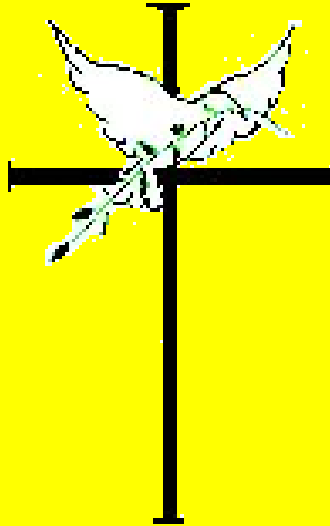


The

Messenger

STAFFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

The Green, Bailey Street, Stafford

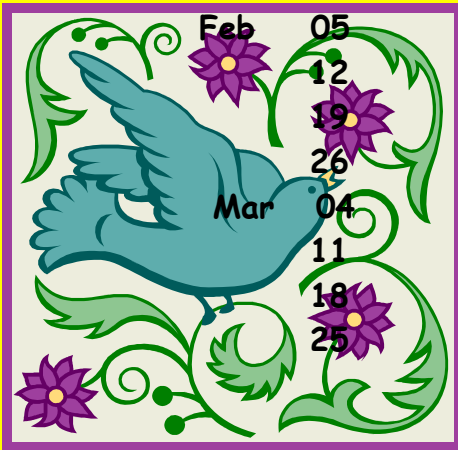


February - March 2012

welcoming Teams

		<i>am</i>	<i>am</i>		<i>pm</i>
February	05	Eslyn	Claire		Cliff
	12	Shirley	Nigel		
	19	Linda	Derek		
	26	Connie	Rita		
March	04	Richard J	Syd		Bryan
	11	Eslyn	Claire		
	18	Shirley	Nigel		
	25	Linda	Derek		

Flower Rota



Betty W
 Erika Muller
 Libby Davies
 Jean Jervis
 Rita Perring
 Penny & John Jarman
 Gloria Knight
 Becky, Chris, Adam Jones

Women's Fellowship

Feb

March

2nd	Miss P Clarke	1st	Mr J Haymore
9th	Members Own	8th	Members Own
16th	Mrs M Logan	15th	Lunch
23rd	Mrs P Hopkinson	22nd	Mrs G Woodward
		29th	Mr R Fullerwood

Dear Friends,



It's good to be in Stafford!

Thank you for your warm, generous and open-hearted welcome, as we moved house just before Christmas and as I officially took up post as your minister on 21st January. It is with a deep sense of God's calling that Sandra and I come to Stafford. It's been a pleasure getting to know you in these past weeks; although I have to confess that I've forgotten more names than I've remembered, so please forgive me if I have to ask you a second or even third time!

God remembers our names, and he has his purposes for each of us as his person, and for all of us together as his people. I hope, with me, that you're looking forward to exploring God's vision and to taking up the roles he sets before us.

In these early weeks I see my role as listening, and hopefully hearing. Listening with one ear to you, the people of Stafford Baptist Church; listening with one ear to the town and community around us; and listening with both ears to God. Please join me in the listening, and let's help each other with the hearing. Just how does God want us to be his people, as a town centre church, in 2012?

Our new banners give us a key text: ***In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths.*** [Proverbs 3:6]

In addition to the welcome I've received here, it's been great meeting folk from the other churches. I've received a warm welcome as the new boy in town, and it's been a wonderful encouragement to feel the depth of regard that the Christian community of Stafford has for The Green.

There are exciting and challenging opportunities ahead for The Green and for the town. God is at work amongst and through his people.

It's good to be in Stafford!

Ron.



Secretary's Report - 2011.

It is difficult to believe that another twelve months has passed and that I am writing the report for 2011. It has been very much a year of ups and downs, but the 'ups' have won the day and we are finishing the year on a high note.

The year started with a Vision Day, that was led by our Area Ministers, Keith Judson and Andrew Millns. We were invited to look ahead, to try to see where we were going, were we ready to move on? We divided into groups to discuss where we were at the present and to seek a path for the future. There were differing opinions but a general desire to move on.

In the early part of the year we were able to upgrade the on-suite facility at the Manse, and a team of workers decorated right through. We were delighted that tenants moved in to the Manse in February for six months.

In March we welcomed Val Chakrabarti on to the Diaconate for the first time and Charles, Kay and Andrew Yearwood were re-elected as Deacons. We then began to put together a Church Profile for submission to HEBA, which was approved by a Church meeting in April.

In May, our Treasurer, Maureen lost a long fight against cancer. She had been diagnosed many months before, and there were hopeful signs earlier in the year, but sadly she became very ill and although she managed a trip to Spain, it was obvious that time was running out. We miss her - her bubbly personality and her sense of humour, but above all - her strong faith. Deacons meetings are much quieter. She is safe now and we thank God for her life and witness.

Our Church Anniversary was led by one of our Area Ministers, Keith Judson, and when the Deacons met him after the service he agreed that we could begin the process of seeking a new Minister. The Deacons met Ron Davis and he was invited to preach not just once but twice, and then in September he accepted a call to the ministry at The Green. The wait was over. He would commence his ministry in January 2012 and we gave thanks to God for his guidance.

We have to thank God for his goodness towards us during the good times and the bad. During the whole of the year the work has continued, and we give thanks to all those who have helped in any way to further the work and witness, and we would especially thank those who have led worship each week. At no time during the year did any of the organisations suffer. Friends Together continued to meet each month for food and fellowship. The Women's Fellowship met weekly for their time together, and listened to a variety of speakers. Sticky Fingers thrives - can you help? Our Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association Company is doing well and numbers are increasing. First Tuesday Coffee mornings are well attended and much has been raised for

charity. Joint Ventures have arranged a number of events, that have been very well supported.(I wonder if the bird on the coach has found its way home from Southport yet?) A small group meet for prayer on Thursday lunchtime and the House Groups have been meeting again.

We have continued to financially support the work of the BMS and Home Mission and have also given to other causes where possible. The Christmas Appeal for children and young people (through Social Services) raised over £600.

At the November Church meeting Margaret Hennessey was appointed as Church Treasurer, and we are grateful that she has agreed to serve in this way.

I would like to thank all who have helped and offered support during the last twelve months, particularly family and friends. The Deacons are also grateful for all the support and encouragement given to them.

Finally, we have to acknowledge the help given to us by our Moderator, Howard Jones. He has been with us in everything that has been done during the last year. He guided us through the preparation of the Profile, and indeed practically re-wrote it. He advised us over the questions we should ask Ron when he met the Deacons and has supported and encouraged us in his own inimitable way. Thank you Howard. And so the future beckons. Ron and Sandra have arrived and are eager to begin work. May God continue to bless us and our new Minister as we look forward to the coming year together. May I close with these words:-

Christ has many tasks for us. Some are easy; others are difficult.
Some bring honour; others bring reproach.
Some are to our liking, and coincide with our own inclinations, and are
in our immediate best interest;
some are just the opposite.
In some we may please Christ
and please ourselves;
in others we cannot please Christ
except by denying ourselves.
Yet the power to take on all of these
Is most definitely given us in Jesus;
for it is He who strengthens us,
and comes to help us when we are weak.

May God give us all a clear understanding of His word as we enter 2012.

Bryan



"Thanks"

Hello all, It's January again where did 2011 go to. Thought I would give you an update on PEPE. In 2011 you were very generous again and the total number of boxes you helped to fill and post came to 40. This as ever is overwhelming and I can't thank you enough. Our regular updates from PEPE show just how grateful they are too. As ever I still have many more boxes filled and taking up space in various rooms of my home so if I can ask you to continue the good work and pass on any loose change you might find lurking at the bottom of your handbags or pockets it would be fabulous to see if we can match last years total. A box at the moment costs around £14 to post so any money you can give no matter how small will always be gladly received. It gives me a great thrill to find I have collected enough money to take a trip to the post office. The staff at the post office know me now and don't even need me to tell them why I am there. In addition to this I have had many an interesting conversation with the checkout staff at Tesco when they see 20 toothbrushes in my shopping basket, they always ask why I need them. One gentleman refers to me as the toothbrush lady when he sees me (I struggle to find that a compliment, but it does prove he remembers the good work that is going on) So once again thank you and may God continue to Bless us all in this very valuable work.

Linda

A big thank-you to everyone who so generously gave to the Christmas Children's Appeal. The grand total has since risen to £645.20 with £25.20 carried over to Christmas 2012. Nina Prigmore from Social Services was completely overwhelmed with such a fantastic amount, resulting in 31 vouchers of £20 each. She would like to keep in touch during the year to let us know just what a difference these vouchers make to the children, and teenagers in their care.

Claire Oakley



"Gossip Column"

THANKS:

Friends,
I just want to thank you all for your cards and visits whilst I was in hospital. A special thank you for your prayers which were a great support to both Syd and myself.

God bless.

Rose.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Wednesday 1st February	Friends Together
Tuesday 7th February	Coffee Morning at 20A Lichfield Road in aid of Stafford Branch of Parkinson's UK
Saturday 25th February	Joint Ventures Skittle Evening at Derrington Village Hall
Tuesday 6th March	Coffee Morning at 20A Lichfield Road in aid of Operation Agri
Wednesday 7th March	Friends Together
Wednesday 14th March	Church Meeting and AGM

Details of all CTSD Events are on the Notice Board in the Foyer

STAFFORD BAPTIST CHURCH
JOINT VENTURES

Saturday 25th February - 7:00 pm
at Derrington Village Hall
“SKITTLES GOES ELECTRONIC”



**Come and join us for some fun and
fellowship.**

Supper choice as usual.

**Tickets available from the Joint
Ventures Team**

Prices according to meal chosen!!

HEBA EVENTS 2012

- **Friendship First** 26th February at Edward Road Baptist Church, Birmingham, led by Steve Bell
- **Michael Roberts Concert** 28th January at New Life Baptist Church, Kings Heath. Free entry.
- **MINISTERS' CONFERENCE** Monday 20th – Wednesday 22nd February. The Hayes Conference centre, Swanwick.
- **DEEPER 2012** 5, 6, 7th March 2012 at Castle Hill Baptist Church, Warwick with Krish Kandiah, Evangelical Alliance. Paradoxology: worshipping the God we don't always understand.
- **First Steps Evangelism** 10th March – Training Day at Newcastle under Lyme Baptist Church with Adrian Argile and Jon Turner.
- **Prophetic Voices** 19th May at BMS International Mission Centre with Roy Searl and Stuart Murray Williams.
- **Jamaica Baptist Union Ministers visit** 12th – 14th May at three venues in the HEBA Region. This team of much sought-after speakers includes Revd Karl Johnson (General Secretary), Revd Karl Henlin (Former President), Revd Dr Glenroy Lalor (Incoming President), and Revd Merlyn Hyde-Riley (Associate General Secretary).

What Valentine Can I Give Him?

What can I give to Jesus
On this special Valentine's Day?
How can I tell Him I'll love Him,
And follow Him, come what may?

How can I show I need Him?
Should I send a red heart, with lace?
How can I thank Him enough
For his sacrifice, love and grace?

What Valentine can I give Him,
My adoration to impart?
I'll give to Him what He wants most;
I'll yield to Him my heart.

Churches Together Stafford & District

Job opportunity at Lichfield Cathedral Book and Gift Shop - Do you know anyone who may be interested? More details and an application form on the cathedral website. www.lichfield-cathedral.org or telephone 01543 306150

Saturday 4th February

7.30am - 8.30am Dawn Patrol - Town Prayer meeting. Everyone is welcome

Led by Lawrence Siaw, Sandon Road Baptist Church

Tuesday 14th Feb, 13th March 7 - 9 pm Prayer For Persecuted Christians at Highfields

Christian Centre Full Gospel Church, Milton Grove, STAFFORD ST17 9TR. Using material from Open Doors, Barnabas and CSW. Join with us to pray God will strengthen the Church around the world. For further information please contact Neville & Anna Brownsey Tel: 01785-255963.

Monday 27th February

Start the Lent Course
Mark Powley, writer of 'Consumer Detox' on which the course will be based, is able to join us to introduce the first session.

Opening Session: Monday 27th February, Trinity United Church, 7.15 for 7.30pm. To be led by Mark Powley.

Closing Session: Tuesday 3rd April, Doxey Church, 7.15 for 7.30pm.

Wednesday 29th February

The John Young Foundation are holding a Study/Meditation Day
CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY IN ART AND LITERATURE, led by Dr Jane Gledhill at St.

Mary's Abbey, Colwich (nr Stafford). 10.00am - 3.30pm.
Cost: £15.00 includes Soup, Coffee/Tea etc, for Booking Form please see Web site: www.johnyoungfoundation.org.uk or contact the office on Stafford 258428, or 131-141 North Walls, Stafford, ST16 3AD

Friday 2nd March

Women's World Day of Prayer
Trinity Church, Town Centre
starting at 2.00pm

Speaker Reverend Mandy
Walker

(Choir practice at Trinity,
10.30am every Friday from 27th
January until the event -
everyone welcome)

For further details contact
Linda Penn 01785 660989

Saturday 3rd March

7.30am - 8.30am Dawn Patrol -
Town Prayer meeting. Everyone
is welcome

Led by Lawrence Siaw, Sandon
Road Baptist Church

Friday 23rd March

Church Leaders lunch at Trinity
Church 12.30pm with Jeremy
Lefroy.

Please encourage your leaders
to join us.

THE BACK PEW - *Jeff LARSON*



1 Timothy 6:6-10 Love of money causes
all kinds of trouble.. serving God makes
you truly rich.

First Tuesday Coffee Morning

Eleri Holmes, a member of staff at Greenhall Nursery, came to the October coffee morning to tell us about her work. She spoke with enthusiasm and her commitment to the children shone through all she said. Eleri showed us photographs of some of the children and these helped us to feel a connection with them.

Greenhall Nursery first opened in 1969 and is now in purpose built premises in Second Avenue. It caters for 35 children at a time, grouped into three classes according to their disability. Children attend from the ages of 2 to 5. Some of them are very poorly. The nursery does receive Government funding but 95% of it goes on paying bills and staff.

There is a hydrotherapy pool and a physio on site. Activities are arranged for the children, sometimes away from the nursery. The children have lots of play equipment. Fund raising has helped to provide a sensory room, mini-bus, an adapted barge at Cheddleton, a sensory garden, specially adapted tricycles and a toy library.

A lunch time “school for parents” takes place twice a week where anyone can come along for help and advice. People often chat with each other as they are sharing similar experiences and difficulties.

Eleri summed up her motivation by saying that her aim is for each child to go home happy at the end of the day. We were impressed by her and what she had to tell us and felt sure that the money we raised that day would be put to very good use.

John Hamore is a neighbour of the family who host the Coffee Mornings. He used to serve as a Coldstream Guardsman. John is now very involved with the Coldstream Guards Association, the chosen good cause for Novembers’ Coffee Morning.

He told us that one of the practical activities he has been involved with for some time now is visiting wounded troops in the Selly Oak Hospital. John takes with him what he describes as biscuits and “comfort food” for patients. He will continue these regular visits to Selly Oak until the hospital closes and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham takes over the care of the wounded troops. Many of the soldiers will have received dreadful injuries from I.E.D. (Improvised Explosive Devices) while on duty in Afghanistan. Some of them are amputees. A friend of John’s recently lost both legs through one of these explosions.

John told us that something of great importance to the Coldstream Guards Association is their support for B.L.E.S.M.A. (The British Limbless

Ex-Service Men's Association), which works directly with all forces, men and women, who have lost their limbs, or the use of their limbs, or who lose eyes, or the sight of an eye while involved in the service of this country. The work will start out with rehabilitation with the aim of proving that there is life after amputation. There is an emphasis on amputees helping each other because of the special understanding their experience has given them. B.L.E.S.M.A. offers life-long welfare support. Members of the Coldstream Guards Association raise money in various ways. One of their plans for this year is a sponsored walk of 73 miles along the Caledonian Canal. Fund raising is getting more difficult. John expressed his thanks for the welcome financial contribution from the Coffee Morning.

December's charity "Action for Children" first began in the 19th century as the National Children's Homes and was founded by Methodists as a way of responding to the needs of neglected children. Over the years the scope of the work expanded to such an extent that its new name seems much more appropriate.

Elaine, a worker with the charity, came across from Birmingham to the Coffee Morning. She gave us a quick overview of some of their 500 projects. Just a few she mentioned are support services for disabled children and their parents, providing safe places to play, helping young people leaving care, parenting classes, fostering and adoption. Elaine then gave us a more detailed account of their involvement with one young woman called Louise. After a dreadful childhood she was a young single mother, devoted to her daughter but utterly unable to cope properly as a parent. Louise dreaded any contact with Social Services because she believed that her daughter would be taken into care. She kept away from anyone who represented "authority". Louise struggled on for 5 years. By this time she was so disheartened and depressed that she was not providing her little girl with enough to eat. Her daughter began stealing sugar from the tables of local café because she was so hungry. Because of this Louise finally came to the attention of Social Services and this proved to be the beginning of a transformation. She was sent to an Action for Children Centre. There she found, not the condemnation she had always feared, but instead "an army of people who cared". She knew that she had so much to learn and took advantage of all the help on offer. Thanks to the support of Action for Children, Louise is becoming the kind of mother she always wanted to be.

Hazel Hollis



BMS *world news*

Magnifying God, multiplying people

A new BMS-supported course in India is following the example of Jesus' ministry on earth as it trains and supports Christian leaders in Kolkata.

Benjamin Francis, BMS associate regional team leader for India, talks about the course, saying, "It's application-based training – looking at what they are doing. Then we will take their disciples and teach them evangelising the lost, building believers, equipping workers and multiplying the shepherds."

Benjamin explains that the course is based on Jesus' strategy of discipleship: how he spent most of the first phase of his ministry simply being with his followers, and then, in the next phase, performed many miracles and sent his disciples out. He explains, "We have about 20 leaders at the moment, then we will equip their disciples. This coming Christmas they are going to do some outreach ministry. When the ministry grows, we will pick up their workers and support them."

Benjamin also speaks about the impact of the BMS-funded boat, which is sent out by Big Life Ministries. It has been reaching villages in the Sunderbans region since the start of 2011. "At this point

over 50 new villages have been touched because of the boat. By the end of this year, we should have been to somewhere around 100 villages. The boat is a catalyst and, through it, we see the Lord glorified and magnified." The evangelism work is carried out by Indian church planters and is boosted on occasions by teams sent by other organisations, including BMS.

"By the time they were leaving people came and talked to our planter and said, 'One of our planters spoke of baptism – can we do that today?' This is just the first day of evangelism. And this actually shakes me up. Wow, what just happened, I have no clue. But I know God is at work."

BMS is also supporting Big Life Ministries workers in other regions of India, including church planters in Orissa, a state where many Christians face persecution for their faith.



Feb/March

Wed - 01 Feb	11.00AM Friends Together
Sun - 05	10.30AM Morning Worship 6.30PM Evening Communion
Mon - 06	7.30PM Deacons Meeting
Tues - 07	10.00AM Coffee Morning 20A Lichfield Road
Sun - 12	10.30AM Morning Worship
Sun - 19	10.30AM Morning Worship Communion
Mon - 20	7.30PM Deacons Prayer Meeting
Sat - 25	7.00PM Joint Ventures Skittles Evening - Derrington
Sun - 26	10.30AM Missionary Sunday
Sun - 04 Mar	10.30AM Morning Worship 6.30PM Evening Communion
Mon - 05	7.30PM Deacons Meeting
Tues - 06	10.00AM Coffee Morning 20A Lichfield Road
Wed - 07	11.00AM Friends Together
Sun - 11	10.30AM Morning Worship
Wed - 14	7.30PM AGM Church Meeting
Sun - 18	10.30AM Morning Worship Communion
Mon - 19	7.30PM Deacons Prayer Meeting
Sun - 25	10.30AM Morning Worship

For further dates please see the weekly news-sheet

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**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
EVERY SUNDAY at 10.30 AM
& 6.30 PM on the first Sunday of the month**

Full youth & children's programme every Sunday morning

Communion Services every 1st Sunday evening & 3rd Sunday morning

**BIBLE STUDY HOUSE
GROUPS**

Please telephone 01785 612039 for
information

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Weekly on Thursday at 2.15 pm

**'STICKY FINGERS'
(parents and under 5's)**

Tues & Thurs 10.00 to 11.30 am

**FRIENDS TOGETHER
(over 55's)**

Monthly on first Wednesday 11.00 am to
3.00 pm

**Boys' Brigade and Girls'
Association**

Thursday at 6.30 pm

**1st Tuesday Coffee
Morning**

Monthly at 20A Lichfield Road on the first
Tuesday at 10.00 am