**St Stephen’s in Fradley Bulletin 25th July 2021**

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**St Stephen’s Church is open 10am-3pm daily for private prayer**

With Government Guidelines changing this week, we would like to update you on the arrangements for services at St Stephens. Although some restrictions have been lifted, we are mindful that infections are currently still high and as such we will be keeping our social distancing measures in place. Whilst masks are no longer mandatory we will be encouraging their use where possible and Communion will still be offered without a shared chalice. We are delighted that, from this Sunday, singing can resume in Church. The PCC will be reviewing our arrangements on a regular basis with our objective to keep everyone as safe as possible whilst welcoming them to church.

**The Diary**

**Saturday 24th July 2.30-4.30pm Garden Party/Strawberry Tea![C:\Users\Elizabeth\Pictures\strawberries-clipart-strawberry-tea-2[1].png]() in the Churchyard**

Thanks to all who have volunteered for any task supporting this event –

we really appreciate it! Do come along; bring your family and friends.

Home produce, plants, bric- a -brac and high quality cards will be for sale

Musical entertainment from 2.45pm with the Music Group and Community Choir,

Tim Chamberlin on keyboard and a special duet from Julia and Sarah Free entry Strawberry Tea £5

Our Recipe Book will be launched! Some of the children from St Stephen’s School have contributed to the artwork in the Book and further drawings are displayed in Church from 10am as church opens. Recipe Book £5

**Sunday 25th July 10.30am Family Communion in church.**

**Wednesday 28th July 10am Events Committee** in Meeting Room

**2-4pm Wednesday Welcome –** our very own Place of Welcome!

Do join us for tea and cake, chat and hospitality **in church**.

 **7pm PCC Meeting** in church

**Sunday 1st August 9am Holy Communion** (Traditional- BCP)

**10.30am All Age Worship** with the Music Group

**Saturday 7th August 2pm Walking Group** 

Approx. 5 mile local walk led by Katie. Meet at Beacon Park gate opposite Ego Restaurant in Lichfield. For more details please contact Katie Levitt 07776 182760

**A Prayer for the 8th Sunday after Trinity**

Lord God,

your Son left the riches of heaven

and became poor for our sake:

when we prosper save us from pride,

when we are needy save us from despair,

that we may trust in you alone;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Readings: 2 Kings 4. 42-end Ephesians 3. 14-21 John 6. 1-21**

 **Thought for the week….**

25th July is his Feast Day of **St James the Apostle.** The Gospels agree that James was the son of Zebedee and brother of John- a fisherman who worked with them in Galilee. When he was called by Jesus, James was mending nets with his brother by the lake. James and his brother stayed with Jesus throughout his ministry and appear to have been among his closest friends.

 Jesus nicknamed the brothers ‘Boanerges’ – sons of thunder - because of their impetuous desire to strike the Samaritan village down with lightning when it refused hospitality to Jesus. It was James and John (or according to Matthew, their mother) who asked that Jesus reserve them a place in heaven – one on his right and one on his left. James was reported to be the first apostle to be martyred for his faith.

Beyond the Biblical evidence, little is known of James’ life but tradition asserts that he preached in Spain, was buried there and a shrine was built. Modern thinking largely rejects this. However the shrine at Santiago de Compostela became a centre of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. James became the focus as a figure in opposition to the Moors and stories of visions and miracles kept his influence alive. The shrine is popular in modern times; James is associated with a pilgrim’s hat and staff and a cockle shell representing Compostela.

The local area may well have been the focus for pilgrims walking to the shrine of St Chad. The Pilgrim Way Church Trail is a fourteen-mile route from St Michael’s Church in Tatenhill to Lichfield Cathedral. It follows an ancient path which may have been the route taken by Saint Chad on his journey to establish Lichfield Cathedral and has been developed by Peter Ralley. You can see the traditional cockle shell on the Trail logo.

Who knows where pilgrims may have been offered hospitality but undoubtedly it was given. There are places in Lichfield which have provided shelter and hospitality to those who travelled to the shrine and other travellers, after the City gates were locked.

Our Gospel reading today focuses on the familiar story of the Feeding of the 5000 in which shows Jesus offers hospitality to all. Hospitality – offering hospitality, I believe, underpins all that we are about. We know that food and water are two essential requirements for life, but hospitality- be it material or spiritual - is essential to the quality of life. We have missed this basic tenant in lockdown restrictions. We’ve had to develop other ways of generously offering hospitality to others………..and it has been revealing what others really value – a phone call, a kindly word…a note that you care…a basket of shopping left on the doorstep.

 Jesus accepts the young boy’s bread and fish – a small and insignificant offering and quite inadequate for the task. But God is in the business of transforming people's lives for the better………………God’s concern is for human beings and human becomings.

So, a prayer…..

‘All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for you, and every life I touch, do by this spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live.’

*Prayer of Mary Sumner*

**Elizabeth**

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We hold in our prayers at this time all those who grieve and especially those whose grief is new and raw and all who experience loss of any kind. We pray for those who grieve for Doris Cotterill and Pamela Jenkins and those whose anniversaries fall at this time

Please do contact us if you have any prayer requests. Morning Prayer (said privately by the clergy) and Sunday Services all include prayers, for the world, for the church, for the community and for individuals. If you would like us to pray for anyone please get in touch.

**Wednesday Welcome **

Our weekly ‘drop-in’ for tea and cake and chat restarted very successfully on Wednesday 7th July after closing for 15 months because of Covid. We are part of the ‘Places of Welcome’ scheme and refreshments are completely free – we would like your company so do join us!

**Pilgrim Way Church Trail** 

**St Stephen’s is part of this 14 mile trail from Tatenhill to Lichfield Cathedral and Peter Ralley has been working on the project and the involvement of St Stephen’s. This is nearly complete and we will have Heritage Guidebooks and a Detective Book for children to complete. Part of the project is training for volunteers to give short tours of the church. If you would like to be part of this (and we do get a lot of visitors to St. Stephen’s so it would be good to consolidate our knowledge) please sign up. Training session will last approx. 2 hours and will be held on Wednesday 18th or Thursday 19th August.**

***Food Bank***

### *We continue to support the Food bank. There is a constant need. Thank you to all who keep donating. Urgently needed food items -*

* **Snack bars/Cereal bars**
* **Long-life milk**
* **Tinned rice pudding**
* **Tinned custard**
* **Chocolate**

**All donations may be left in the box at the back of Church.**

**Can you help to support St Stephens Church?**

**St Stephens Church is heavily dependent on voluntary donations and income from events in order to fulfil its ministry to the local and wider communities. The continuing pandemic is having a material impact on our income. If you feel able, and would like to support us at this time, donations can be made via our Just Giving page or by text. With our huge thanks and appreciation!**

[**https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ststephensfradley**](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ststephensfradley)

**Text - 21FRADLEY to 70085 followed by an amount,**

**e.g. to donate £10 – text 21FRADLEY10**

**Texts cost the amount of your donation plus one standard rate message.**

EAW 24th July 2021