

Stranton and Burbank Community Church

SIGNPOST



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

May 2021

What are you looking forward to?

We are slowly moving through the government roadmap of opening up from our lockdown. On the 12th April a lot of people were delighted they could once again sit outside a pub and have a pint of beer or whatever their preferred tippie is. Many folk were very happy that the hairdressers are now open, there will have been a great deal of sweeping up of hair clippings during this week! It has been easier to meet with family and friends outside and go for walks; plus the gyms are now opening - I think due to the lockdown excesses and boredom the increase in weight of quite a few of us means we will be looking forward to going to the gym or swimming.

May 17th is the next stage of opening up - so what are you looking forward to then? A meal out? The latest James Bond film, the release of which has been delayed several times, at last being available to watch? A football match? Finally on 21st June it is hoped all legal limits on social contact can be removed. So trips to see family and friends are allowed, we can make holiday plans. Weddings with a reception are allowed to happen – watch out clergy people, a busy time may ensue! I have booked the grandchildren to come and see grandad the first weekend we are allowed...

There is a sense of hope about our future and it is right to look forward to things opening up, it may not be as fully as before, but we will make the most of what we have. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

I now want to ask you, what you are looking forward to as a Christian. What do you want from God? How would you like God to move in your life? What gifts would you like God to give you?

If you could imagine Hartlepool is a town into which God has decided to shine His light and love, what would you expect or desire to happen in the town?

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.” Acts 2:17

I imagine that the Spirit will be at work, the Holy Spirit that touches hearts and minds and gives spiritual gifts to people to use. People will have Godly dreams and hope will rise in the hearts of all believers in this town. People getting excited about God and talking openly about Him. Then more and more people will join God's family and this town will become a beacon of light to all welcoming all to come to it.

I look forward to a time when God will be at work through his people. With that thought in mind then read the scripture below OUT LOUD a few times.

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”. Isaiah 6:8.

May God bless YOU richly.

Rev Clive

Mothers Union

Like many of you I suspect, I spent the afternoon of Saturday 17th April watching the funeral of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The pomp, the ceremony, the many touches of how to put on a magnificent occasion still only served to focus on one little figure sitting alone in a pew. But that figure, our Queen, has a strong Christian faith and although she will have her ninety fifth birthday soon, still trusts, worships and prays to our God, who she so plainly loves.

One of the commentators before the ceremony started said that he felt many people watching would have lost family and friends in the coronavirus outbreak and would be upset. Many of us older people have previously lived through bereavement, and understand the loss of parents, partners and children. Grief is a rite of passage that all humans face at one time or another. But we have an even stronger God than death and our God loves us and brings us through these awful times that are part of our lives.

I hope you all received "Connected" MU new bi-annual magazine. An excellent publication with lots of information about MU members around the world and what they are involved with. I haven't yet had time to read every item, but I do recommend it to you all.

St Matthew's will be reopening soon, but we still need permission to meet. I'll keep you informed of any developments. We would be in the Small Hall due to keeping apart from each other. Please hold our branch in your prayers. I think all of you have had the vaccination by now, but pray for those undergoing "normal treatment" for serious illnesses.

I've had my family visiting for nearly a week, they are in my bubble so that is five in all. My daughter Sarah, husband Stuart, grandson Robert (14) and granddaughters Rachel (12) and Holly (10). They left yesterday – I felt quite worn out and am going to do a big clear up on Monday! It was lovely to see how they had grown. It has been noisy and seemed to be always mealtimes! Robert is now as tall as his dad (6ft) but as Robert is a goalkeeper playing for two teams, that is an advantage. My dog and their dog are alright with each other, but Ember found her usual seats taken up and spent some time sulking! Peace at last...

Let us pray that as Lockdown is easing people continue being careful and we can return to meeting again soon.

God Bless
Ann Courtenay

Christian Aid Week

10 - 16 May 2021: Christian Aid 75th anniversary

Christian Aid was founded 75 years ago, by Church members like us, uniting together at the end of World War Two – determined to live out Jesus' teaching to love their neighbour, by offering love and care to those in need. Instead of focusing only on their own needs and rebuilding their own lives, they raised an incredible amount of money to help refugees right across Europe. But that was only the beginning.

Over the following decades this generosity became the inspiration for a movement of people bringing about real change right across the world – empowering communities to break the cycle of poverty and look forward to a more hopeful future. For many this has been through prayer and generous giving, and in supporting house to house collections during Christian Aid Week in May each year. The achievements of Christian aid include not just relief of immediate poverty and famine but investment in education, farming, water management, housing and many self-help programmes in developing countries.

We can celebrate those achievements together – because they are our achievements as well.

We can use them to remind us of what we are capable of as we now face one of the greatest challenges of all, the climate crisis. Christian Aid's work continues as the world continues to change. The challenge now, as it was 75 years ago, is to see beyond the personal hardships we have faced in the last year and the love that we have been able to share locally within our own community. We now have to look ahead and see what we can do in our time to support global communities as they, like us but from a less privileged position, face uncertainties and hardships from climate change affecting their farming, fishing, trade, education, sustainability - and for many their very livelihoods and survival.

House to House collections have not been the main focus of Christian aid week for some years now but prayer, fundraising and support activities are still very much what we seek to do at this time of year.



This year we are proposing to
Send out information and giving envelopes with our
Notices and magazine distribution.

Provide for wider distribution of giving envelopes
through families friends and work colleagues

Enable online giving through our Stranton Facebook
account and Website

Hold an open "thank offering" in Church on 16th May
including a "contactless" card payment option, as the
scaling down of "lockdown" continues .

Encourage and publicise individual fundraising
initiatives – let us have your ideas!

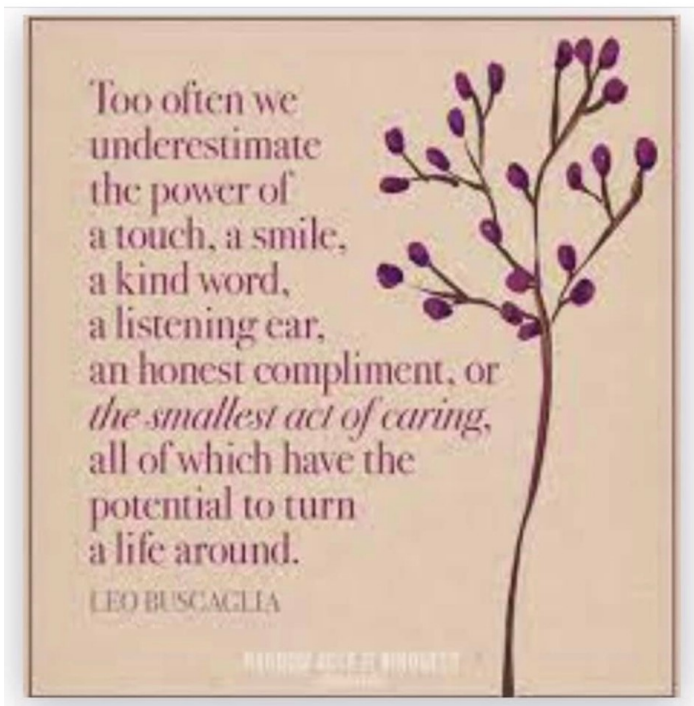
Please watch out for these opportunities and don't just take part – promote them with family, friends and colleagues as a means of sharing God's goodness with all.

For further information and (if you would like) some giving envelopes, **please contact Angela Craig or the Church Office**



75 Years of Hope

Put your faith into action through daily reflections and challenges



*I am the Lord your God
who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you, Do not fear;
I will help you.*

Isaiah 41:13 (NIV UK)

Reopening of St Matthew's Community Centre

The Centre reopened on Monday 12th April under the new guidelines which were confirmed by the Government on April 6th 2021. As you will be aware, these regulations severely restrict the activities which can take place at St Matthew's. We have informed all previous user groups of the current situation and they will decide, along with our advice, when it is safe and appropriate to return to the building. We have also posted the information on the relevant Facebook pages.

Despite these restrictions, there has been significant interest from new groups who may wish to use our facilities, but most of these groups must await the next announcement on May 17th or even June 21st.

In the mean time we have been reviewing and updating our covid-19 security measures so we will be ready to open fully when we receive the go ahead. This will be the third time we will have reopened St Matthew's, and like you, we hope this will be the last time we undergo this rather arduous, but essential process.

We remain cautiously optimistic and look forward to the future. If you would like any more information please call me 01429 290290.

Carol Laud

Sunday Club News!

Hi All,

I hope that everyone who has been watching the Online Sunday Club videos have been enjoying the stories and fun activities. Over the Easter break we had some bonus videos looking at the story of Easter. Our fun activities included decorating crosses, painting using our feet and decorating eggs.

We have lots of exciting activities coming up including making instruments, creating crafts using pasta and baking biscuits! The videos will be available on the Stranton Sunday Club Facebook page and the church website. You can also catch up on previous videos by visiting the church website or Sunday Club Facebook page.

What's coming up?

25 th April	The Battle of Jericho
2 nd May	Deborah Leads the Way
9 th May	Gideon's Battle
16 th May	Samson
23 rd May	Ruth and Naomi
30 th May	Israel's First King

Enjoy,

Kate

Stranton Sunday Club Leader

Sunday Club Easter Presents

During Easter we created Easter gift bags for children and families within our church. The gift bags included an Easter egg, colouring pages, a craft activity set and a nest cake kit. The family nest cake kits included ingredients and instructions to create nest cakes to be shared. A big thanks goes to Azam for kindly translating the instructions into Farsi for our Iranian families. The children were all very excited to receive their gift bags and paint the small Easter decorations that were included in the craft activity. Eighteen children received an Easter egg, and ten families were given an Easter Nest Cake Kit to make together.

Here are some pictures of the Easter eggs that were distributed as well as the craft activity sets.



See what some of our young people have been up to over Easter:

Trinity made some delicious Easter nest cakes using our kit. She made them on her own and enjoyed eating them!

Tyler and Lorelai enjoyed decorating their Easter crafts.



"We have enjoyed joining in with Kate's on-line Sunday Club. The activities are fun, we have baked and made pancakes, done lots of colouring-in with the sheets Kate gave us and really enjoyed the quiz. We can't wait to go back to Sunday Club in church. Thank you Kate. Hope to see you soon." – Tyler and Lorelai



William and Eva also enjoyed decorating their Easter crafts, making the Easter nest cakes and talking about the Easter story.



"The cakes were super yummy! Easter is a really lovely time, it's for family, like Jesus and God are our family." - William

"Painting is my favourite thing! Also, we talked about Jesus and him being back to life at Easter" - Eva

Kate

Stranton Sunday Club Leader

Baptisms in Church on Sunday 11th April

Unfortunately due to Covid regulations we were unable to use the usual baptistery immersion pool for our baptisms but that did not detract from the happiness of the occasion for Leila, Elnaz and Mitra with her children Alice and Ava. Negar sang a song of praise and worship accompanied by Seth on guitar, Seth had given a brief translation of the words beforehand.

Leila, Elnaz and Mitra all gave testimonies about their baptisms, which were translated by Azam. We were very grateful to Azam who translated the order of service throughout.

Mitra, Alice and Ava



Leila



Alice pours the water into the font



Elnaz



The baptisms



Candles to represent Jesus the Light of the World



Astra Zeneca Quiz

Don't worry even under 30's can attempt this!!

- A** Which **A** was the brother of Moses?
- S** Which **S** was the first martyr?
- T** Which **T** is required in '_____ and obey' (Hymn)?
- R** What **R** did Jesus describe Peter?
- A** Which **A** is missing praise to the Lord the A_____ King of creation?
- Z** Where Elijah was fed by the widow of **Z**_____?
- E** Which **E** means God with us?
- N** Which **N** was a cupbearer to the King?
- E** Which **E** was the father of Hophni and Phinehas ?
- C** In what **C** did Jesus preach in the synagogue?
- A** What **A** was where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians?

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 months - J.A.R.

F

Dust plain flour on plants. It plugs insect breathing holes & is a stomach poison to caterpillars.

If frost strikes a tender plant, you can often save it from damage if you get up early & hose frost off before the sun - oils it off.

Fennel deters aphids.

If you have a dog fennel is a must for the garden. Plant by the kennel as it is said to deter fleas.

Bothered by flies – then place a pots of basil, tansy or eau-de-cologne mint by the door.

If using Maidenhair fern pick only mature stems, and sear the end over a flame. Submerge in cold water for 12 hours.

Church Services Annual Church Meeting

Through May Sunday Services will continue at 9am and 11am in Church and these will also be streamed as well.

The Church Annual Meeting (APCM) is on Sunday 16th May after the 11am service. We will arrange for church members to attend in person or online via zoom. In the next few weeks the Electoral Roll will be revised in preparation for the meeting. We will be looking to elect a new Church Warden and there will be spaces on the PCC - so please do prayerfully consider whether you might serve the Church in this way.

COH's Easter-date

Dear All, Easter has been a good time for the COH team and lots of fun has been had. We came together, supported by our dedicated volunteers, to run a family Easter event based in St Luke's Church. We had 'Easter story-telling' corners, 'nail your prayer into the cross' stations and 'painted pebbles' prayer stations. We also handed out Easter eggs, which had been donated by the parishes and by our supporters in the community, as well as age-appropriate Easter Story books and hot cross buns.

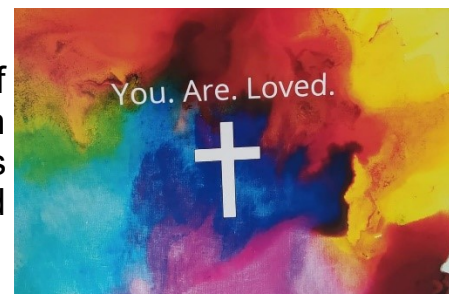


The pièce de résistance, however, was Teddy the miniature donkey, which families and volunteers alike (not to mention the team) swooned over and were welcome to pat and have photos taken with, in the garden. Teddy handed out daffodils (though Teddy was not allowed to see them, as he would have then tried to eat them!).

We hosted 24 families - all the available booking slots were filled up! 😊 It was a great setting for our event and we are very grateful to St Luke's parish for hosting us and to all our wonderful volunteers and donors for supporting us!!

We also donated food hampers, Easter eggs and some really lovely books to families we had initially met at Christmas. This was done in partnership with the Food Bank and Hartlepool Food Network and is witness to the deepening of the relationships we have been building with similarly minded agencies across town, in the last 6 months. More is planned for the summer holidays, so watch this space!

We were also able to share Easter eggs and messages of hope with homeless members of our community and with some of the people we have met through St Aidan's Kitchen, and who live in the area around there and around St Matthew's Community Centre.



We would like to thank all who, over the last 6 months, have been supporting us in any way, whether through donations, practical help or prayer, for all you do - we could not do it without you!

The COH Team 😊

An update from Mother Gemma

As you know, from my report at the APM last year, and in the magazine, and from here, my long-term plan is to join Craig and his children in Australia. COVID restrictions are still making this impossible, and the borders are still closed. But as things progress, so I also want to keep you informed. This past week I have been appointed as Priest-in-Charge of a church in Perth – St Paul's in Beaconsfield – and work is underway to arrange my visa for that. I don't know about timelines for this. In ordinary time, outside of a pandemic, this would take somewhere between 3-6 months, but it is possible it could take longer. It might not. As and when I know more, I will keep you updated. For now, if I may, can I ask for your prayers for me and for Craig and for the process, and please be assured of my prayers with you, as always.

Astra Zeneca Answers

A	Which A was the brother of Moses?	Aaron
S	Which S was the first martyr?	Stephen
T	Which T is required in '_____ and obey' (Hymn)?	Trust
R	What R did Jesus describe Peter?	Rock
A	Which A is missing praise to the Lord the A_____	King of creation? Almighty
Z	Where Elijah was fed by the widow of	Zarepeth
E	Which E means God with us?	Emmanuel
N	Which N was a cupbearer to the King?	Nehemiah
E	Which E was the father of Hophni and Phinehas?	Eli
A	What A was where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians?	Antioch

"If you know someone
who has lost a very important
person, and you're afraid to mention
them because you think you might
make them sad by reminding them
that they died--you're not reminding
them. They didn't forget they died.
What you're reminding them of is
that you remembered that they lived,
and that is a great gift."

— Elizabeth Edwards



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Comfort and Pain

The word comfort comes from the Latin confortare, meaning 'with strength and support'. This isn't just a warm gesture or a soft encouragement; comfort equips us to persevere.

'The University of Wisconsin's Center for the Study of Pain conducted an experiment in which researchers timed how long volunteers could keep their feet in buckets of freezing water. They discovered something very remarkable: whenever a companion was allowed in the room with the person whose feet were being frozen, he or she could endure the cold for twice as long as those who suffered alone. "The presence of another caring person doubles the amount of pain a person can endure," the researchers said. The same is undoubtedly true of emotional pain.'



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3–4 (NIV UK)

These encouraging words remind me that God is compassionate and comforting; but I only experience this when I let go of my fears and uncertainties, and when I allow Him to meet me where I am.

How well do you know your hymns?

- 1 The second verse begins.....
"Cold on his cradle the dew drops are shining"
How does the first verse begin?
- 2 Sir Arthur Sullivan was more famous for his Savoy operas than for hymn tune composing. However he did compose two tunes for a popular Harvest Hymn. What are the words of the first line and what are names of the tunes?
- 3 Frances Van Alstyne is known by what other name?
- 4 The well known Welsh hymn tune Ebenezer by T J Williams has a "nickname" . What is it and what is the literal translation?
- 5 Sabine Baring-Gould wrote the words of Onward Christian Soldiers. He also set to music "Saviour Teach me Day by Day". And named the tune Lew Trenchard. Who, what or where is Lew Trenchard?
- 6 D L Moody and I D Sankey. What do the initials stand for?
- 7 The hymn tune "All for Jesus" was written by whom? And featured in which famous choral work?
And finally.....
- 8 Remember I'm the sinner whom Jesus came to save" is from verse 3 and lines 3 and 4 of which hymn?

'I waited patiently for the Lord;

He turned to me and heard my cry.

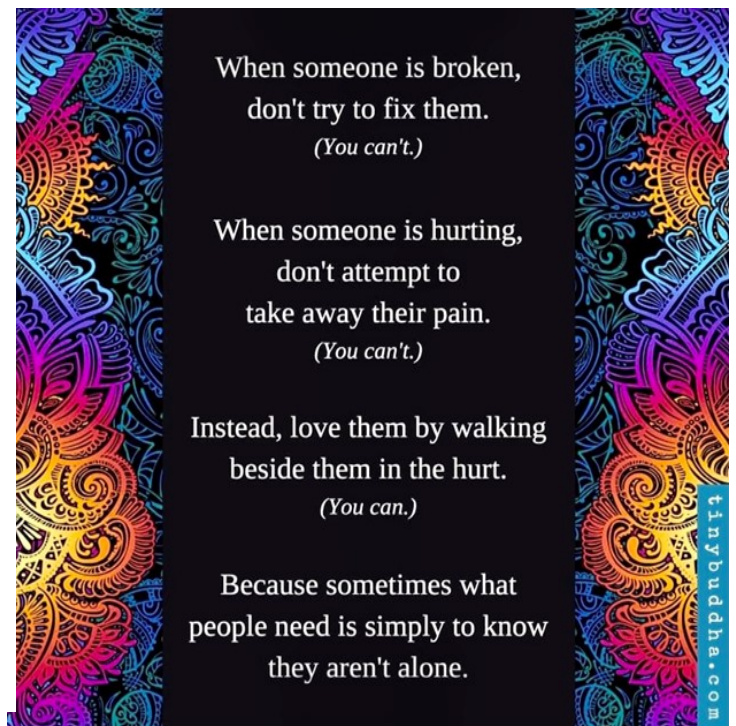
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,

out of the mud and mire;

He set my feet on a rock

and gave me a firm place to stand.'

Psalm 40:1-2



‘Remember my love.’

I asked God what he wanted to say to me for that day and these words came to me.

Then other words started to flow...

These words were for me, but I also know Jesus wants us all to hear them too..

“I loved you at your very worst.

My body took all your shame, sin and guilt.

If I wasn’t nailed to the cross, my love for you would have held me there.

Remember my love when you are struggling to love the person that at times is unlovable.

Remember my love when you find it hard to forgive.

Remember my love when you feel isolated from me.

Remember my love when people are against you.

Remember my love when your heart is hurting.

Remember my love when you don’t want to be sacrificial with your money or time.

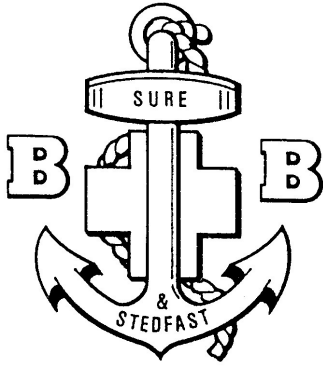
Remember my love when you’re weary of this world.

Remember that NOTHING can separate you from my love ...”

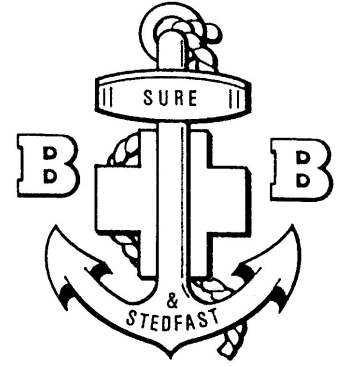
“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:38-39

Ang Hall



Boys Brigade The Re-Start



Just like the rest of the country we have been following the data and opening up dates from the Government, Boys Brigade HQ and St Matthew's Community Centre Committee, and finally April 12th was the designated date in which we could look forward to re-starting.

Juniors met on the 12th April where we did potted sports and practice, marching, devotions - The Grace, inspection and dodge ball before home time. It was great that we had 12 Boys attending and any missing Boys will be followed up.

Anchor Boys met on 16th April, in the large hall where we found out about the Anchor Boys Prayer, coloured in and played a series of games which were all timed, 5 Boys attended the night: This means we have room for new starters between the ages of 6 and 8 years old (school years 2 & 3).

Company - we played table tennis, pool, electronic games, football, dodge ball and rounders, 15 Lads attended and again those missing will be followed up

As this was our first night back in each section it was pleasing to see so many members there, however, as we hopefully start to leave the pandemic behind us it will still take a while for us to really fire up and start growing as a Company.

We now have a race track in St Matthew's Car Park - which in the summer term we will be using as part of our programme.

If you would like to see pictures and videos of our Company in action why not visit our Facebook page - 4th Hartlepool Boys Brigade

George Bainbridge

Mary Baines Recipes

Pork loaf

6 oz streaky bacon	3 oz fresh breadcrumbs
8 oz minced belly pork	1 small onion finely chopped
1 teaspoon mixed herbs	1 tablespoon tomato puree
1 egg beaten	1 tablespoon cream/ whole milk

Stretch bacon with the back of a knife & line small loaf tin.

Mix together all the other ingredients & add egg & cream to bind together

Pack this on top of the bacon. Press well down & cover with greaseproof paper.

Stand loaf tin in tray of water so pork is steamed. Bake at 190oc, Gas 5 for about 1½ hours.

Leave to cool & turn out. Serve with salads in buffet.

Zealand Orange Slice

3 oz butter	3 oz chopped walnuts
Grated rind of an orange	½ tin condensed milk
1½ pkts plain biscuits – crushed	
½ cup coconut	juice from ½ orange

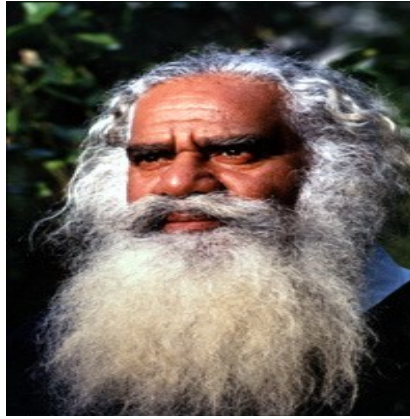
Place all ingredients in a bowl & mix well together. Press into a greased, lined Swiss Roll tin.

Make some orange icing using icing sugar & some of juice from remaining ½ of orange. Cover the mixture, cut & store in fridge.

Answers to Hymn tune quiz

- 1 Brightest and best of the sons of the morning
- 2 To thee O Lord our hearts we raise. “Golden Sheaves” and “Bishopgarth”
- 3 Fanny Crosby
- 4 Ebenezer. Ton-y-Botel The Bottle Tune
- 5 Village in Devon where he was for many years the vicar and the “Squire” – The “Squarson”
- 6 Dwight Lyman Moody Ira David Sankey
- 7 J Stainer Crucifixion
- 8 Tell me the Old Old Story (Katherine Hankey Music W H Doane)

Burnum Burnum



England was once claimed by an Aboriginal man. Burnum Burnum. January 1988. 200 years since the first fleet arrived in so called Australia.

These were his words:

Transcript: "The Burnum Burnum Declaration England, 26th January, 1988

I, Burnum Burnum, being a nobleman of ancient Australia do hereby take possession of England on behalf of the Aboriginal people. In claiming this colonial outpost, we wish no harm to you natives, but assure you that we are here to bring you good manners, refinement and an opportunity to make a Koompartoo - 'a fresh start'. Henceforth, an Aboriginal face shall appear on your coins and stamps to signify our sovereignty over this domain. For the more advanced, bring the complex language of the Pitjantjajara; we will teach you how to have a spiritual relationship with the Earth and show you how to get bush tucker.

We do not intend to souvenir, pickle and preserve the heads of 2000 of your people, nor to publicly display the skeletal remains of your Royal Highness, as was done to our Queen Truganninni for 80 years. Neither do we intend to poison your water holes, lace your flour with strychnine or introduce you to highly toxic drugs. Based on our 50,000 year heritage, we acknowledge the need to preserve the Caucasian race as of interest to antiquity, although we may be inclined to conduct experiments by measuring the size of your skulls for levels of intelligence. We pledge not to sterilise your women, nor to separate your children from their families. We give an absolute undertaking that you shall not be placed onto the mentality of government handouts for the next five generations but you will enjoy the full benefits of Aboriginal equality. At the end of two hundred years, we will make a treaty to validate occupation by peaceful means and not by conquest.

Finally, we solemnly promise not to make a quarry of England and export your valuable minerals back to the old country Australia, and we vow never to destroy three-quarters of your trees, but to encourage Earth Repair Action to unite people, communities, religions and nations in a common, productive, peaceful purpose.

CELEBRATE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
to

May

Barbara Busby
Sarah Cartwright
Eve Coils
Elspeth Craig
Kath Harkness
Andrew Rogers
Michael Thompson
Kath Weimer
Janice Young



Wedding Anniversaries

Andrew & Louise Robertson
David & Megan Robertson
Amy & Phil Warnes



If you have something to celebrate we would love to share it - email
admin@stranton-church.org.uk
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All entries to be in by the 16th of the month.

Memorandum

JMC

TO: Jesus, Son of Joseph
Woodcrafter Carpenter Shop
Nazareth

FROM: Jordan Management Consultants
Jerusalem

Dear Sir:

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have now taken our battery of tests; we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Sincerely yours,
Jordan Management Consultants

Who's Who

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

