prayer meeting, **Owen Room**
7.30pm PCC meeting, Children's Room

Wednesday 27th

10.15am Banner Group, Children's Room

Thursday 28th

10.00am Parents & Toddlers, Parish Centre
10.30am Holy Communion, Order 1, St Laurence
7.30pm Alpha, Parish Centre

Friday 29th

9.00am Prayer Meeting, St Michael's
5.00pm Choir Practice, St Laurence

Saturday 30th

10.00am Winter Warmer, Parish Centre
4.00pm Messy Christingle, St Laurence



PRAYER FOCUS

- **Please pray for Messy Christingle and Experience Advent in the coming weeks:**
 - ⇒ For favourable interactions with primary schools in the lead up to the events
 - ⇒ For inspiration and clarity of each activity and station
 - ⇒ For the children and adults who will attend, that they will be open to hear God's voice and he would speak to each person through the activities or what is said.
- **Please continue for those attending the Alpha course**, which is going really well.
- **Pray for Winter Warmer**, those who come, those who volunteer and those who come to listen and converse.
- **We pray for those who are sick**, particularly from our church family, Sylvia L and David M.
- **We pray for all our residential homes**, particularly remembering Ley Gardens this week.

Bishop Richard reflects on the Makin report in his [weekly video](#), and ends with this prayer:

Lord have mercy on your church,
make us holy, make us kind,
make us caring, make us safe,
that the love of Christ
will still shine through our frailty and brokenness.
Amen.

Rector	Rev Steve Johnson	steve.johnson@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 722585
Curate	Rev David Andrews	david.andrews@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 721355
Associate Minister	Rev Preb Christobel Hargraves	chris.hargraves@strettonparish.org.uk	01547 550311
LEP URC Minister, St Michaels	Rev Hazel Allen	hazel.allen@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 751400
Children & Families Worker	Sally Cilverd	sally@strettonparish.org.uk	07985 943 906
Readers	Gillian Taylor	gillian.taylor@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 722956
	Chris Lear	chris@barcombe.net	07514 738 653
Churchwardens	Steve King	steve.king@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 722694
	Julie Lawton	Julie.lawton@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 723750
Deputy Wardens			
St Laurence	James Foster	James.foster@strettonparish.org.uk	07736 324 160
All Saints	Maira Matthews	moiraemathews@gmail.com	01694 723045
Pastoral Coordinator	Rev Nancy Cleaton	Nancy.cleaton@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 328132
Treasurer	Graham Vince	graham.vince@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 328478
Rector's PA	Jo Aze	jo.aze@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 724224
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Chrissie Pepler	chrissie.pepler@strettonparish.org.uk	01694 771888
Rector's Day Off	Frídáys	Church office hours: 9am-12.30pm Monday to Friday	