

February 2025

Surface



Happy February!

I might be in the minority, but I absolutely love February! It tends to be a transition month from cold and dark weather to brighter and warmer weather. Talking of brighter we go from roughly 9 hours of daylight at the beginning of February to almost 11 hours of daylight by the end – 2 whole extra hours of daylight each day. That daylight wakes up our gardens and during February we will be seeing snow drops and daffodils come into bloom. We will also be seeing the first lambs being born and birds starting to nest. It's still winter but it will soon be spring.

We are so fortunate here in the Weald to see the beauty of God's creation all around us and the effect of the changing weather on nature. The fields and hedges will soon be starting to turn green and new shoots will begin to emerge.

February is a time of new beginnings, a time of fresh starts, of new life. The name of the month comes from the Roman festival of purification "Februa" – this was a month-long observation of purification and preparation for the new farming year. It was a time when individuals and whole cities purified and cleaned themselves – so next time someone asks, you can tell them that it was the Romans that invented spring cleaning!

In Christian tradition we usually see Pancake Day and Ash Wednesday fall in February, both of those events are also related to getting ready, to preparation, new starts and spiritual cleanliness. This year as Easter is very late, they and the start of Lent fall into the first week of March. This means that this year we'll have two months to get ready instead of one!

February also sees the first half-term of the year a chance to spend time together as families perhaps or even go away for a few days.

We all love a fresh start – whether it's starting a new book, or a craft project, or a lego model, or getting a new car, or getting new furniture or something more fundamental like starting a new job or moving to a new house. As a Christian I believe that I get a fresh start every day, I acknowledge what I got wrong yesterday, I pray for forgiveness and I know that I am forgiven, I am loved, I am blessed. I know that my forgiveness was paid for at a great price. As it says in Psalm 86:5 "O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help". I'm so grateful that I can start again.

Lastly, one of the other reasons I like February so much is that it's the month of my birthday! So Happy February! Enjoy the extra day light! Maybe it's time for you to make a fresh start!

Peter Brook, Church Leader

Considerate Parking

Please, please, please can we ask that you do not park on the pavement or block (even partially) our neighbours drives. It makes it impossible for those with buggies or wheelchairs to use the pavement, forcing them out into the road, which is unsafe.

As our neighbour highlighted, this seems to occur if people are arriving late. We would prefer you arrive later having parked considerately than the present situation.

One possible reason people are parking on the pavement is concern for their vehicle. Traffic cones are available which can be placed at the front and back of the vehicles parked on the road should you wish to use them. Please ensure these are returned to the foyer after use. Thank you.

Church Suite

As has been previously mentioned, we have been exploring moving the church onto a cloud based administration system called Church Suite. This system is used by many other churches throughout the country who have found it helpful for communication. In preparation for this I have already uploaded the current information I have about members and regular Sunday attendees. Over the next week or so, if you have an email address, and are a member or regular Sunday service attendee you will receive an email with an invitation to set up a password on your personal account. Once this is done you can then confirm and/or amend the details we hold about you (and if relevant) those of your children. The settings shown are as you have previously agreed to, however there are some new ones too. Some of these are part of the system e.g. currently we do not use SMS texts to message the church but this is an inbuilt facility in the system and it cannot be removed. So whilst we do not envisage currently using it, as time goes by we may wish to, so it is your decision whether you would like receive communications in this way in the future. I have also added a facility to add an emergency contact. Whilst this is not a requirement should you become ill at church it would be helpful to have a way of contacting a member of your family, other than your spouse especially if I do not already have their details. You can also download an App "My Church Suite" to your mobile phone to update your details through. In the section on "log in and privacy" you can choose whether others in the church can see your contact details inside My Church Suite. Currently the default is blank which means people can only see your name. if you think you would like to be able to see other people's details then please remember they might wish to see yours too, in which case you might want to tick the relevant boxes. The system is simpler to use than it sounds and moving forward we are hoping to develop how we use it but the first step is to get everyone to confirm their details. If you have any concerns or would like me to assist you in getting your account set up, please speak, email or text me and we can arrange a suitable time to do this. Thank you

Maggie

Surface Deadline For inclusion in the March edition of Surface Magazine - Please send all copy to Kate M by **Thursday 23th February**. If you no longer wish to receive this magazine, please contact the church administrator to **unsubscribe** *Thank you*



THE SHEPHERD'S
PANTRY

COMMUNITY FRIDGE

A selection of shop surplus food is available to be shared by the local community who in turn, share garden produce or larder excess.

Any private donations, intended as urgent food support, are used to fulfil that purpose discreetly.



Located at:	Tuesdays	12:30 to 16:00
Staplehurst Free Church	Wednesdays	9:00 to 11:00
Station Road	Thursdays	9:00 to 16:00
TN12 0QQ	Saturdays	9:00 to 11:00

   01580 893993
Station Rd, Staplehurst, TN12 0QQ
contactus@staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1127205



The next meeting of
Friends Together
will be
Tuesday 11th February
10am to midday - All welcome



Filling Station

Filling Station will meet on **Wednesday 19th February at Staplehurst Free Church**. The session will be led by Graham Kendrick. Come at 7pm for refreshments before a 7:30pm start.



Fridays 6 - 7:30pm
Fortnightly on the 2nd & 4th
Friday

Join us for fun, food, laughter and a chance to wind down at the end of a school week!
Key Stages 3 & 4
Term time only

28th February - only one session
this month due to half term!

All Age Connection - Family Church

Just a reminder that the decision has been made to **change the All Age Connection/Family Church to the second Sunday in the month**. So this month it will fall on **Sunday 9th February** Which will then be followed by the church AGM and sharing lunch

Welcome Rota - February

Sunday 2th- Brenda and Graham
Sunday 9th - Clive and Lynne
Sunday 16th - Jo and John
Sunday 23rd - Alan and Amanda

Nat West Mobile Banking

The fortnightly visits of Nat West's mobile banking unit to our car park are due to take place on **Wednesday 5th and 19th February** between **1:30 and 2:30 pm**.

SFC Quiz!

a) Are you free Saturday 22nd March at 6pm?

b) Do you like a Quiz and want to have a fun evening out?

c) Can you find 5 more like minded individuals to join you?

d) Do you want to help us raise funds to support our community work?

If you have answered yes to the above
why not join us for our quiz evening on the 22nd March?

Door open 6pm for 6:30pm start

Tables of 6

Tickets £5 per person

Book your table online using the QR code

Pay for 1st ticket when you book

Pay for additional tickets on the
door (cash or card)



*Please bring your own nibbles. Soft drinks will be provided for
a donation (or bring your own)*

Please note this is an alcohol free event



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**STAPLEHURST
FREE CHURCH**

A heart for our community



Registered Charity No. 1127205

Enabling Everyone to Know Jesus

Staplehurst Interest Group

Our February Friday meetings start on the 7th with 'A funny thing happened'. Those present will recall where, when, what, who and/or why they were involved? Our title on the 14th, 'Inspirational', invites us to share what has or does inspire us; quotations, poems, books, people? A week later on 21st, we welcome back Ani Martin with 'My life and other stories'. Ani's talk was very well received on her last visit. Lastly, on the 28th, members have been asked to supply pictures for projection of their 'Pets', past or present, especially those who have interesting tales (or tails).



We have three speakers and secrets to reveal, booked for March. If you would like to know more about this group, give us a call or just turn up for refreshments just before 10am in the café area of Staplehurst Free Church in Station Road. We laugh a lot and enjoy each other's company for the rest of the morning.

Joan and Malcolm Buller

9th February
Family Church
followed by
Celebration AGM
rounded off with a
Sharing lunch



Threads through the Bible.

I have just returned from a visit to Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, the largest cathedral in the UK, being built between 1909-1976. I was visiting the exhibition of textile hangings produced over a period of ten years by Jacqui Parkinson (nee Frost), Andy Frost's mother.

I am a trustee of a textile charity, "New Creations", Jacqui founded many years ago in order to put Christian textiles out there in the art scene, realising that while many of us are helped to understand more about God through words, others are helped by pictures and art in general.

Jacqui invited all her trustees to attend the launch of this vast exhibition of 44 hangings to see what we have been involved in over the years as we have served on the board of New Creations. What a delight it was to attend and to see the glorious display of stitching (25 million of them!) and colours, depicting, Creation, the Gospel narratives and the book of Revelation. It was most moving to attend and if you get the opportunity to attend, as the tour of these displays moves around cathedrals in the UK over the next two years, you will not be disappointed but greatly blessed. Shown on the next page is the advert announcing the launch of the 3-month tenure of the display in Liverpool Cathedral, which gives you an idea of the quality and beauty of the workmanship.

Over the years that Jacqui's work has been displayed in many cathedrals. There have been many testimonies of how people have been helped to a deeper place in God as a result of their visits and even atheists have admitted to being helped to a place of believing in God as they have seriously considered the pictures they were observing.

Please pray that as many hundreds of people see the display over the next two years, many will be helped to faith, or a deeper faith, as a result of their visits. Thank you.

Clive Jones.



Liverpool Cathedral

16th January to 3rd March

'breathtaking!' 'stunning!' 'inspiring!'

A vibrant combination of 44 huge panels

Threads through the Bible is an astonishing display of embroidered panels inspired by three parts of the Bible. Textile artist Jacqui Parkinson retells the stories in a vibrant combination of silks, paint, metallic leathers and gold leaf – with 25 million stitches!

Jacqui has a national reputation for spectacular, large scale work. This is one of the largest textile art projects, ever. The 44 panels are nearly 3m high and up to 4m wide. The variety is extraordinary. Some panels are startling and dramatic, others complex and dazzling.

Ten years' dedication: three great sequences

Jacqui has been working for ten years to create three great sequences. Two have toured many cathedrals and been seen by over a million visitors. Now for the first time they are joined with *'Threads through the Cross'* to complete this extraordinary and inspiring project, with its premiere at Liverpool Cathedral.

'Such artistry and vision. What a privilege to be able to stand and stare.'

Threads through Creation - astonishing colours and patterns. Twelve huge panels bring wonderful imagination to the creation story in the first pages of the Bible, from the book of Genesis.

Threads through the Cross - dramatic and moving. Eighteen huge panels retell moments from the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Threads through Revelation - startling and spectacular. Fourteen huge panels re-imagine the strange visions in the last book of the Bible.

'we have been 'blown away!' Such amazing creative design and spiritual depth'

Perfect for all ages: you'll find the work breathtaking and fascinating. Children love it. And it's especially interesting for anyone who stitches, to be able to study Jacqui's unique techniques close up.

ADMISSION FREE

Open daily: 10 - 6

Please check Cathedral website for details of opening times and for

touring supported by

Westhill
make things happen



WHAT'S ON AT SFC

At-a-glance activities schedule

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
A.M.						<p>Ladies Badminton</p>	
P.M.							
Eve							

All activities are weekly unless otherwise stated. Some activities are seasonal or may pause if volunteers are unavailable.

Detailed information at www.staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk and updates on Facebook & Instagram

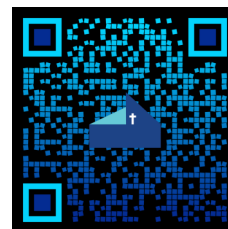
[Staplehurst Free Church Leadership Team](#)

Peter Brook

Church Administrator - Maggie Whalan

Office Tel No.: 01580 893993

www.staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk



Sunday Connections in February

Sunday 2nd	10:30am	Worship, Word and Communion Speaker: Peter Brook <i>Continuing our series on the Sermon on the Mount</i>
Sunday 9th	10:30am	All Age Connection - Family Church <i>Theme: Creation Calling!</i> Led by: Corinne and Roy Laming Followed by Church AGM & Sharing Lunch
Sunday 16th	10:30am	Sunday Connection - Worship, Word and Communion Speaker: Terence Hawgood
Sunday 23rd	10.30am	Sunday Connection - Worship, Word and Communion Speaker: Peter Brook <i>Continuing our series on the Sermon on the Mount</i>

Enabling everyone to know Jesus
and grow in a personal relationship with Him

