

**Stranton and Burbank Community Church**

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# **SIGNPOST**



**Rooted in God's love  
Growing together with Jesus  
Branching out in the  
Power of the Holy Spirit**

**November 2020**

## **Be strong and of good courage**

*Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."*

Joshua 1:7-9

In these verses God uses three symbols to emphasize the diligence He expected (and still expects from us).

First, He told Joshua not to turn from the right or the left regarding His word; in other words, we are not to deviate in the least from His precious living word.

Second, He told Joshua that the Law should not depart from his mouth; in other words, we should live the word and speak the word, always.

Third, He told Joshua to mediate on His word day and night: God's commands are to be the guiding focus of our lives so that we constantly do what God desires of us. We are not to be courted by the zeitgeist (the spirit of the age) or swayed by the ways of the world.

The prosperity in store for us as followers of Jesus Christ, has to do with deeper insight and knowledge of our beautiful God and His character. We are being called to "prosper" in knowledge of, faith in, and relationship with God. We must know our precious Abba Father, rather than just know about Him, in order to live out His Holy word in our own contexts.

In that place of deep relationship with our beautiful triune God, His command, *"Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."* becomes possible. No matter the difficulties or losses we experience, as we begin to live in His strength rather than ours. Then, His Peace, the Light of Christ and the Comfort of the Holy Spirit keep us in the assurance of His great love for us. We are reminded that he is the God of our valley places as well as our mountain tops.

**Michelle**

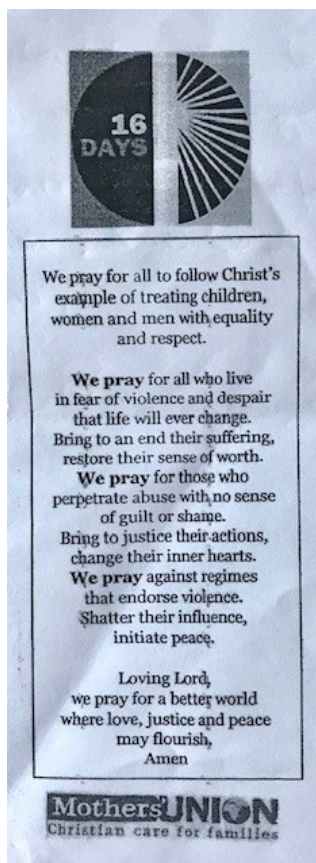
# Mothers Union

Whoever would have thought that we would still be deep in Coronavirus restrictions and beset with ever changing regulations? Thank goodness God doesn't keep changing His mind about what is right for us! I know some of you are feeling a bit 'away from it all' and lonely. I was sent the following prayer when in hospital years ago and it sustains me still:-

Dear Lord

Help me to live this day quietly, easily; To lean upon thy great strength, trustfully, restfully; To wait the unfolding of Thy will patiently, serenely; To meet others peacefully, joyously; To face tomorrow confidently, courageously. Amen

November is the month when the Mothers Union has taken part in an international campaign against gender based violence named "16 Days of Activism". In recent years we have given our support by some of our MU members joining together in Durham City for a walk of prayer to the cathedral. This campaign is an extension of the day to day grassroots work of the Mothers Union, where we work alongside communities to help end gender-based violence and to support those affected by it. With the Covid 19 restrictions in place, this will not be possible this year. However we invite our members and their friends to use the attached prayer. The 16 days run from 25<sup>th</sup> November until 10<sup>th</sup> December. I feel this is important during the present time as we are hearing of more upsets and violence due to the stresses and the pressures caused by lockdown and its ongoing effects in society. Thank you



We remember our friend Hilary Harkness with gratitude and love, we shall miss her at our meetings and in church. Hilary was an example to us of overcoming illness and setbacks, of covering difficulties with God's love, of prayers instead of despair. God bless her.

Please pray for our Branch still unable to meet, pray for Kath Wiemer who is not well at this time, and for each of our members to be strong...

May God bless you and keep you safe.

Love

**Ann Courtenay**

# From the Home Front



This year has been unusual to say the least! Personally my body and mind have been tricked by my globetrotting and extended stay in the Southern Hemisphere – I went from Winter to Summer to Autumn, then on my return, back to Summer and now Autumn again!!

I have gathered that the weather in Britain has also been confused, with an incredibly wet winter followed by a hot dry spring which has impacted greatly on farming crops, particularly silage and hay.

In early August I visited Wiltshire to see my grandson. I spent some time picking delicious ripe blackberries every couple of days. By the time I returned home the crop was almost finished. Three weeks later we were picking the ripe blackberries here in Hartlepool and enjoying them again until the crop started to diminish. In mid-September I made the long journey to the Highlands of Scotland to visit my oldest two grandsons. During our forest walk beside the River Spey I yet again picked the ripe blackberries to enjoy once more in crumbles!!!

Back to Wiltshire in the middle of a mild October, I photographed this confused bramble bush – it was festooned with withered ripened fruit, flowers in full bloom and developing brambles – all on the same stalk! Obviously it couldn't fathom out the seasons either!

Alongside the ever changing science/political restrictions to try to stem the waves of the Covid virus we are trying to adjust to the 'new normal' – masks, hand washing and sanitising, social distancing, not being allowed to sing in church, decreasing socialisation, restricted numbers at weddings and funerals etc, etc... At times I know I feel as if I have stepped into a parallel, but bizarre, universe! I also know it is my quiet times listening to Lectio 365, praying, faith messages, reflecting on the involvement of our awesome and loving God, plus seeing God's love reflected in the actions and words (spoken and written) of Christian sisters and brothers that is sustaining me through my confusions, doubts and darker days. So if you are feeling confused and down look no further than Father, Son and Holy Spirit for reassurance, love and clarity.

**J.A.R.**



Hilary Harkness an active member of Stranton and Burbank Churches for many years died on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, with her daughter Pam beside her. All of us who knew Hilary are sad to lose such a kind hearted and compassionate friend - she always had a smile for everyone and her quiet conversation was interesting and thoughtful. She was a friend to many in Stranton and Burbank churches, MU and Pansies and will be greatly missed.

Personally my family owe Hilary for their very existence – she introduced Frank and Mary Rogers to each other, which led to their marriage, our children and grandchildren!

Her funeral took place in Stranton Church and the Crematorium on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October with family, friends, colleagues and members of church able to say their farewells in person, but many more able to watch online too. Hilary's granddaughter played the cello before the service. Psalm 121 was read by daughter Patricia and the reading 'We Give Back to You by William Penn' was read by son John. Julie played a musical accompaniment to a slide show of Hilary's life.

**Jacqui Rogers**

### **Tribute to our Mam - Hilary Harkness given by Pamela. 7th October 2020, Stranton Church**

Mam's, (Hilary's,) life is a real treasure trove, filled to the brim with people, places and precious memories; the richness of her character and her inestimable worth as a person created by God. Today, we will share a few gems from her life, but each of us will consider the value of her presence in our own lives, in the weeks and months to come...

Hilary was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1927 to Sarah and Thomas 'Pop' Clouston, and she grew up with big sister Enid and little brother Tom, in the general dealer's shop her parents owned at the corner of Brougham Terrace, near St Oswald's Church. Here, she honed God-given skills which shone throughout her long life, as she watched her mam and dad running the shop, then herself served customers, took payment and helped her dad with quality and stock control of their goods, so vital for the family's livelihood.

Mam's bright, practical mind and love of order and numbers, stood her in good stead both in the workplace, and running our family home, with our Dad Ronnie. As John recalls, Mam was always busy doing something, looking after us and not sitting still for long. Her jobs list was ALWAYS to hand...



Everything was kept ship-shape and in order. No out of date cheese with mould spots at the back of Mam's fridge; Uncle Francis' lucky football socks, our dear old wooden pig salt and pepper set, and many valued, but worn, items disappeared during such a Hilary tidy-up...

Where Trish, John and I showed dad's inclination for keeping things just in case, Mam saw what was surplus to requirement and created a tidy, serene environment.

From a young woman, Mam reflected this same care and attention, in her person and appearance. Hilary cut a smart figure, dignified and attractive, with a beaming smile. With her clothes hanging neatly on the back of the bedroom door, ready for the next day, skirts and court shoes were Mam's stock-in-trade. She remained keenly interested in fashion trends all her life, giving away any clothing she deemed 'old-fashioned' or 'past its best'. As long as we can remember, she has enjoyed weekly trips to the hairdresser's, with her recent return to Curls Aloud, after shielding, a real highlight for Mam...

She was fit and active and always loved sport, and Trish recalls how she'd sniff the crisp autumn air and say "lovely day for a game of hockey". She had the honour of participating in a gymnastics display for Princess Elizabeth's 21st birthday celebrations at Wembley Stadium. Keep-fit and walking were features of hers, and Dad's life, throughout. Mam looked years younger than she really was and had an amazing, elegant posture and gait until past her 90th birthday?

God's hand of protection was on her, bringing her safely through on several occasions this past three years, and her resilience was amazing.

'Live life to the full' the expression goes, and Mam definitely did that, embracing opportunities the wider world had to offer, and experiencing life on her doorstep, as she got involved in her own local community.

After attending the High School for Girls, Mam started to work in stock control at Siemens at Seal Sands, rising around 5am for the early bus to work. When she was married, Mam worked in accounts first at GEC, then The Expanded Metal Company, in Hartlepool. Dad worked at Expanded Metal too, where they both remained until retirement.

Outside of work, as a keen new bride, Mam took cookery classes, later joining Stranton Young Wives, she helped at Lister Street Youth Club, and in her 50s she joined the International Toast Mistresses Club to listen to good speakers and learn new skills.

Mam loved work and retired reluctantly, aged 60, with lots more to give: she enjoyed more free time with Dad, but also took up a role giving reading support at Fens Primary School, later becoming a governor there too. It was not long after retirement that she took on what ended up being a commitment spanning two decades, training as a volunteer caseworker at Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau, two days a week.

She enjoyed the camaraderie and stimulus of this new work environment without remuneration, as well as the opportunity to support fellow Hartlepudlians with her skills. Manager Joe Michna remembers Mam as an asset; friendly, conscientious, with an eye for detail and very good at checking the management accounts for errors. As the years passed, she served as a trustee on the CAB board and moved

to admin support until poor eyesight led her to stand down at the grand old age of 85, with a 25 year long service award.

Perhaps her most remarkable undertaking was an Open University degree in the Arts, which Mam began in her early 60s, and was awarded aged 74, at the Royal Festival Hall London, with us, her family, in proud attendance.

Hilary Harkness, Bachelor of Arts, class of 2001. Well done Mam! In some ways, this was a joint venture as Mam and Dad often discussed topics and pondered essay questions together. A real partnership, typical of the support they gave each other throughout their marriage.

Depending on where you met Mam, you may initially imagine her to be a bit reserved, rather a private person; but she enjoyed being with people and was good company. She knew her own mind, and had strength of purpose, but was a kind and loyal friend, generous and a good listener, with a sense of fun. No more so than for Dad who was her best friend for over 50 years.

Alongside her own Clouston family, Mam entered into a lifelong friendship with Dad's family, particularly Jean and Francis, and Mam - and we all - loved the Harkness get-togethers with food, fun and laughter. John recalls the Festive gatherings where Mam and Dad or the aunts and uncles would have a Christmas meal, then start to prepare a table-full of food for 20, ready for the teatime family party! Diversions such as the Balloon and Nighshirt game and Carol singing rounded off the evening.

Mam's relationship with friends from early years, Betty, Wynne, Joyce and Mary lasted throughout life, and time spent with friends enriched her days. She loved the Exparmet Walking Club outings with Dad; enjoyed meals out with Citizens Advice colleagues; and was an active member here at Stranton Church for nearly 60 years, after moving from St Oswald's. Mothers Union and her Home Group, led by Geoff Webster, and then the Thompsons, have provided her with valuable spiritual support and friendship over the years. Mam was impacted by the love and friendship which Clive and Angela Hall and Burbank members showed her, once she joined me for church.

It was a body blow when Mam got breast cancer in her later years, but making so many friends through the Pansies Breast Cancer Support Group, was a real blessing. With fun nights out at the Mayfair, where Mam was "first on and last off the dance-floor" says Isabel; drop-ins at the Grand Hotel; Fashion shows; holidays abroad and more besides - always lots of good company - with raffles and afternoon teas in abundance. So, our thanks to Isabel, Ellen, Joan and all the Pansies for your care of Mam over the years. She had a ball...

Mam's sense of rhythm and love of music is something Trish, John and I have inherited. Tripping the light fantastic was definitely Mam's thing, from childhood tap dancing to ballroom, to disco. It was less Dad's; the first time he met her was in fact, when he fell over her feet at a Saturday night dance at the Queens Rink! The rest, as they say, is history... Mam's teenage love of jazz music shared with young musician, Frank Rogers, family friend and, later mayor of Hartlepool, continued throughout her life, and, as Trish says, an up-tempo Jazz beat would get Mam's foot tapping even into her 90s!

Mam learnt to play the piano when growing up, including classical pieces, and listening to classical music became her preference as the years passed. She loved

attending the Middlesbrough classical concerts with Dad, then Auntie Jean and Uncle Francis, and also friends Joyce and Eric Pidd, and more recently with me, and sometimes Trish. She kept a keen interest in securing a good seat to watch the pianist's hands during a performance.

Finally, we end with the subject closest to Mam's heart; her own family. On 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1954, Mam and Dad began a long and loving marriage, which lasted until 2003, a year before their Golden Wedding Anniversary, when Dad died.

Patricia, John and I had a happy, loving upbringing with Mam and Dad and we treasure many personal memories. It has been a privilege to honour our father and mother throughout their lives.

When Dad died, we adapted to include Mam even more, and her relationship with us, spouses Jonathan and Cricket and her granddaughters Philippa, Lillian, Bonnie and Sarah grew. She was glad to welcome Jack to the family in recent times too.

When my relationship in London ended, I moved to Hartlepool again and became the one on the ground, so to speak. We spent a lot of time together. Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, just living life...

Between the whole family, we have forged many happy memories, such as; happy family picnics and Sunday lunches together, Mam's Surprise 90th Birthday Party; good food and fun has always been crucial. Mum's love of Johnathan's home-made marmalade, leading to her family nickname, Paddington. With a Paddington hard stare to match...

Mam's holidays in Crete to visit John's family, at summer and Christmas time – having fun together.

Driving to Seaton or Hartlepool, to take a stroll and look at the sea she loved. Getting fish and chips to round off the day.

Sitting in Mam's conservatory on many a sunny afternoon, radio on, chatting, admiring the garden and listening to her friends, the birds. Washing blowing on the line, a bonus...

To end, I will refer to the two Scriptures in the order of service:

Psalm 121

As you may know, for the 17 years since Dad died, Mam has ploughed a courageous, undaunted furrow. We are proud of her. Countless times, God has been her help, her shade at her right hand. She has prayed for help and He has answered. When she had her falls in 2017 and last year, God sent first a neighbour, and second time a retired doctor across her path, to call an ambulance and to call me. God will preserve her soul in heaven from this time forth and forever more.

The final word goes to Mam, reading Proverbs 31 verse 25:

Hilary is clothed with strength and dignity she can laugh at the days to come.

Thank you...with all our love until we meet again.

**Amen.**



Hilary with her husband Ronnie who she married in St Oswald's Church in 1953. They met working at Expanded Metal. They were married for almost 50 years



### **Thank you**

We send our thanks from the family for your many kind cards, words and prayers, as well as your presence celebrating our beloved Mam's life with God. Our grateful appreciation goes to the Church Team for their support and contribution in making her service in Stranton Church so lovely and enabling others to join us on-line.

**Patricia, John and Pamela**



### **Rule of Six Quiz**

- R** Which R had a mother in law called Naomi?
- U** Which U was the husband of Bathsheba?
- L** Which L was responsible for lighting candles in the temple?
- E** Which E is the only bald prophet?
  
- O** What O did a centurion give and expected to be obeyed?
- F** What F was the job that Peter did prior to meeting Jesus?
  
- S** Which S saint's day is July 15th?
- I** What I is the collective noun for the Children murdered by Herod the great?
- X** Which X is a king mentioned in Esther?

# Baptisms 27<sup>th</sup> September

Samaneh and Nehmar were baptised in Stranton Church during the service on 27<sup>th</sup> September – the first baptisms under Covid 19 regulations – so no full immersion!



## Answers

R	Which R had a mother in law called Naomi?	Ruth
U	Which U was the husband of Bathsheba?	Uriah
L	Which L was responsible for lighting candles in the temple?	Levite
E	Which E is the only bald prophet?	Elisha
O	What O did a centurion give and expected to be obeyed?	Orders
F	What F was the job that Peter did prior to meeting Jesus?	Fisherman
S	Which S saint's day is July 15th? Saint	Swithun
I	What I is the collective noun for the Children murdered by Herod the Great?	The Innocents
X	Which X is a king mentioned in Esther?	Xerxes

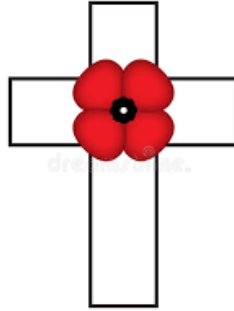
# **An Announcement from Mother Gemma at the St Aidan's APCM The Future**

On a personal level, the pandemic has been costly for me. Australia's borders are closed and Craig and I haven't been together since January. I have bothered the Lord about this a lot. God has been very clear with me; my two vocations are as a priest and a wife. Craig also has two vocations; as a dad to his 4 children and as my husband. While I can fulfil my vocations here, or in Australia, Craig cannot fulfil his vocation as dad, away from his children; they have not chosen this and don't want to leave their siblings, mum or friends. We don't want to live separately – indeed, it wouldn't be right to do that. God has given us each other, as a gift, and we want to celebrate that. So, our aim is to live together, in Australia. I am not leaving yet – that is important for you to know – borders are still shut, I haven't even applied for a job or anything like that, but we are working towards this as our future plan. I face this new call, with excitement and also with a heavy heart, because I'm sure you know how much I love this place. I am trusting God for God's goodness to me and Craig, and for the future here. I feel incredibly blessed to be counted in the line of priests in this place, and I am praying for the hugely fortunate priest God is preparing to come next, and for each of you. And if I may, I ask for you to hold Craig and me in your prayers too.

## **Rev'd Clive Hall, Candidates' Panel September 2020**

Over the summer Clive had a series of interviews with representatives of the National Church, then, in late September the outcome of these interviews was considered at a Candidates' Panel. The result of the Panel is that Clive has been recommended to take on a 'post of significant responsibility'. This is Church of England speak for saying that in April, at the official end of Clive's training, he could be offered another job as an ordained priest, perhaps as a chaplain or as a vicar. We live in very uncertain times and we really don't know what will be happening in the Church of England by April next year, however it is possible that after 17 years serving in the parish Clive and Angela may be moving to pastures new. Please pray for them in the next few months. Pray also for the Community of Burbank and Burbank Community Church as we seek to discern where God is leading.

## The Poppy and The Cross



The poppy and The Cross  
Two signs of painful loss.  
One a way to remember every year  
As their deeds slowly flow into history,  
Valued more as a family tree ancestry.

The other an empty sign  
Of a plan that was divine  
When all worldly sin was loaded,  
Especially all those of mine.

Graves of soldiers can be respected and remembered  
Wherever the location of the battlefield occurred,  
But the victory won by hours of cruel torture  
Ensured a very large stone was rolled away  
Offers us a chance to remember and in the future  
The choice to live our lives and follow His way.

George Bainbridge

## Church Mice

Karl Zorowski



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## **Switching a space suit for a clerical collar via Hartlepool**

Just over four years ago I moved to England from my home country, South Africa, to embark on a PhD in Astrophysics at Durham University. A new adventure was waiting, one that I dreamt of since I was a little girl as I was gazing up at the night sky, being amazed by our Creator's artwork and creativity. I was going to be an astronaut someday and, if not, I believed that God was going to use my dream to bring me to His dream. And it so turned out to be the case: instead of putting on a space suit, God has called me to put on a clerical collar someday. I still have a long journey ahead, but I believe Hartlepool will become a vital cornerstone to the ministry to which God has called me.

My first few weeks in Hartlepool has certainly been above and beyond what I expected. Now, first things first, living with the Craigs is amazing! Anyone who has had the privilege of meeting them will know that they immediately crawl into your heart with their kindness, generosity, humility, wisdom and enthusiastic outlook on life. And then there is of course the food — as the saying goes, I am “eating like a king”. In the short amount of time that I have been here, they have already become very dear to me, bringing the black and white writings of Paul about ‘Priscilla and Aquila’ during the early Church times into full technicolour.

Growing up in South Africa and being called to ministry in the UK have given me a rich and diverse church experience: Dutch Reformed, Baptist, Apostolic, Pentecostal, Free Church, Russian Orthodox and the beautiful Anglican tradition. I always say we are first and foremost followers of Christ and as long as God's love is present, I am satisfied. And that is something that particularly drew me to the community here in Hartlepool: your church family! Different worshipping styles and buildings and in many cases doctrine, but ultimately, we are united in our diversity by the love of Christ — uniquely called to be beacons of hope in the community. So far I have enjoyed worshipping at Stranton All Saints, where I have met some of you (I hope to meet you all once lock-down is relaxed, but in the meantime I would love to meet via Zoom or a phone call), attending Communion at St Luke's and, of course, following St Aidan's eminent live streams. I truly feel that I have found my church family here with you, thank you for everyone's warm welcome and for all your prayers. I am excited to work alongside you the next few months, to learn from you, to grow together and to be God's disciples living the Great Commandment of loving others.

I guess you might be wondering what exactly a 'Ministry Experience Volunteer' does. In short, I am shadowing Revd Norman, almost like being his protégé for the next few months before I am off to theological college in Cambridge. As he has mentioned before, I've made a slight detour from Durham to Cambridge via Hartlepool. Yes, God works in mysterious ways and despite the enemy's intent to throw me off track, our Father has been faithful and opened a door to every door that closed because of Covid-19. At first it would seem that my dream has been put on hold for a year (through which God is teaching me patience), but I have come to

realise that now I actually get to do what I love most everyday: sharing Christ with people through acts of loving service and evangelism. Therefore, in the following paragraphs I would like to share with you briefly some of the things that have touched my heart the last three weeks while working alongside Norman, Mother Gemma, Michelle, Clive, and the Communities of Hope team, to only name a few.

One of the highlights of my week is definitely volunteering at St Aidan's Kitchen where I get to live out the gospel imperative of Matthew 25:35-40. I always pray for God to give me a soft heart and hard feet, to break my heart for what breaks His, so I can love people as He loves them. And it is on the pavement of St Aidan's where I feel my prayer coming to life, where I experience the paradox of feeling both sad and joyful at the same time: sad and heartbroken for their circumstances, but joyful and hopeful in knowing that God is with us and by His grace we can bring light to their darkness. Alongside caring for the physical and emotional needs of the people in our community, another evident mark of mission is proclaiming the Good News of Jesus. Now anyone who knows me will affirm that all I really ever want to do is talk about Jesus — I am passionate about sharing the Gospel. Martin Luther said, *"We are all mere beggars showing other beggars where to find bread."* And so I always seek ways to share the 'Bread of Life' with others. Therefore, when I heard the Communities of Hope has their own evangelist, I was ecstatic and couldn't wait to do outreach, particularly to the rough sleepers. We had our first stroll around town this week to start building relationships and we already experienced the Holy Spirit at work. In the weeks to follow we will continue to sow the message of God's mercy and love, which is powerful enough to radically change the hearts of people and transform their lives. Watch this space!

A new area in which I am gaining experience is working with Asylum Seekers in our parish. Over the last few months I felt the Lord igniting a spark in my heart towards them, especially towards those who have been persecuted for their Christian faith. I have a deep desire to help them, although I think in many ways they are the ones helping me, inspiring my walk with God with their testimonies of bold faith and courage in the face of adversity. I feel deeply blessed to not only be given the opportunity to meet them, but to call them my brothers and sisters in Christ, and to study the Word of God with them. This week at Persian Bible Study I taught on Philippians 2 where Paul encourages the Christians to be light-bearers. And that is my prayer for us as a church: may we be a light on the hill in our community, shining our light so before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

And the list of experiences continues... From volunteering at Ward Jackson School to an illuminating staff 'Away Day' at the beautiful St Hilda's Church, from attending funerals to experiencing a Spirit-filled Harvest festival, from laying bricks on the church's stonewall to being fortunate to observe two PCC meetings in my very first week (some might say unlucky, but I found it to be enlightening). I certainly already have had a breadth of experiences, despite the Covid-19 limitations, which is a further confirmation to me that God brings beauty for ashes when we trust Him in

spite of our lack of understanding and when we obediently follow His call in our lives.

A few days ago I was asked what I do in my downtime. Well, at the moment, all my downtime is allocated to writing my PhD thesis on 'Unveiling the true colours of Red Quasars'. That's a story for another day, but I thought it's worth mentioning, since this is the seed which God planted in my heart, which He nurtured, watered and pruned over so many years, all with the purpose of bringing me to England. And, therefore, I want to see it through to the point where it blossoms to His glory. To do this whilst living my heart's true desire to share the love of Christ every second of every day, I please need your prayers so I can wisely balance being a 'vicar in the making' by day and an astronomer by night.

I would like to finish by thanking you all for welcoming me into your church family, for being a rainbow amidst my storm of change, uncertainty and being far from my own family. I am so blessed to be with you and I hope in the months to come that I can be a blessing to you too.

Yours in Christ,

**Lizelke Klindt**

## **Alphabet of Gardening tips**

*I was given a little book of gardening tips "Green fingers and dirty nails", when I was in New Zealand which I thought I would share with you over the coming months - J.A.R.*

### **A**

**African violets like warmth and moisture.**

**Agapanthus is perfect for clay banks or dry shady areas under trees.**

**Plant Asparagus with parsley and tomato.**

**Asparagus likes a mulch of hay.**

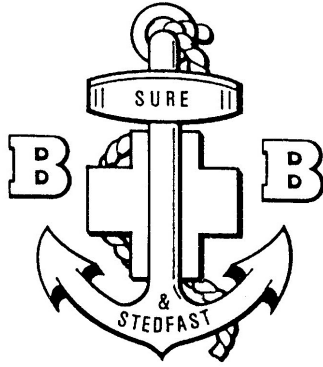
**Aphid ridden plant/ Ladybirds love them. They eat about 400 of the pests a week.**

**Aphids do not like strong blasts of cold water or soapy water spray followed by a rinse of clean water. Spray made from basil (cover with water, bring to boil, then strain) – dilute spray with four times the amount of water to solution and use at once.**

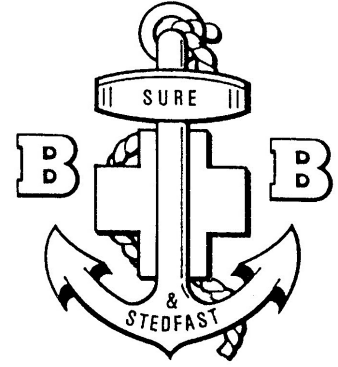
**Apple trees are not happy with grass growing around the trunk.**

**Apple trees like foxgloves and wallflowers.**

**Apple trees like chives and nasturtiums around their roots – but they dislike potatoes.**



## Boys Brigade News



**Anchor Boys** - we have learnt the stories of Eli and Samuel, Isaac and Abraham, the feeding of the 5,000, and the story of the rich young man. Plus we have played lots of games

**Juniors** - have been given various challenges such as putting, magnetic darts, shove ha'penny, basketball, hockey, target games and also used a very large parachute so that we could keep socially distant (viewable on our Facebook page), plus the Boys have become very good at marching with a 2 metre spacing!

**Company** - We have bought an air hockey game, had quizzes, also drawing challenges and our next project is to make a cigarette card album

**90th Anniversary** - we certainly picked the right year!!! We handed out our 90th Anniversary badge to all our members - this sadly will be the last part of the celebrations

**Covid 19 Advantages** - although the virus is bad news it has made our leadership team look at re-developing our programme which will ultimately improve what we offer our members in the future

**Anchor Boys** - we have room for 3 new members between 6-8 years old please ring 07816 445829 if you know someone who would like to join us.

**George Bainbridge**

### Second Tier Quiz

- S** Which S carried off the Gates of Gaza?
- E** Which E was the father of Methuselah?
- C** Which C approached Jesus about the illness of his servant?
- O** In which O direction do Christian Soldiers go?
- N** Which N is another name for Bartholomew?
- D** What D was a region where Jesus carried out His ministry?
  
- T** Which T doubted Jesus?
- I** Which I was to be sacrificed by his father?
- E** Which E is the only bald man in the Bible?
- R** Which R was left weeping after the Slaughter of the Innocents?

## Birds of a Feather



A few days ago I came from the beach with Ember, my dog, and met my next door neighbour coming out of his house. His dog Sid, had found a bird in the front garden and being a Springer spaniel, had informed his master and was guarding it! My neighbour picked up the bird and we decided it would be better in the corner of my front garden where there was more shelter, plus a bird table and water. So a transfer into my hands was made. The bird was so small at first sight I thought it was a late fledgling. I opened my hands slightly to see what sort it was, when I noticed a bedraggled crest on its head. It was a gold colour – it was a Goldcrest, the smallest bird in Britain! All of a sudden it escaped! It flew a little way and settled on a neighbour's gate. As I watched it rested for a few minutes then it was off and away. I can only think my hands warmed it enough to enable it to fly off.

A couple of days later another bird appeared in my front garden. This time a much bigger one. I was a bit puzzled as it looked like a pigeon but was much larger. When I got really close it appeared quite scruffy, but I was able to identify it as a young Wood Pigeon with wind damage from the recent storms. A female she settled in the corner and stayed being fed and watered for 3 days. The weather was bad for two further days before she seemed to improve. Then as I was refilling the bird table and putting down food for her – she liked chopped up peanuts – she took off, heading towards the sea, then went around the corner and away. She had recovered her strength. I'm now waiting for the next visitor. I knew she was a Wood Pigeon because their beaks have a more downward turn, plus the colours – although youngsters don't have the adults' colourful plumage to begin with.



The winter birds are starting to be seen on the beach now and each day I look out to see if my favourites, Oystercatchers, have returned.

"The birds of the air" are mentioned so many times in the Bible. Do look out for them as you do your daily verses and thank God for their songs and the way they interact with us and remind us of God's love and care for all of his creation – including us.

**Ann Courtenay**



## **HARVEST FESTIVAL - Foodbank: thankyou**

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October we celebrated God's goodness to us in our Harvest Festival, in which we received generous thanks offerings of non-perishable food items plus cash donations totalling £140. The Foodbank staff and volunteers are very thankful for this support. If you missed this opportunity to help those most in need or wish to give further support it is not too late! Foodbanks nationally are under immense strain and the Hartlepool Foodbank is very grateful for the continued generosity which enables them to meet the increasing level of need in Hartlepool - donate via the foodbank website <https://hartlepool.foodbank.org.uk/contact-us/>, or post a cheque to the Hartlepool Foodbank at 28 Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7DH

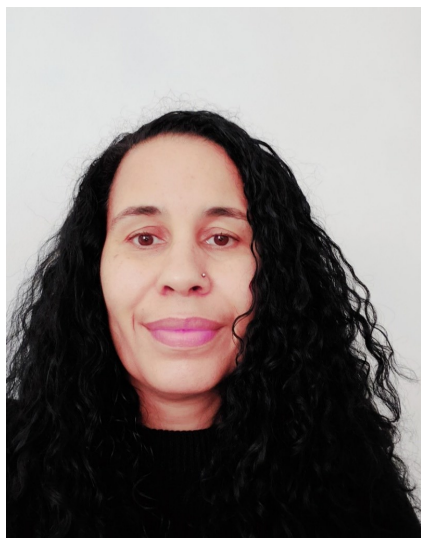
## **Communities of Hope Team**



**The team - Emma, Jess and Jo**

Emma, Jess and Jo have just had their first, incredibly busy, weeks of working as a complete team and there was a dedication service on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 4 pm, at St Aidan's Church led by Bishop Sarah. Please continue to pray for each of them and their work over the coming weeks.

# Introducing Communities of Hope Team – Jo Leslie



My name is Jo, I was living in Leicester working for a homeless charity. As part of this job, I've been overseeing the centre activities such as the breakfast club, recreational activities and food services. Through these services I have been able to build trust and relationships with guests, which over time has often led to doing more in-depth case work on housing, benefits, EEU settled status applications, and drug and alcohol referrals.

I am passionate about homelessness and social justice, having supported women involved in prostitution and vulnerable adults for many years. I want to see vulnerable people's lives be all they can be, and I'm really excited to be working with you all to achieve this in Hartlepool.

At present I am an Evangelist in Training with the Church Army and currently in my final year of training, as well as a member of the Archbishops' College of Evangelists. I love sharing Jesus with others and feel that God has called me to share the gospel and love those on the margins. I've got experience of co-leading Fresh Expressions of church in south east London, helping on an outreach bus for homeless in East London, and working with sex workers in the Netherlands. During lockdown I've also been helping out at my local foodbank, delivering food parcels and socially distanced befriending with the homeless community who have been placed in temporary accommodation.

I recently co-delivered a 6-week evangelism course within Leicester Diocese. Even after the short period of 6 weeks, we were seeing people stepping out in faith, coming together to carry out evangelism together and growing in confidence. I'd love to help people in Hartlepool share their faith in Jesus too.

My relationship with Christ is at the centre of who I am and all that I do. The word of God is my guide and helps me to grow in understanding and relationship with God. It is an integral part of my Christian life. I am led by the Holy Spirit who is a great comfort and strength in my life. It is Him who gives me the strength and power to approach all things with trust and faith.

I was born in Derby, although I have also lived in London and The Netherlands. I enjoy travelling and experiencing different cultures and contexts both in the UK and abroad. I enjoy the outdoors and like cycling, hiking and walking. Reading is something I find relaxing and often do in my spare time. To de-stress I love to run or go to the gym.

I am excited to have moved to Hartlepool and I'm expectant to see what God will do with the amazing team He has brought together and see Isaiah 61 lived out amongst those who feel forgotten and unloved.

# Vicar's Report for Stranton Church 2019 and beyond (written 23.9.20)

*Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:29-33)*

We live in strange times and I am sitting down to write this report in September for the first time ever. The Church APCM has been delayed by 6 months because of the pandemic and for many 2019 is a distant memory, much has happened since. In this report I will record some key events in 2019. All of us in recent months have experienced constant uncertainty but we should also remind ourselves God is everlasting and faithful, one who can be trusted. As his people we place our hope in him and so renew our strength and look forward in faith and hope.

Some significant changes occurred in Church organisation during 2019. In March the Central Hartlepool Group Ministry came into existence and we as a parish are now committed to close collaboration with St Luke's and St Aidan's with St Columba in the long term. There is now a group council and both lay and clergy are committed to working together. In practice this means I am interim priest in charge of St Luke's alongside my role as vicar at Stranton. Mother Gemma now lives in St Luke's vicarage and shares pastoral ministry at St Luke's. In the first few months of the group ministry Rev Andrew Craig continued as a non-stipendiary minister working mainly at St Luke's. We are all deeply grateful for Andrew's long ministry amongst us over many years and in particular the support and care he gave to the people of St Luke's in the last two years of his ministry. Andrew retired from licensed ministry in the middle of August and this retirement was marked by a very special event in Stranton Church in July.

On 1<sup>st</sup> September the whole group introduced new service times to allow time for our worship to flourish and for ministers to travel between services. At Stranton our services are now at 9am and 11am. The 9am service is a said communion service using both 1662 and common worship liturgies and the 11am service remains a more informal service with Morning Worship (service of the word) alternating with Holy Communion. Later in the year a good example of collaboration was the Group Carol Service held at Stranton. The joint choir pulled together by Andy McAllister, Stephen Darkin and Julie really made the evening special. More generally I would like to thank all who enable our services to happen, each service involves a number of people who work hard behind the scenes to ensure our worship happens. Thank you.

Another significant event was the ordinations of the Michelle Delves and Clive Hall as priests. It has been encouraging to see them both grow into their respective and yet individual ministries. Our thanks go to Clive and Michelle who were a real asset over the Christmas period when they helped cover the multiple opportunities for ministry during a time when Mother Gemma was recovering from a surgical procedure. I am encouraged that as a parish and group we continue to be a training parish.

Through 2019 we continued to have 1 day time and 2 evening home groups for fellowship and study. Mother Gemma also arranged a Lent course across the group. Our ministry to those seeking asylum has also continued. A key part of this is encouraging discipleship through bible study for those professing Christian faith. Alongside this we have continued to support English practice sessions for any who want to learn and also to provide what we can through care and support. Jean Waller deserves a particular mention for her continued support of those who need help.

The remarkable story of St Matthew's Community Centre continues and it is encouraging that it remains a community hub for a diverse range of groups including Boys Brigade, Rainbows Brownies and Guides and a number of Church groups. The kitchen and accessible toilet extension was completed on time and on budget which is a tribute to the hard work of the Hall Committee, and Barbara Butcher and Carol Laud in particular. The reopening was celebrated in July with a visit from Bishop Sarah and the Mayor of Hartlepool. We also continue to be very involved with various local primary schools with a particular focus on Ward Jackson Church of England Primary School. Since September Rev Clive Hall has been working here as a volunteer chaplain and more recently we have been asked to be part of the Growing faith initiative. For more information about Clive's work please see his separate Burbank report.

The pastoral group has continued to visit and take communion to the housebound and the lonely. When Andrew retired Michelle also took on responsibility for monthly communions in at Elwick Grange, an event that was very popular with the residents. The year was also tinged with significant sadness. After a struggle to find a local job Kat and the family joined Josh in Germany and Patricia Vaughan also stepped down from her various roles and in September moved to St Hilda's. There was a number of deaths but of particular note was the passing of Margaret Lumley who was a lifelong member of the fellowship.

Despite the difficult moments we entered 2020 with hope looking forward to the accessibility work being completed in the Church building and in anticipation of the Communities of Hope Project coming into being. Who would have guessed what was round the corner with the Global Covid 19 pandemic and all its ramifications. But we do continue in hope and with thanks for the generosity of all sorts of people who have continued to contribute to our Church community life, and in particular our office holders Peter, Angela, Maureen and David. We continue, trusting in the everlasting God who will renew our strength. I leave the final word to Paul from Romans 15, 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.'

**Norman**

# CELEBRATE!

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**  
**to**

**November**

Sally Clarke

Linda Cartwright

Debbie Coxon

Anna Jennett

Sylvia Shepherd

Mike Weimer

Rachel Wilson



Congratulations  
to  
Nirmalee & Steve  
On the birth of Emmeline  
On 14<sup>th</sup> September

If you have something to celebrate we would love to share it - email  
[admin@stranton-church.org.uk](mailto:admin@stranton-church.org.uk)  
or phone 864006.

All entries to be in by the 16th of the month.



# Mary Baines' Recipes

## Herb and cheese muffins

Good served with a savoury dish, but especially good with beetroot and crème fraiche to make a snack lunch:

8oz plain flour

3 ½ teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

3oz strong flavoured cheese, grated

2 tablespoons oil

2 large eggs

8 fluid oz milk

1 chopped tablespoon each of fresh sage, chives, parsley

Preheat oven to Gas 5 190C.

Grease muffin tins very well or use paper cases.

Sift flour, salt & baking powder into a large bowl.

Beat together eggs, oil & milk, then stir in cheese & chopped herbs.

Quickly mix wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, being careful not to over stir.

Spoon mixture into muffin trays and bake for 20-25 minutes. Cool in tin for a few minutes. Serve warm

## Tuna Bake

Store cupboard quick meal:

Medium sized tin of tuna

1 tin condensed mushroom soup

2 oz breadcrumbs

Sliced tomatoes

Drain liquid from tuna & flake. Place in a greased ovenproof dish.

Pour over mushroom soup & place in oven (Gas 4, 180C) for 15 minutes to warm through.

Remove from oven & sprinkle with a layer of breadcrumbs & the sliced tomatoes.

Return to oven for about 10 minutes until tomato is cooked & breadcrumbs are golden brown.

## Answers

S	Which S carried off the gates of Gaza?	Samson
E	Which E was the father of Methuselah?	Enoch
C	Which C approached Jesus about the illness of his servant?	Centurion
O	In which direction do Christian Soldiers go?	Onward
N	Which N is another name for Bartholomew?	Nathaniel
D	What D was a region where Jesus carried out His ministry?	Decapolis
T	Which T doubted Jesus?	Thomas
I	Which I was to be sacrificed by his father?	Isaac
E	Which E is the only bald man in the Bible?	Elisha
R	Which R was left weeping after the slaughter of the Innocents?	Rachel



# Dates for the Diary

## **Dates for November**

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>

### **All Saints Day**

3pm-6pm Stranton Church open for those who have experienced loss or bereavement

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>

All Souls' Day

St Luke's Service 6.30pm

Wed 4<sup>th</sup>

SMDT Stranton, 7.15pm (zoom)

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>

### **Remembrance Sunday**

We will have an act of remembrance at both services

Later service begins at 10.55am

We Welcome Counsellor Brenda Loynes

The Ceremonial Mayor to this service

Monday 9<sup>th</sup>

Group Council, 7.00pm (zoom)

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>

Stranton Standing Committee, 3.30pm (zoom)

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>

Deanery Synod, 7.00pm

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>

Stranton PCC, 7.30pm (zoom)

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>

Day of Prayer (more details to follow)

Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> **December**

Burbank Leadership Team, (zoom)



### **Day of Prayer, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November**

Our current circumstances mean that it is very difficult to plan very far into the future. It's also clear that as a group of Churches we are facing a number of significant transitions in the coming year. As we look forward I am suggesting we set aside time on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November to pray, asking God to lead and guide us. More details will be available nearer the time.

**Norman**

# Who's Who

<b>Church Office</b>	St Matthew's Community Centre Arncliffe Gardens TS26 9JF
<b>Administrator</b>	Trish Playfor "Tues- Fri, 9.00 to 11.00am" 07305 550009 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:admin@stranton-church.org.uk">admin@stranton-church.org.uk</a> Web Site: <a href="http://www.stranton-church.org.uk">www.stranton-church.org.uk</a>

## Vicar

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E-Mail: [nshave1@btinternet.com](mailto:nshave1@btinternet.com)

## Curate

Revd Michelle Delves 40 Browning Avenue 723461

## Burbank Community Church Worker & Curate

Revd Clive Hall 10 Clarkson Court 278504

## Reader

Mary Tones 40a Blakelock Road 265625

## Churches Together in Hartlepool

Secretary Susan Atkinson,  
St Mary's RC

<b>Church Wardens</b>	Peter Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266 Angela Craig 57 Claremont Drive 234279
<b>Music Group</b>	Julie Shave 34A Westbourne Road 233609
<b>PCC Secretary</b>	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
<b>Treasurer</b>	David Craig 57 Claremont Drive 234279
<b>Asst. Treasurer</b>	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
<b>Loyalty Treasurer</b>	Peter Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
<b>Notice Sheet</b>	The Office (Notices by the preceding Wednesday)
<b>Signpost Editorial</b>	Jacqui Rogers 19 Trentbrooke Avenue 265527
<b>Signpost Advertising</b>	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
<b>Signpost Subscription</b>	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
<b>St Matthew's Booking</b>	Trish Playfor Church Office 894006

***Magazine articles to the parish office by 16th of every month.***

