



Dear Friends,

In March I'm looking forward to a warmer and drier period of weather. Meteorological winter ended on the 28th of February and Spring has officially started. Having just returned to Staplehurst from the Lake District I can share that I've seen my first spring lambs of 2025, an abundance of snowdrops and catkins on lots of trees!

Whilst in the Lake District we walked around Buttermere. It's an amazingly atmospheric place. The most beautiful lake surrounded by huge mountain peaks with evocative names such as Haystacks, High Crag, High Stile and Red Pike. You can't help but reflect on all the events, wars, governments, generations and lives that have come and gone whilst those mountains have stood majestic and serene.

Buttermere wasn't always as peaceful as the day of our visit. Local stories say that the Lake District was settled by Norsemen – Vikings in the 9th century. But these Vikings wanted peace, a place to farm and establish a village. Following the Norman conquest, Jarl Buthar and his kinsfolk defended his valley from the Normans for over thirty years, using a combination of local knowledge of the geography, ambush techniques and disguise. I don't know if it is a true story but it's nice to think of small group of people seeking peace and trying to protect themselves from oppression by those around them. Jarl Buthar's lake or Buthar's mere is the sort of place where you want to sit and dream. A place that inspires stories, art, poetry and prayer.

As we move into March the Christian season of Lent begins with Shrove Tuesday (or pancake day) and Ash Wednesday. In years gone by households wanted to use up eggs, milk and flour before the season of Lent started, as Lent was a time of fasting – hence pancakes! Lent is also time of reflection and seeking forgiveness – the word “shrove” comes from the act of confessing sins to a priest. The ash in Ash Wednesday comes from the practice of burning the previous years palm crosses, adding a small amount of olive oil and marking a cross on the forehead. Often the priest would use words inspired by Genesis 3:19 such as “from the earth you were taken, to the earth you will return; for you are dust and to dust you will return.” A reminder that we are all mortal, and we have choices of how to live our lives. Both Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday encourage people to choose to turn towards God for their guidance and protection.

I pray that whatever you do this March – that you will find time to sit in green valleys (like Buttermere) and you will find a place of peace and protection, where you can cast all your cares on God. He made the mountains, and the lakes, and the green valleys – nothing is too big or too difficult for God.

Peter



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 wheel-chairs 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.

Thank you.

SFC Quiz

As an alternative to the QR code please click on link to book [Quiz Evening Fundraiser \(22-Mar-2025\)](#)
[ChurchSuite Events](#)

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



Surface Deadline For inclusion in the April edition of Surface Magazine - Please send all copy to Kate M by **Thursday 20th March**. If you no longer wish to receive this magazine, please contact the church administrator to **unsubscribe**. *Thank you*

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 be on **Sunday 9th March!**

Welcome Rota - March

Sunday 2th - Paul and Sally
Sunday 9th - Clive and Lynne
Sunday 16th - Brenda and Graham
Sunday 23rd - Jo and Bob
Sunday 30th - Alan and Amanda



Filling Station

Filling Station will meet at Benenden Primary School, Rolvenden Road, Benenden, Kent TN17 4EH on Wednesday 19th March when James Nichols, the regional director of Filling Station will be speaking. 7pm for pizza 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

14th and 28th March

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



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 March

between **1:30 and 2:30 pm.**

Invitation

*We, Beni and Maria, warmly invite you to join us in celebration of our marriage at **12:00 on Saturday 26th July 2025** at the Staplehurst Free Church.*

For the ceremony, we ask that you attend in an all-black outfit. This doesn't have to be a black suit or dress, a casual smart aesthetic; for example, a plain black shirt and trousers will be just as effective. We are aware that this is untraditional, but we are trying something a bit different. Please trust us on this one...

The pleasure of your company is also requested for the afterparty at 18:00 at the Staplehurst Free Church.

We look forward to celebrating with you.

Répondez S'il Vous Plait if you can attend either, or both.

Thanks

Beni + Maria



Staplehurst Interest Group

You may read this in time to join us for "Pets" on 28th February when pictures will have tales and/or tails attached. Our programme for March begins on Friday 7th when we welcome Steve Kelly from Kent Police to help us all stay safe with "Fraud and Protection". Frank Page visits us again for our annual visual and aural treats on the 14th with "Frank leaves his camera behind". A week later, members will be invited to share their "Secrets". (One previous members used to have angel's wings in a drawer.) The simple statement will be read out and we will guess whose secret is which. Our third talk is "Leeds Castle" when Gill and John Brook will share the history and stories of 'The loveliest castle in the world' on the 28th. Come along to the café area of the Free Church in Station Road for refreshments and entertainment, a ten o'clock start and a warm welcome. .

Joan and Malcolm



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2025
Friday 7 March

A service for everyone!

You are invited to the
World Day of Prayer Service
3.00 p.m.

Staplehurst United Reformed Church

Followed by refreshments

Everyone is very welcome

For further information please contact

secretary@staplehursturc.org.uk

Cook Islands *I made you wonderful*

INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION
24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led
wwdp.org.uk Registered Charity Number 233242

Staplehurst NEEDS YOU

on Saturday 5th April

It's the return of our Clean-Up morning.

Please come along to the Youth Club in the High Street at 10am. Sign in, collect a litter-picker, a sack and a Hi-Viz vest. We recommend you bring your own gloves, although disposable gloves will be available. You will be given a road to clear of rubbish. Then just return your sack and equipment and enjoy some well-earned refreshments.

Let's be proud of our cleaner village!



STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Office
High Street
TN12 0BJ
Tel: 01580 891761
Email: admin@staplehurst-pc.uk



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:
Staplehurst Free Church
Station Road
TN12 0QQ

Tuesdays 12:30 to 16:00
Wednesdays 9:00 to 11:00
Thursdays 9:00 to 16:00
Saturdays 9:00 to 11:00

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

**STAPLEHURST
FREE CHURCH**
A heart for our community
Enabling Everyone to Know Jesus

Choir is restarting!

Just to let you know that I am
planning on restarting choir on
Monday 3rd March, 8pm

at

Staplehurst Free Church

Judith



WHAT'S ON AT SFC

At-a-glance activities schedule

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
A.M.							
P.M.							
Eve							

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

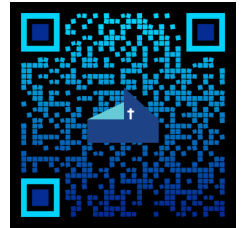
Detailed information at www.staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk and updates on Facebook & Instagram

Church Leader: Peter Brook


Church Administrator - Maggie Whalan

Office Tel No.: 01580 893993

www.staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk



Sunday Connections in March

Sunday 2nd	10:30am	Sunday Connection - Worship, Word and Communion Speaker: Clive Jones
Sunday 9th	10:30am	All Age Connection - Family Church <i>Theme: Captain's Orders! The Centurion's Servant</i> Led by: Paul Davey
Sunday 16th	10:30am	Sunday Connection - Worship, Word and Communion Speaker: Peter Brook
Sunday 23rd	10.30am	Sunday Connection - Worship, Word and Communion Speaker: Peter Brook
Sunday 30th 	10.30am	Mothering Sunday Sunday Connection - Worship, Word and Communion Led by: Youth 24

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

