

Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

KNOWING JESUS... MAKING JESUS KNOWN!



DURING Lent, St Stephens Soundwell has had the opportunity to run the 'Talking Jesus' Lent course.

THIS course has given us the privilege to listen to other people's stories about their faith and their relationship with God. It has also highlighted the importance of talking about Jesus to our friends, families and to people who we do not know.

Talking about Jesus to people is no easy task and it requires faith and bravery.

What people think about us and the fear of rejection are issues that many people deal with on a day to day basis.

These issues have an effect on us when we try to speak about Jesus to those who we meet daily.

However, the amazing story of Jesus has the ability to change the hearts of people and ultimately, it highlights the amazing love that God has for each one of us.

ON 31st of March, the church celebrated **Easter Day** which is the time when we remember the resurrection of Jesus three days after he was killed.

The week before Easter is known as Holy Week and it begins with Palm Sunday which is the time when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.

The crowds who saw this began to break branches and palm leaves off the trees and they began to shout:

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" as Jesus rode into Jerusalem.

Though this was a celebration, Jesus was about to face the final week of his ministry as he was about to be betrayed, falsely accused, arrested and crucified.

As I think about **Holy Week**, I can just imagine the emotions that Jesus must have been facing at that point in time.

Just before going to the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples and at the supper, he clearly states that one of his disciples will soon betray him. This in itself must have felt tremendously heart-breaking.

Following this, Jesus then heads to the garden of Gethsemane. To see the disciples asleep as he prayed in the garden and then to see Judas betray him with a kiss must have really impacted his emotions and added to his heartbreak.

As we travel our faith journey, we often face challenges and go through situations in which we feel like nobody understands us and nobody understands the way we feel. Through everything that Jesus went through, we can take comfort that he understands us when we feel betrayed, angry, heartbroken or fearful.

Whenever we feel misunderstood or whenever we feel distant from God, may we remember the Easter story and may we know that Jesus knows and understands exactly how we feel.

ON **Good Friday**, we have a service at church entitled *'The Last Hour at the Cross'*, which helps us to focus on that final hour at the cross before Jesus died.

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APRIL 2024

Mission Partners with St Stephens:

Beloved
Bristol City Centre Soup Run
Bristol Schools Connection
Bristol/Uganda Link
Christian Aid
Community of the Sisters of the Church
Emmaus
Harvest for The Hungry
One25 Project

St Stephens

Church Road
Soundwell
Bristol BS16 4RH
0117 956 6257

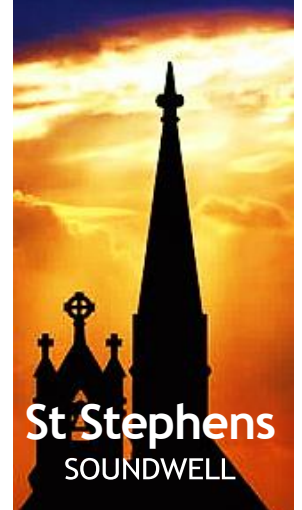
visionatststephens@gmail.com

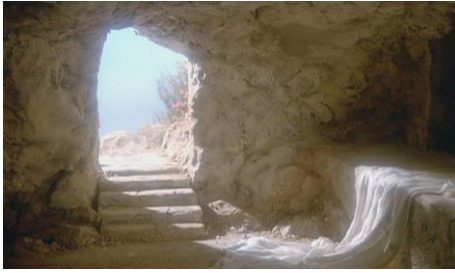
www.saintstephen-soundwell.org

 saintstephen-soundwell

 @SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER
1131503





SUNDAY 07 APRIL 2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:32–35; Psalm 133

1 John 1:1–22; John 20:19–end

RISEN CHRIST, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father. Amen

SUNDAY 14 APRIL 3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12–19; Psalm 4

1 John 3:1–7; Luke 24:36b–48

RISEN CHRIST, you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope: strengthen us to proclaim your risen life and fill us with your peace, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SUNDAY 21 APRIL 4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:5–12; Psalm 23

1 John 3:16–end; John 10:11–18

RISEN CHRIST, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SUNDAY 28 APRIL 5th Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:26–end; Psalm 22:25–end

1 John 4:7–end; John 15:1–8

RISEN CHRIST, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

At this point, it looks as if Christ has been defeated and it looks as if his ministry and teachings have all come to an end. But after three days, the tomb where Jesus's body was laid to rest is found empty.

Jesus then appears to his disciples and shows them that he is alive, thus proving that he really did have the power to conquer death.

The Easter story is a story with great emotions as we learn about the Son of God who was crucified for our sins. However, this story is one that leaves us with a great sense of joy and of hope as we look to the future.

The death and resurrection of Jesus has blessed and impacted our lives in a way that nothing else can ever compare to what Jesus has done for us.

Through his death and resurrection, we can be assured that all our sins and mistakes are forgiven and because of this, we do not have to feel the guilt and the shame of things we have done in the past.

Through his resurrection and bursting from the tomb, we can look to the future with hope knowing that we have a heavenly home in which we will spend eternity with God our loving father and Jesus our King and Saviour.

THE 'Talking Jesus' Lent course left us with a challenge of not only talking about Jesus to those around us but also the challenge of praying for 5 people. Likewise, Jesus left us with a challenge before his ascension into heaven.

In the last verses of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives us a challenge that is known as the Great Commission. His words state:

'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

I believe that the challenges of both the Lent course and the Great Commission apply to every Christian.

However, both challenges require a bold response from us because often, we may feel like we don't have the right words to say to people or we may feel like we do not have the right gifts to speak to people and therefore they may not listen to us.

I remember the first time I arrived to do prison ministry, I was not very confident, and I did not know if I was able to do what God was asking me to do.

It is important to remember that each one of us has a story and this story is unique because it is our own personal story.

It is also important to remember those comforting last words of Jesus in the Great Commission which he states, **'I am with you always.'**

As we daily live out our faith and as we share our experience of Jesus with people, we may sometimes face challenges such as feelings of being outside our comfort zones.

During times like these, may we take comfort in those words of Jesus. May we know deep in our hearts that the Son of God gave his life for each one of us because we are God's beloved children.

Finally, may we never forget that Jesus is with us always.

Regan

YOUNG PREACHERS

Do you know a young adult aged 16–25 who

- Is living and growing as a Christian?
- Shows leadership or teaching potential?

Could they become a Young Preacher?

Young Preachers are discerned, accountable and trained.

They must be supported by their vicar/minister and will receive the Bishop's permission to preach up to 4 times per year in their local church.



For more information, speak to your Vicar, Lisa.
lisawigmore66@gmail.com or 0117 9574297

FORGING FRIENDSHIPS

WE ARE a friendly and welcoming bunch of people at St Stephens Church, Soundwell, but friendships and welcome don't have to stop at the church door.

Would you like to forge a friendship and visit someone in their home? Or would you like to welcome a new friend, someone you might already



know from your church, to spend a bit of time with you in your home?

If either of these ideas spark something in you, take your fancy, or it's for you... whatever it is please be in touch!

Every blessing!

Jenny Bishop 07801 989490 or jenannb75@hotmail.com

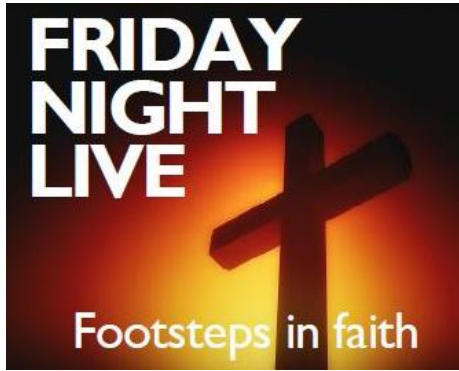
Revd Lisa Wigmore 0117 9574 297 or lisawigmore66@gmail.com

Holy Communion

HOLY Communion is a very important part of Sunday worship, so we want to ensure that everyone who wants to, is able to partake, even if unable to walk to the Altar.

It could be that one Sunday you are feeling unwell or have had an injury that affects your mobility, or even too embarrassed to walk to the altar, but for whatever reason, PLEASE let us know as soon as you arrive at Church.

We already take the bread and wine to several people where they sit in church every week, so it can be made available to YOU also in situ. Talk to Gill Mayo (*our Church Warden*) or alternatively phone before Sunday on 0117 956 9796.



19th APRIL 6.30PM

EXPLORING what life with faith is all about in an hour of getting to know others, through informal song, prayer, and discussions, followed by refreshments afterwards in the Church Room.

Come if you know Jesus, come if you don't, let's grow in footsteps of faith together!



**9 to 11am
TUESDAY 9th APRIL**

**Conversation,
free snacks & refreshments
ALL ARE WELCOME!***

WE also look forward
to seeing you again on
23rd April!

*Please note that under 17s must be
accompanied by an adult).*

* IN OUR CHURCH ROOM

BELOCKED DRAINS...

UNFORTUNATELY, a recent sewage pipe blockage resulted in a very hefty bill for remedial work.

Please would you help to ensure this does not happen again.

THE GUIDELINES ARE:

1. Only flushing toilet paper.
2. Putting anything else in the bin provided.
3. Taking used nappies home.

Thank you!

See & Know



THEY would love grown-up help at their parent and toddler group: to continue helping young families in our Parish know and follow Jesus... ... could you spare half an hour or so on Thursday mornings, to help in school term-time only??

It would include setting up the play equipment in the church hall at 9am, if not every week, then perhaps now and again.

AND/OR could you be part of the See & Know **Team**? If not every week, then perhaps now and again?

This would mean:

- Welcoming children & their carers,
- Chatting with them during the session
- Helping the children do a simple craft.

Sessions run from 10am–11.45am.

We don't want this fabulous Mission Outreach Group to close, because it does so much good in our community.

SO PLEASE CAN YOU HELP??

For more details please chat with:
Sue Humphrey (07 929 404 272) or
Lisa (0117 9574 297).



...so that we can help people who need such items in the Bristol area.

IF SO: PLEASE CONTACT KEVIN
Call or text 07972 00 99 26

or email:

sunsetmissionofhope@yahoo.com

FOOD donations can be made at collection baskets (by the checkouts) at any of the following stores:

Aldi Fishponds Road, Bristol
Lidl Bishopsword, Bristol
Or direct to Kevin.



THANK YOU!

**Sunset Mission
of Hope**

www.sunsetmissionofhope.org.uk

Word for today

MY usually connecting with God routines, begin with a morning chat with the Lord before I even get out of bed!

AS WELL as daily Morning and Evening Prayer, for which I tend to switch between Common Worship and various versions of Celtic Daily Prayer, I also read a bite size of Scripture which comes with a thought for the day, produced by UCB Word for Today, normally as I am munching on my breakfast.

The following is taken from one of my recent 'daily readings'. I found it helpful in thinking about my finances, so I thought I would share it with you!

What the Bible teaches us about money:

'Though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.'
(PSALM 6:10 NIV)

Let's settle it once and for all. If God can trust you with something small, He will trust you with more (see LUKE 16:10, 2 & CORINTHIANS 9:6-11).

BUT His blessings come with certain conditions, and here are four you need to honour.

1) Don't try to claim credit.

God told the Israelites:

'You may say to yourself: 'My hands have produced this wealth for me.'

But remember the Lord... for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth... If you ever forget... you will surely be destroyed'

(DEUTERONOMY 8:17-19 NIV).

2) Don't forget others.

The Bible commands *'those who are rich in this present world...to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds...generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves'*

(1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19 NIV).

3) Don't become arrogant.

Jeremiah admonishes us, *'Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong, of their strength or the rich...of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord.'* (JEREMIAH 9:23-24 NIV).

4) Don't allow anything to take God's place.

'Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, "Who is the Lord?'" (PROVERBS 30:8-9 NIV).

REMEMBER, you don't own anything—you're just an administrator of God's estate and an executor of His will.

It's an awesome responsibility, so make sure you do a good job.

And another one that spoke strongly to me...

Give your worries to God:

"The peace of God...will guard your hearts and minds."

(PHILIPPIANS 4:7 NIV).

WHEN you feel anxious and afraid, here are two things you should do:

1) Find a 'faith friend'.

When anxiety grabs your mind, one of the most powerful ways to break the worry spiral is to disclose it to a 'faith friend'. When Israel went out to occupy the promised land, here is what God said to them:

'Is anyone afraid or fainthearted?'

Let him go home so that his fellow soldiers will not become disheartened too'

(DEUTERONOMY 20:8 NIV).

Pessimism, fright, and discouragement are contagious.

And so is courage!

2) Take action and face your fear.

Sermons about how God will take care of you aren't in and of themselves sufficient to remove anxiety from your life. You must do certain things, like stepping out in trust.

The way to get God's peace from your head to the rest of your body is to trust Him to the point where you can confront your fears head-on.

So, with that in mind:

a) Meditate on passages like Psalm 23; imagine yourself being shepherded by the Lord through green pastures and led beside still waters.

b) Talk to your 'faith friend' before worry gets a foothold in your mind.

c) Use a 'breath prayer' such as, 'God, I'm casting all my cares on You'

d) Exercise; physical exercise is one of the best ways to stop excess adrenaline from building up.

e) Identify your fear and take even one small step towards confronting it, and--

f) Get sufficient rest. David said, *'In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety'* (PSALM 4:8 NIV).

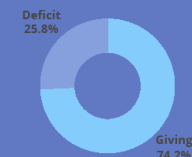
IF you'd like have a daily readings booklet, which chooses passages of Scripture from right across the Bible on every kind of subject, then please do have a word with Lin or phone her on 0117 967 2621.

IF you'd like to know more about giving to God through your Church, then have a chat with Lin, Lorraine 07 858 017 102 or Lisa 0117 957 4297.

Love and prayers. Lisa x

OUR CHURCH FINANCE UPDATE

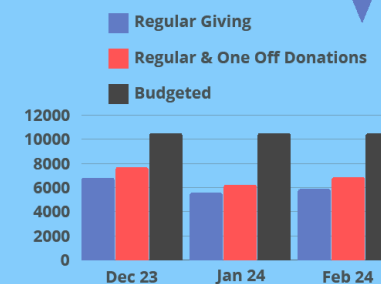
GIVING FOR FEBRUARY



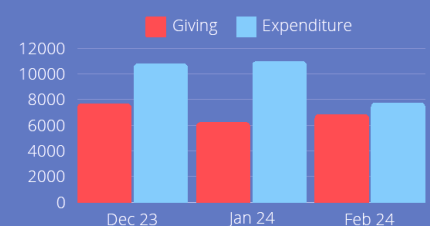
WHAT OUR GIVING NEEDS TO BE £10,500

GIVING RECEIVED £6858

Giving in the last 3 months:



Giving v Church Expenses Last 3 Months





So why should we all care for God's creation?

WHY INDEED!

• Because he asks us to.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. He made us to be part of his creation to serve and protect it.

• Because we are called to love our neighbour.

Especially, those who are weak and vulnerable. We all depend on the land, sea, and sky. So, caring for those things means caring for our neighbours.

• Because Jesus is Lord.

We can share and show his Lordship by caring for this world that he created.

Our brokenness is also the brokenness of the earth and it is for God's love of the whole world that he sent his Son.

God is sustaining and redeeming all of creation and we can come alongside him.

IN 2019 The Diocese of Bristol declared a climate emergency and set a target to achieve Net Zero by 2030.

THE ECO CHURCH scheme provides a framework to support our church and its leaders in taking practical action in caring for God's earth.



Here at St Stephens, we are passionate about looking after God's creation but need your help to do so.

Are you interested in looking after God's creation?

Would you like St Stephens to become an Eco-friendly church?

If you answered yes to the above questions, you could be just the person we are looking for.

We need to make St Stephens an Eco-friendly church, but in order to do this, we would like to find someone/likeminded people to become our Eco Champion/s who can help us look after God's creation and work our way through the Eco Church Scheme with the support of the church community.

If you are interested in becoming an Eco Champion please speak to Lisa, 0117 957 4297.

The PCC of St Stephens

SAFEGUARDING — at St Stephens — AWARENESS COURSE

AS part of making St Stephens a safe and welcoming place for all, you are invited to a session arranged to help us all understand more about what Safeguarding means, and how we can follow Jesus' example by caring for each other the best way we can here at St Stephens.

Saturday 20th April
10AM~12NOON IN CHURCH

BOOK IN ADVANCE ON SIGN UP SHEETS IN CHURCH

THE course will be led by the Parish Safeguarding Officers Peter Robbins and Sarah Fry. Please contact them or any of the Ministry Team to book your place or phone Peter on 0773 036 9112 or Sarah on 0795 293 8180.

Welcomers

WHEN PEOPLE come into Church, especially if it is their first visit, we feel it is important they are given a really warm welcome.

FOR this reason we have a lovely group of people who are there by the door each Sunday morning to do just that.

We would love more people to help us offer this service, on a rotating basis, the more Greeters we have the less duties each person would be required to do, and by the way, if like me you feel the cold, you don't have to stand outside! At present our team are all women so it would be fantastic to have some men join us as well.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Gill Mayo 0117 956 9796.

PLANT SALE 11 MAY 2024



COUNTDOWN to the Plant Sale **2~4pm Saturday 11th May.**

As with previous Plant Sales, your goodwill is appreciated for donations of plants to sell on the day with proceeds going towards St Stephens Church funds.

So now is the time to plant seeds indoors, keep them warm, damp and covered in polythene or cling film until shoots appear.

Also, think about taking cuttings from your house plants and they hopefully will be ready for the sale.

Wanted ASAP: plastic boxes, the larger grape container size only please. Urgently needed.

Thank you! **Gill Mayo**

APRIL CYCLE OF PRAYER *BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK*

07	St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School	Tania Lowe and Alfie Gillett Gill Mayo, Leona and Clive Meares Regan Meares, Julia Merrifield	Pool Road Portland Court Portland Place
14	Kings Oak Academy	Clive Milkins, Carol Millard Holly Miriam, Andrea Monks Margaret Moore	Portland Street Pound Road Prospect Crescent
21	John Cabot Academy	Josie, Tanya & Bradley Morris Carol Murphy, Leanne and Aaliyah Munt Dave Newton	Randall Close Riviera Crescent Rodway View
28	Downend School	Katy, Tom, George & Theo North Gill Ogborne, David Packe, Jan and Dave Parker, Suzanne Parker	Rose Oak Gardens Rudge Close Seymour Road

SUNDAYS: 8am BCP **Holy Communion** on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.
10am **Community Worship Service**

Prayer Ministry is offered after the 10am Service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays or at any other time by request, so do please ask as necessary.

WEDNESDAYS: 10am **Service of Holy Communion**

APRIL DIARY

03	Wednesday	NB: 11am	Coffee/Chat/Company Turnpike Pub (New time)
04	Thursday(s)	2-4pm	Ladies Group in Church Hall (then fortnightly)
06	Saturday	9.30am	Little Church for families with Neuro-diverse members in Church Hall
07	Sunday	10am	Service of the Word - featuring a Play, entitled: Table for 13
08	Monday	10.15am	Retreat Memory Café in Church Hall for Dementia sufferers and their carers
09	Tuesday	9-11am 7.30pm	WELCOME SPACE in Church Room PCC meeting in Church Room
11	Thursday	2-4pm	Men's Group Film/Quiz Night in Church Room (then fortnightly)
12	Friday	1.15-3.45pm	Pensioner's Group in Church Hall (fortnightly)
16	Tuesday(s)	1.30-3.30pm	Knit & Natter resumes, then weekly in Church Room
17	Wednesday	7-9pm	Discipleship Course Group A week 1 in Church
18	Thursday	10-11.45am 2-4pm 7-9pm	See & Know in Church Hall (weekly in term time) Ladies Group in Church Hall (then fortnightly) Discipleship Course Group B week 1 in Church
19	Friday	6.30pm	FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE in Church: informal songs, prayers, discussions followed by refreshments in the Church Room
20	Saturday	10am-12noon	Safeguarding Session in Church
22	Monday	10.15am	Retreat Memory Café in Church Hall for Dementia sufferers and their carers
23	Tuesday	9-11am	WELCOME SPACE in the Church Room
24	Wednesday	7-9pm	Discipleship Course Group A week 2 in Church
25	Thursday	2-4pm 7-9pm	Men's Group in Church Room (then fortnightly) Discipleship Course Group B week 2 in Church
26	Friday	1.15-3.45pm	Pensioner's Group in Church Hall (fortnightly)

MAY DIARY

01	Wednesday	NB: 11am 7-9pm	Coffee/Chat/Company Turnpike Pub Discipleship Course Group A week 3 in Church
02	Thursday(s)	10-11.45am 2-4pm	See & Know in Church Hall (weekly in term time) Ladies Group Birthday Celebration in Church & Church Hall (then fortnightly)
		7-9pm	Discipleship Course Group B week 3 in Church
03	Friday	7-9pm	Outburst Youth Club in Church Hall
04	Saturday	9am-5pm	BRISTOL NOISE Community Project
10	Friday	1.15-3.45pm 7-9pm	Pensioner's Group in Church Hall (fortnightly) Outburst Youth Club in Church Hall
11	Saturday	2-4pm	PLANT SALE & Cream Teas in Church Hall
12	Sunday	6.30pm	Memorial Service in Church

FROM THE REGISTERS

SINCE FEBRUARY

Baptism

● MARCH 03: Ezra Andrew Williams. Please hold Ezra's parents, Charlotte and Tom, her Godparents, Emily, Craig, Gemma and Kristy, and all the family and their friends in your prayers.

Funerals:

● MARCH 12: Maria Neath (61). The celebration of Maria's life was held at St Stephen's Church, Soundwell, followed by the burial at Kingswood Remembrance Park.

Please hold Maria's husband, Tim, their children, Tash, Timmy and Laura, along with all of Maria's family and her many friends in your prayers.



Dial-a-SERMON

Listen to this week's Sermon on your phone:
0117 456 2090
(Cost is the same as a local call)

OR



Click-a-SERMON

Visit our website and use the audio link to listen on-line
<http://saintstephensoundwell.org>

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL



● **Revd Lisa Wigmore**
Vicar, 52 Gladstone Street
Soundwell, Bristol BS16 4RF
Telephone 0117 957 4297



● **Revd Sandy Cooper**
Associate Minister, 1 Deerhurst
Soundwell, Bristol BS15 1XH
Telephone 0117 967 2621



● **Revd Regan Meares**
Priest
Telephone 07769 704270



● **Peter Robbins**
Lay Minister, 13 Wood Road
Kingswood, Bristol BS15 8DT
Telephone 0117 967 9576



● **Gill Mayo**
Church Warden
Telephone 0117 956 9796

