

# Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

NOVEMBER 2021

## Gratitude & Generosity



**WE HAVE** talked often over the last 5 years about being 'Thankful and Grateful' to God.

I BELIEVE, as people of faith, we have a deep-rooted sense of being 'Thankful and Grateful' to God for all he gives us... our families and friends, the various groups and communities to which we belong, his daily provision of all our needs, forgiveness through his Son for the things we and our world gets wrong, and ultimately for our lives – both now and in the world to come – because: *We Follow Jesus.*

But what does being 'Thankful and Grateful' mean? What effect does it have in us and for us? And what type of people does that make us? ...**GENEROUS!**

Being 'Thankful and Grateful' to God for all that He has freely given to us, both in provision for all our needs AND in Jesus... means that we, like Him, become Generous people.

Generous with our time; Generous with our love; Generous in our speaking; Generous in our thinking; Generous in our ways; Generous in sharing what we have.

In other words, we become Generous, just as God is Generous with us. Our gratitude to God overflows into Generosity.

At the end of October and in early November, Sandy and Peter will be speaking to us in Church, and on Dial-a-Sermon, about Gratitude & Generosity, and I want to use some of their words now, to help us think about it at home, while we are reading this – and hopefully in the days and weeks to come.

On Sunday 31st October, we celebrate All the Saints. The Saints seemed to possess a crystal clear view of the personality of God, who God is, and His involvement with humanity. They seemed to readily grasp God's personality:

- ★ In His amazing love God created the whole universe and world order and placed humanity in this beautiful place we call earth;

- ★ He didn't create then go away and forget. No, He had a plan for total on-going commitment and involvement;

- ★ From ages past he planned to actually enter into His own creation, and experience it for Himself, and show us what He is really like in the person of Jesus;

- ★ Not only that, He demonstrated His love by going all the way to the Cross, giving His life to provide the means of salvation and of forgiveness;

- ★ After all of God's action, the Saints had the choice, the step of faith to opening up an intimate relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.

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Open Space  
NOVEMBER 2021



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  
Fair Trade  
One25 Project  
The Bristol Noise

**St Stephens**

Church Road  
Soundwell  
Bristol BS16 4RH  
0117 956 6257

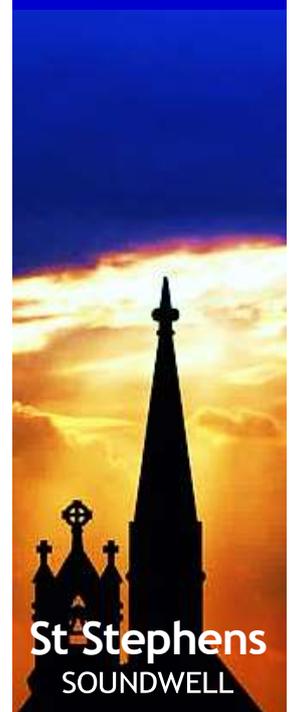
visionatststephens@  
gmail.com

www.saintstephen  
soundwell.org

f saintstephen  
soundwell

@SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER  
1131503



**St Stephens**  
SOUNDWELL

# They're back!

OUR Church Groups have resumed meeting up again following their long absence due to and during, the Covid lock down.

Many groups have changed their meeting time(s), but one that hasn't, is **FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE** which keeps to its third Friday of the month at 6.30pm for an evening of informal and more relaxed and interactive worship.

Shown here are images of some of the creative responses to the theme of the evening – which was taken from a verse in 1 Samuel, of how God looks at the heart of a person, not just the outward appearance.

So 'hearts' was an obvious topic for visual interpretation!



# THANK YOU'S!

WHEN we give from an overflowing response to God's generosity to us, it is often right to do that quietly. This doesn't always make it easy to receive a Thank You, but I hope we know in our hearts that God smiles when we do this.

At Harvest, a total of **£959.95** was collected, which we shared between The Sisters of the Church and Harvest for the Hungry.

Both of these charities, who feed the poorest of the poor in their area of influence, have written to thank us for our generosity, so THANK YOU, for all that you gave.

Lastly a thank you from me, on behalf of the whole Church Community and the Parish for those of you who have given over and above your regular giving to God through your Church.

Thank you for all those one-off donations throughout the year, and those that have begun to appear following the receipt of Fuel Allowances.

**Lisa**



## Christmas Gift Service

AS WE DO each year at St Stephens, part of our regular giving is to those whom the Sisters of the Church support.

This year, our Christmas Gift Service to support them will be on Sunday 5 December.

Envelopes will be available nearer the time.

The Sisters welcome financial gifts so they can buy seasonal food to add to their basic food parcels.

They also welcome gloves, warm scarves, hats and socks and especially toiletry sets.

Please bear in mind they have twice as many men callers as women, so gifts for men are a priority.

# Readings & Collects

## FOR NOVEMBER 2021

FOR THOSE OF US who are not able to attend services or who wish to use the Sunday readings and Collect Prayer to worship at home, here they are:

### SUNDAY 07 NOVEMBER 2021 3rd Sunday before Advent

Isaiah 3: 1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-end;  
Hebrews 9:24-end; Mark 1:14-20

HEAVENLY LORD, you long for the world's salvation: stir us from apathy, restrain us from excess and revive in us new hope that all creation will one day be healed in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2021 Remembrance Sunday

Daniel 12:1-3; Psalm 16;  
Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25;  
Mark 13:1-8



GOD, our refuge and strength, bring near the day when wars shall cease and poverty and pain shall end, that earth may know the peace of heaven through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### SUNDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2021 Christ the King

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Psalm 93;  
Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

GOD THE FATHER, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. Amen.

### SUNDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2021 1st Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-9;  
1 Thessalonians 3:9-end; Luke 21:25-36

ALMIGHTY GOD, as your kingdom dawns, turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness, that we may be ready to meet you in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE information at right, is a new initiative which we intend to include month by month in Open Space, so that we can be open and honest about our finances, and our Gratitude and Generosity to God with and through them.

As I mention in the 'Thank You' section, many of you have been most Generous with additional one-off donations this year, over and above your regular giving.

These are included in the figures – and without them our deficit, or 'in the red' balance, would be so much worse. We would be more financially secure if these came as part of our regular giving, but as the adverts say: 'every little helps'. Thank you!

## More time

Dear Lisa,

AFTER reading your recent article 'About time', in October's Open Space, I came across a verse in a 'St Stephens Standard' from many years ago. I thought it was a good alternative perspective on 'Time'.

Margaret Stawte

## Time is the most precious thing you can give anybody

AT the end of your life, you will NOT regret ever having passed one more test, run one more race, or not making one more deal.

You WILL regret time not spent with a husband, wife, a child, parent or friends.

Give someone your time today, if not a visit, then a phone call or short note, to let them know you are thinking of them.

## PLANT SALE SPRING 2022

WE will be requesting plants for the above next year. It's a long way ahead I know, but **now** is the time to take cuttings, sow biennials, save and dry seeds and later, split perennials. (I have spare pots if required).

Please help us make this a successful event. Gill Mayo

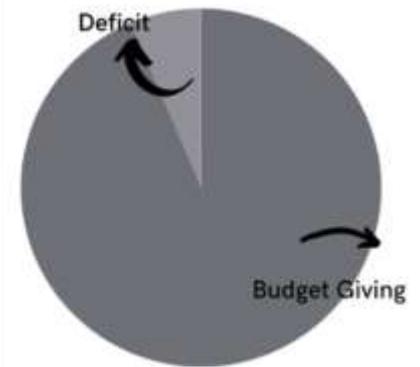
# Your church finance update

## GIVING FOR SEPTEMBER

This is our financial 'Giving to God', through his Church, for the month.

Our aim is not to balance the books (*although the Charity Commission requires that of us*) but to respond to God with an outpouring of gratitude and generosity.

Thank you for your generosity.



## GIVING YEAR TO DATE



**£5083** Average Budgeted monthly giving

**£4766** Average monthly giving

**£5317** Average monthly giving & one-off donations

## SEPTEMBER GIVING VERSUS EXPENSES



## NOVEMBER CYCLE OF PRAYER BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK

07 Kingswood Court Care Home	Nicola, Andy, Amelia & Erin Read Ruth Redler Sarah, Mark, Layla & Lauren Reid	Leicester Square Middle Road Midland Road
14 Welcomers & sidepersons	Colin and Tessa Rice, Peter Robbins Monica Robinson, Carole Rockliffe Sandra Rosser	Morley Close Morley Place Morley Road
21 Prayer Ministry Team	Kerrie, Kevin, Kaiden & Kolby Rowland Lorraine and Paul Sanderson Marianne Saunders, Anne Scott	Mulberry Gardens Mulberry Grove Narrow Lane
28 Those sharing in Home Communion	Jayne, Chris & Phoebe Selway Carolyn, Martin, Abbi & Jess Smith Louise, David, Owen & Rhys Stanton	Neville Road North View Nymphsfield

**SUNDAY Community Worship Service at 10am**  
**WEDNESDAY Service of Holy Communion at 10am.**  
*Sunday 8am BCP Holy Communion on 1st and 3rd Sundays.*

## DIARY

### NOVEMBER

05 Friday	1.15-3.45pm 7-9pm	Pensioner's Group in Church Hall then fortnightly Outburst Youth Church in Church Hall (Monthly first Friday of the month)
09 Tuesday(s)	1.30-3.30pm	Knit & Natter weekly in the Church Room*
11 Thursday(s)	10-11.45am 2-4pm 7.30-9.30pm	See & Know weekly in Church Hall Ladies Group in Church Hall then fortnightly Men's Group in Church Room* then fortnightly
14 Sunday	10am	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE
19 Friday	6.30pm	FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE in Church

### DECEMBER

04 Saturday	2-4pm	CHRISTMAS FAYRE in Church Hall and elsewhere!
05 Sunday	10am	GIFT SERVICE in Church

\* access to the Church Room is via Church only

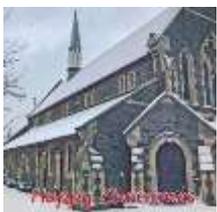
## Christmas Cards

WE HAVE 3 different Christmas Cards on sale this year, so that you don't have to go hunting the shops for the right cards to give your family and friends – we have them right here for you!

2 new designs for this year are:



Or you can choose the same great design we had last year:



The price is the same as last year: £4.99 for 10 cards with envelopes.

## Calendars

WE will also have 2022 Calendars to buy - this year with small boxes by each day to make notes on important dates easier.

The cost of these will also be held the same as last year at £7.50 per calendar. BUT all the photos will be new and fresh for a new year!

## Christmas Cards to the Parish

THESE, along with flyers which will advertise our Christmas Fayre, will need to be delivered to homes in our Parish before Saturday 4 December.

Therefore they will be ready to deliver around the middle of November, to allow us all to do this.

PLEASE do take some cards to deliver to the families of Soundwell. Thank you for your Generosity and Leg-work in doing this!

*Every blessing. Lisa*

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### SINCE SEPTEMBER

## Baptisms

- October 03: **Gracie-Mae Jefferies.** Please hold; Mum and Dad, Hayley and Neil; Gracie-Mae's Godparents; and all the family in your prayers.
- October 17: **Austin Robin Hawkins.** Please hold; Mum and Dad, Emily-Jane and Matt; Austin's Godparents; and all the family in your prayers.
- October 24: **Isabella Kalyani Millar.** Please hold; Mum and Dad, Sangeeta and Ben; Isabella's Godparents; and all the family in your prayers.

## Funerals

October 26: **Denis John Melling (88).** The celebration of Denis' life was held at Westerleigh Crematorium. Please hold his wife, Barbara, children, Paula and Peter, their families and the wider family, as well as Denis' friends and neighbours 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 Deerpark  
 Soundwell, Bristol BS15 1XH  
 Telephone 0117 967 2621



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



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



# GRATITUDE & GENEROSITY

< *Continued from page 1*

This meant giving God first place in their lives and letting Him walk beside them even in the toughest of times;

★ And He assured them that this was just the beginning... because there was a whole eternity with God to enjoy.

THE Saints discovered so much about our amazing God. Their gratitude just poured out through their lives.

The Saints are there to remind us and call us back to our first love, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

And Jesus calls us to do likewise. But what does that look like?

- Overflowing gratitude to God.
- Reset our attitude to be God focused.
- Listen to where He is calling us.
- Learn to ask once more 'How can I help you, Lord?'
- Learn to be Generous to the Lord's work once more.
- Remember 'all things come from you, and of your own do we give you.'

GOD has placed us here in this family... He has called us here.

He has provided for our Church, St Stephens, through the generosity and vision of the Saints of Soundwell in years past.

But we don't just live on the past Generosity of those who have gone before us. No, we have a calling and a duty to honour our faithful God with our faithful response of Generosity in our time.

We are now the Saints of the present to continue that care and stewardship.

Peter reminds us that the disciples were incredibly Generous: they were simple fishermen who Jesus called to follow Him in His mission and ministry, and they did!

But follow him into what? They could not have known what lay before them, what this act of Generosity on their part would really mean for them, but they did it all



the same. They simply and without hesitation responded to Jesus' call, they responded Generously with all that they really had, which was themselves.

So why would we call their choice to leave their simple but stable life-style to follow this obscure itinerant preacher 'Generous'?

Well if you think about it, it was the ultimate in Generosity.

They gave up everything they had, which wasn't much in the first place, in order to devote their time and energy, their lives, to Jesus.

It was a huge act of Generosity in response to Jesus' call.

They became an essential part of the core group of Jesus' disciples. Without their Generosity of committing their lives to Jesus, the disciples could not have been the instrument through which the Church began, and with it the spread of Jesus' message of Generosity.

For, if you think about it, all of Jesus' teaching about forgiveness, loving each other, (including our enemies), his sacrifice for our salvation is, in essence, all about Generosity.

And as the prophet Isaiah reminds us, quite bluntly, '*Tell the innocent how fortunate they are, for they shall eat the fruit of their labours*', which means, that all things are the result of God's gifts to us... we can take nothing for granted.

In other words, if we are fortunate enough to gain from our work, even hard work, that gain is still ultimately a gift from God. If we lose sight of that and believe solely in our own ability to create and own things, then we are not honouring the Lord, from whom all things come.

So, Isaiah reminds us, quite forcefully, that all that we have comes from the Generosity of God. We can honour His gifts to us through our Generosity to each other, and to our Church.

Your Church, which is not just me, or the ministry team, but all of us as the Body of Christ in this place, are called to make Christ known and loved. To do that, here in Soundwell, in all the places we spend time, and also in reaching out to support others in need wherever that might be... that work does cost money.

Some of the costs are obvious to see, like heat and light in the Church and the maintenance of the buildings. Other costs like paying our 'Parish Share', means clergy are recruited, trained and provided to parishes, along with essential ongoing training and resources that our Church needs to keep itself fresh, relevant – and growing.

This building was paid for by our forebears many years ago. It is only still here today, because it has been carefully maintained by generations of faithful Christians here in Soundwell. Without our Generosity, the Church collapses. And with it, all the amazing work the Holy Spirit enables us to do in the Lord's name here, and further afield.

There are many ways to Give to God through your Church. You can put money into the plates at the back of Church or use the QR code displayed around Church to give using a smart phone.

To enable us to budget and be secure in the knowledge we can pay our bills, we highly commend the first of these 2 following options:

1) Through the **Parish Giving Scheme** (PGS), which is a direct debit from your bank each month. So, no scrabbling for cash or needing to remember it on Sunday!

2) Requesting **Special Collection Envelopes**, so you can enclose your donation every week and just take them all to Church when you can.

For more details regarding the above, please contact Lorraine Sanderson on 0117 940 1829 or else Lin and Sandy Cooper on 0117 967 2621.

*Continued overleaf>*

# GRATITUDE & GENEROSITY

< *Continued from page 3*

But, just as our promises from God, through the suffering of Jesus on the Cross, mean that we have life eternal... we can also choose to leave a Legacy to our Church.

This means that our giving goes on, and the Church community and the surrounding Parish benefit from our Giving to God through His Church, after we have met Him face to face in Glory.

A Legacy leaflet is included with this issue of Open Space to help you consider this.

If you would like to talk personally about the theology of Giving to God through your Church, then please do seek out either Sandy, Peter or myself.

Our aim is not necessarily to balance the books (although the Charity Commission does require that of us) but to respond to God's love for us, with an outpouring of gratitude and Generosity.

**Lisa**



## In Flanders fields

BY JOHN McCRAE

*IN Flanders fields the poppies blow  
between the crosses, row on row,  
that mark our place; and in the sky  
the larks, still bravely singing, fly  
scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
loved and were loved, and now we  
lie, in Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
to you from failing hands we throw  
the torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
we shall not sleep, though poppies  
grow—in Flanders fields.*



## 100 years of Royal British Legion



IN 2021, The Royal British Legion is celebrating the anniversary of its 100th year of existence, and the constant work that it does has been made possible over time, by people's repeated generosity, and especially at this time of year via their annual Poppy appeal.

The 'buying of a poppy' gives an opportunity for everyone to express their gratitude for the sacrifices of life and limb, made by past, and even present, service personnel performing their duty in harm's way, in any of the many conflicts that have and still beset our world, think of Afghanistan for instance.

Our generosity of donation, goes towards supporting those survivors of conflict, who have been injured in one way or another and who need some form of support for their day to day living.

Wars occur for a variety of reasons and mostly for the wrong ones.

Often wars are fought for conquest, such as over disputed territory, per-

haps, usually to obtain resources to be plundered from another nation, the complete opposite motivations to generosity and gratitude.

Battles are fought for such things as to wrest energy supplies, such as oil, or to obtain food producing areas, or obtain advantage for selfish gain, or because of historical mistrust or hatreds, disputes and any other number of negative calls.

When wars finish, and hostilities cease, there are always victims that need our support, not just those that fought in them.

And so it is the generosity of others that help to remedy these situations via charitable giving to any number of non-government organisations who rely totally on public sympathy.

And of course there remain many ongoing tragedies that occur from natural disasters, such as flooding, earthquakes, hurricanes, or other environmental disasters such as forest fires, landslips, and so on.

May you feel the blessing and benefit of being generous with your financial giving, but also – not to neglect the giving of your time and talents to those around you – your friends, your family, neighbours and community.