



Stretton Parish

CONTACT

News for weekend beginning Friday 21st March 2025

Parish Website: www.strettonparish.org.uk

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

The next Contact will be issued on Friday 4th April 2025

Parish Vision Weekend 29-30th March incorporating the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

Saturday Afternoon

2pm: Worship and Reflection

2.30-3.30pm: The APCM will take place in St. Laurence's Church. During this time, elections will be held for a number of key roles to support the governance of the Parish, including to the PCC and the DCCs. If you feel you are being called to a particular role, please ensure that you complete a nomination form and submit it to Jo in the office as soon as possible, and at the latest by Friday 28th March. Forms are available in each church. See details of vacancies overleaf. The APCM will provide an opportunity to hear reports from the Rector, Churchwardens, Treasurer, PSO and others regarding the continuing work across our three churches.

3.30-4pm: Refreshments

4pm-5pm: The Mission Show. The theme for the weekend is "Mission in the 21st Century – what does it look like?" and we are delighted that both our Mission Partners are able to join us. Lea and Petra Williams and their children will be coming from the Czech Republic and Anna and Chris Hembury are coming down from Hull. We look forward to hearing about their work and learning how we can partner with them.



Saturday Evening

6pm-8pm: Beetle Drive with a Twist. Unfortunately we have had to postpone the Murder Mystery Evening to another time, but will instead have a Beetle Drive with a Stretton Parish twist. This fun alternative is suitable for all ages, requires no skill or strategy, involves no craft, and provides the perfect opportunity to get to know one another. It can also get very competitive!

We will still be sharing a meal together so, if you haven't done so already, please [book in](#) for this so our catering team know how many to cater for.

Sunday morning:

10.30am-11.30: All three churches meet together for our United Parish Service where we welcome Andy Rose from CMS as our speaker.

Sunday afternoon:

2.30pm-3.30pm: An opportunity to speak with and hear more from our Mission Partners over tea and cake in the Parish Centre. Do come along and show your support.



Help needed with refreshments

Can you help with refreshments either on the Saturday afternoon or on the Sunday afternoon please? Offers to Jo. Thank you.

Vacancies

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) takes part within our vision weekend and will include elections to fill vacancies in the governing bodies of Stretton Parish. The two Churchwardens and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) have oversight of the whole Parish, and each church has its own Deputy Churchwarden and church council - District Church Councils (DCCs) for All Saints and St Laurence, and an Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) for St Michael's.

This year the following positions are to be filled at the APCM:

- Two Churchwardens
- Stretton Parish PCC: There are vacancies for two representatives from each of the three churches, so six people in total
- Deputy Churchwarden for St Michael's
- Two or three places on the St Laurence DCC
- One place on the All Saints DCC

Nomination forms for all these positions are available in all the churches.

Please speak to the Rector or one of the Churchwardens for more information.

New Electoral Roll

The new Electoral Roll is published and you can view it [here](#) or ask to see a copy in the office. No further names can be added after this until after the APCM on 29th March, but if you would like your name to be included after that, please complete the online form [here](#) or download one from the footer on the home page of the website. Alternatively paper copies can be found in all the churches.

Stretton Parish Annual Report

Our [Annual Report](#) is available to [read here](#). Please take the time to read it to find out all the exciting things that happened in the Parish over the last twelve months. If you would like a paper copy please request one via the office.

From the PCC

The PCC met on 4th March.

- The Parish Safeguarding Officer was in attendance and the way forward was discussed on how to implement recommendations set out in the CofE guidance called "Safer Environment and Activities".
- The treasurer presented the financial reports for each church, budgets for 2025, and authorisation limits for spending were approved. The annual accounts were approved and these will be presented at the APCM.
- The Deanery Synod had asked all PCCs to discuss and feedback things our parish is doing well, ways parishes could work together more to help each other, and ways we could support ministry across the deanery and support we would like to receive.
- Updates were received on the current Alpha course, Bethel and Foodbank.
- Written reports were received from the churchwardens, DCCs and the ECC. The PCC agreed to accept a quote to have acoustic treatment in the hall in the Parish Centre, to reduce reverberation and noise, using the £4000 received from the Marches Energy Agency towards this.
- Sally Clilverd was approved as the new Foundation Governor for St Lawrence CE Primary School.

Prayer Ministry

As part of the body of Christ we should always be seeking to help, pray with, encourage and serve one another. One way of doing this is through Prayer Ministry. We will now be offering Prayer Ministry at the 10.30am Holy Communion Services at St Laurence, the 6.30pm Deeper Services at St Laurence and at 10.30am services on a 5th Sunday. Team members will be available during communion until the end of the service in the right hand corner of the nave (if facing the front of the church).

If you have any queries about this Ministry then please contact Revd Preb Chris Hargraves.

Lent Lunches will be held at St Michael's each Tuesday during Lent, beginning on 11th March, between 12 noon-1.30pm, with homemade soup served with a roll and butter, followed by fruit and tea or coffee. The cost is £4.50 in aid of the charity Housing Justice and St Michael's church funds. The charity Housing Justice, founded on Christian principles, is a small national charity that supports Churches and community groups to respond to homelessness and housing needs. Do come along!



Lent Study Group—There is space for anyone who would like to join the Lent study group on Tuesdays in the Parish Centre. Please contact Nancy Cleaton on 01694 328132 to check the time, if you are interested.



We had a wonderful time at Messy Church last week exploring the parable of the Mustard Seed. Over 40 people started their afternoon watching an engaging and witty retelling of the parable then chose to take part in a range of activities including planting cress seeds, cake making, French knitting, mustard tree of faith collage, blow painting. As people took part in the activities we posed questions getting them to think about what faith means to them and how big things can grow from a tiny start; we had some particularly good examples of

this with the French knitting! During the Celebration time Sally shared the story of Lucy Moore who had the tiny seed of an idea to make a creative, hospitable and intergenerational space where anyone would feel welcome, including those alienated or threatened by traditional forms of church service. She started the first 'Messy Church' in her own church near Portsmouth in 2004 and said that 'The challenge was to be faithful in each little moment, and trust that God has the big picture in hand.' Lucy was faithful and Messy Church has now spread to over 30 countries, with over 4,000 Messy Churches registered worldwide and over 500,000 people attending each month!! Let us praise God for her vision and pray that each of our Messy Churchers' faith will grow over the coming days and months.





PRAYER FOCUS

This month we are focusing our prayers on our Parish Life Groups

- Give thanks to God for the Parish Life Groups and for Caroline as she leads them. May she be given wisdom and vision as she seeks to support and inspire.
- Please pray for the discernment of new Life Group leaders and the formation of two new life groups; a day time group and an evening group.
- Pray that our Life Groups would be supportive and nurturing spaces that encourage members to grow in their discipleship.
- Ask God that the Life Group members may care pastorally for one another, each person to feel valued and supported.

Let us pray for the world:

- Pray that the people of Gaza may be given access to food and medical supplies and be given hope for their future
- Pray for the work of Embrace in the Holy Land as they seek to bring relief to anyone in need. Ask God to protect those who are serving their communities in the name of Jesus.
- As Foreign Aid is cut in the UK, pray that food and medicines in the areas of greatest need may still arrive through the generosity of private contributions and other charities.

During this season of Lent, let us fast with courage and determination.

- Fast from hurting words, and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness, and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger, and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism, and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries, and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints, and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures, and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness, and fill our hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness, and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges, and be reconciled.
- Fast from words, and be silent so that we can listen.

Memorial Book

We give thanks for the lives of those in our memorial book in March:

John Seager, Margaret Roberts, Barbara Manser, Helen Bowyer, Francis Woodhouse, Guy Heath, William Cooke, Donald Hopkinson, Lucy Fisher, Doreen Goss, William Wright, Jean Small, Derek Martin, Helen Davidson, Lily Luty, Mark Lawton, Beryl Wheale, Florence Montgomery, Gwyneth Evans, John Mason, Joyce Coad,

We pray for those who mourn, particularly the family and friends of Norma Brewer, whose service of thanksgiving is at 2pm on Saturday 22nd March in St Laurence Church.

We pray for Noah who is being baptised at St Laurence on Sunday 23rd March.

We pray for all who are sick

Janet Wilcoxon

Residential Homes

We pray for all our nursing homes, this month particularly remembering Ley Gardens.

Flower Festival—July 2025

St. Michael's, All Stretton are planning a Flower Festival to run over three days from 12th to 14th July 2025. The theme of the whole weekend will be 'A Moment in Time'.

Although our aim is to commemorate the end of World War II, we plan to give thanks, by illustrating through flowers and music, key moments in time through the decades since the end of the war.

We are encouraging everyone to share their personal memories, as well as reflecting on the more well known moments which have shaped our world since the 1940's.

One opportunity to do this is to join us in St. Michael's on Saturday 5th April at 10.30am, when we can share these memories and continue to plan what we hope will prove to be a very exciting weekend.

Please join us if you can help in any way, and to find out more about what's in store.



Carolyn Bates,



Maundy Thursday Supper and Tenebrae at St Michael's

Thursday 17th April at 6pm. Join us for a light supper with Communion.

Please book via the [website](#) or phone Hazel Allen on 01694 751400.

Two concerts in our churches—please come along and show your support

SPRING SING.



Stretton Parish Choir and Craven Arms Mens Chorus come together to sing for our local branch of Samaritans

ST LAURENCE'S, CHURCH STRETTON

12TH APRIL AT 7.30PM

ADMISSION £10 (CHILDREN £5)

SAMARITANS

Shrewsbury

All profits to Samaritans of Shrewsbury.
Charity Number 1170398

Information: 07793001649

Organ music for Passiontide

All Saints' Church, Saturday April 5th at 10.15am

As part of the Saturday Morning Music series, Richard Walker will play organ music by Bach and Marcel Dupré to mark the progression from Ash Wednesday to Easter; the mood will quickly lift towards the end of the recital!

The recital is centred around Dupré's 'The Way of the Cross' – 12 compositions giving his response to the 12 Stations of the Cross, from 'Jesus is condemned to death' to 'Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre'.

The recital will last around 50 minutes, and the Ragleth Inn is kindly opening early to offer us coffee etc immediately afterwards. We may also use the Ragleth Inn car park. Admission is free of charge with a retiring collection shared between the church and Stretton Foodbank.



Help needed mowing the churchyard at St Laurence

Many thanks to Alan Kay who's been a member of the churchyard mowing team for many years. Alan is hanging up his boots.

So can you join the team? What's involved? During the grass-growing season a couple of hours mowing once a month. And help with the autumn clear-up.

Offers of help to Mike Carter (misawa47@gmail.com)



Mothers' Union Diocesan Lady Day Service Tuesday 25th March, 2.30pm, St Laurence Church

Rev Penny Littlewood, the Diocesan Chaplain will be leading the service. Refreshments will follow in the Parish Centre. Please come and join us as we celebrate this special day.



**CAMEO: Wednesday
2nd April 2.30pm in the
Parish Centre:** Come along for an afternoon of friendship, sharing, encouragement and a cup of tea and cake.

This month's speaker is Christine Williams is speaking on "The lost art of letters". To book transport with Ring and Ride, please ring Rhoda on 01694 724197.



On Saturday 29th March from 10am -10.45am the Ladies Bellringing Guild will be ringing at St Laurence Church.



Our verse for 2025

"But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.."



1 Samuel 12:24



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|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------|
| 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 Clilverd | sally@strettonparish.org.uk | 07985 943 906 |
| Readers | Gillian Taylor | gillian.taylor@strettonparish.org.uk | 01694 724224 |
| | 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 | Moira 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 |
| Life Group Coordinator | Caroline Windley | caroline.windley@strettonparish.org.uk | |
| Rector's Day Off | Fridays | Church office hours: 9am-12.30pm Monday to Friday | |

DIARY

Sunday 23rd March Readings Isaiah 55:1-9, Luke 13:1-9

St. Laurence's 8.30am Holy Communion, Order 1
 10.30am Altogether, with baptism

St Michael's 10.30am Holy Communion

All Saints 11am Holy Communion, Order 2

Parish Centre 5pm Young People's Life Group

Online Service 10am Online, via website

Tuesday 25th

9.15am Parish Prayer Meeting, St Laurence
12.00pm Lent Lunch, St Michael's
2.30pm Mothers' Union Lady Day Service, St Laurence
7.30pm PCC, Parish Centre

Wednesday 26th

10.15am Banner Group, Children's Room

Thursday 27th

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

Friday 28th

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

Saturday 29th

10.00am Winter Warmer, Parish Centre
10.15am Alpha, Children's Room, Parish Centre
2.00pm Parish Vision Day, St Laurence—see front page for details
2.30pm APCM, St Laurence
6.00pm Murder Mystery evening with dinner, St Laurence

Winter Warmer will be open on 29th March, then we close for the summer until October 2025 when we'll be open throughout the winter months.

Sunday 30th March Readings: Isaiah 1.10-17, Mark 4.35-20

St. Laurence's 8.30am Holy Communion, Order 2
 10.30am United Parish Service
Parish Centre 2.30pm Afternoon tea with our Mission Partners
 5pm Young People's Life Group
Online Service 10.30am Live Stream from the United Service, via website

Tuesday 1st April

9.15am Parish Prayer Meeting, St Laurence
10.15am Ministry Team meeting, Children's Room
12.00pm Lent Lunch, St Michael's

NB The Parish Office will be closed on Thursday 3rd April

Wednesday 2nd

2.30pm CAMEO, Parish Centre

Thursday 3rd

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

Friday 4th

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

Saturday 5th

10.15am Alpha, Children's Room, Parish Centre
10.15am Organ music for Passiontide, All Saints
10.30am Flower Festival planning meeting, St Michael's