

Stranton and Burbank Community

SIGNPOST



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

December / January 2021/22

‘At the heart of Christmas’

‘But Mary treasured all these words, and pondered them in her heart.’
Luke 2.19

In 2020, many of us experienced a Christmas when countless of the ways we traditionally mark the season were suddenly denied to us. Julie and I had planned to visit our daughter in Fife, but in the end spent Christmas Day with each other creating a very different feel.

This year, of course, we hope and pray that many of the familiar experiences that help Christmas come alive return to our homes, our churches and our communities. But whatever else December brings, it will offer us an opportunity to enter more deeply into the joyful mystery that lies at its heart: God becoming human in the birth of Jesus Christ.

Alongside time with family and the giving and receiving of gifts, each of our group churches has a series of events that will help keep the birth of Jesus ‘At the heart of Christmas.’ Please do come and join us for at least one of our special Christmas services or events.

If you would like to go deeper the Church of England has produced some resources either in book form, via the app or on line (<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/advent-and-christmas-2021-resources-heart-christmas>).

Inspired by readings from the Gospels of Luke and John read at so many Christmas services, *At the heart of Christmas* is an invitation to everyone to discover – or rediscover – the good news of God’s saving love as revealed in the birth of Jesus. It is also a challenge to each of us to ponder in our hearts – as Mary did – what the extraordinary events of the first Christmas might mean for us now and in the years ahead.

May we each discover Jesus at the heart of Christmas this year.

In peace and joy,
Norman

Mothers Union

Where has this year gone? At first January seemed endless but everything speeded up once we became accustomed to the slower pace of life and the Covid restrictions. Then when we gradually gained more normality we accelerated and here we are at Christmastide again. Last year I was all set to drive to stay with my family for Christmas on the outskirts of London, when it was decreed that wasn't to be. Fortunately I had the choice of various Christmas dinners here and eventually went to join with my middle brother Bob, his wife Julie and their four collie dogs, plus one old Westie (18!). Hopefully this year my family will be able to join with me here at Seaton.

We are meeting together on **Monday 6th December at 1:30pm** at St Matthew's CC for our Advent meeting. The following week on **Monday 13th December** at the Marine Hotel, Seaton Carew we are meeting for a Christmas meal. There are still a few places left, so please let me know if you would like to join us there.

Looking back over the year my memories are of being able to sing in church again, of restarting MU in September, and of getting up to date with the vaccines (flu too!) and a gradual return to what will be our normality. During this period my school friends and I have lost two of our number and other older and younger friends. Throughout all this God is there to console, to support, to teach that crying isn't a weakness but a release. Bible readings set down a year or two back are suddenly exactly right to be a great comfort, and very much needed.

As we approach 2022 may we continue to support each other, our clergy, our families and friends and those God guides to us, and help us to remain steadfast and sure members of the Mothers Union.

In 2022 we restart on **Monday 10th January at 1:30pm** – back to the second week of the month, to avoid Bank Holidays.

Let's join together in praying for a peaceful and prayerful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year. Please remember our NHS and all those involved in caring for others in their own homes and care homes.

God Bless, with love
Ann Courtenay

From the Home Front



As a small child my Auntie (who was also my godmother) frequently used to walk me from her home in Eastlands Ave to Ward Jackson Park and back. But our favourite time of year for these walks was autumn. She used to point out the diverse and changing colours of the leaves on the trees, which we would pick up and examine and identify their source. We looked for sycamore helicopters (often trying to catch them as they twirled to the ground!) and conkers (to prepare for games with my siblings), we watched the birds gobbling up the berries from the holly bushes and pecking at rosehips. However my favourite part of these walks was stamping through the crunchy fallen leaves – around the Park, along Wooler Road and Elwick Road and back along Newlands Avenue. In my childhood there were huge Victorian mansions at St Francis School, Northbrook Court, Elwick Road and in Newlands Avenue, all with a variety of large trees along their boundary walls. We would crunch and kick the leaves and I would toss armfuls into the air over and over again... It was wonderful fun and I learned such a lot about nature too.

Autumn leaves hold such precious memories released and relived every autumn. Now I am reliving these memories as I pass on the pleasure of 'crunchy leaves' to my grandsons and any unsuspecting children who are around as I crunch and kick my way through the leaves whenever possible! Calling in at the Vicarage the other day allowed me to run up and down through the leaves in the drive unseen, giggling away to myself!



I am in awe of God and His creation in the autumn – although the leaves are dying and will soon rot back into the earth, they give this kaleidoscope of colours along with amazing dances in the wind as their finale – God knows how to put on a show! I for one enjoy my front row ticket to as many performances as possible every autumn time. So as the seasons change do look for God's wonders – they are the greatest how on earth and they are all free for you and me.....

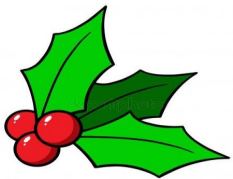
J.A.R.

Forest Church

"Forest Church is an informal, family-focussed, outdoor church community where we explore faith and nature together. We'd love you to gather round the campfire with us for toasted marshmallows, songs, stories and prayers. We explore interactive activity stations around the garden and finish with a picnic. Worried about getting chilly in winter? There's no such thing as bad weather - only bad preparation! We have gazebos and tarpaulins on hand if we get caught out. For more info contact Rachel (Rachel@stranton-church.org.uk) "

The next Forest Church is **30th Jan - 2-3:30pm** (winter hours!) – All welcome
Please note there is NO Forest Church in December.

Rachel



Communities of Hope



Hello everyone, it's that time of the year again, Christmas is almost here :o)
Like last year, we would like to show solidarity and God's abounding generosity to the lovely families and individuals we have been working with over the year, by putting together some festive hampers for them.

If anyone would like to support our efforts and reach out to some of the most struggling people in our community, could we please ask for donations in the form of cash or vouchers? Last year taught us that organising collection points is much more demanding than we had anticipated, and we hope this might help us, at a time when we are quite stretched on the ground. It will also mean we can do the shopping ourselves and ensure each hamper contains similar goodies, avoiding over-provision or under-provision of certain items.

If you would like to make a donation you can do so in person or by making a bank transfer using these details:

Stranton Parochial Church Council

Acc. N. 10146501

Sort Code 20 82 18

Reference: COH

Thank you so much for your continued support!

Emma, Jo and Aneta

Thanksgiving for Burbank Community Church

7th November



Today is a service which holds mixed emotions. This service marks the closure of Burbank Community Church, which had been a church on the Burbank Estate for about 25 years. Ruth Stranex came to live on the estate in 1994. I arrived in 2003 and we celebrated our 10 years in 2004 by inviting Ruth back to talk at the church service.

Today's readings are about Jonah who was called to leave his home town and go to Nineveh. Which he does do eventually, after a little detour involving a massive fish. In Mark we hear Jesus, this time calling the first disciples to come and follow me. They had to leave their jobs behind and start a new one with Jesus.

I personally have identified myself with Peter, a working class man, I worked in a factory when I was 16 till I was 30 years old. Then God called me - "Leave your home town and go to Malton near York and go to Bible College." This was the start of my training, God was getting me ready, moulding me so that in 2003, I would become the Stranton Church and Community Worker. God had made it clear it was a job he wanted me and my family to be doing.

Now I can't give a running account of all the things the Burbank Church has been involved in over the last 18 years. I did find a scrap book of some news items that I had cut out. I also found the folder that Ruth collected news items in.

I have always thought the church should reach people with its words, but also with its actions. So we all went gardening on the estate, litter picking, planted trees in the Community Garden, had benches made both for the Community Garden and the back alley. We did lunches on special days like Mothering Sunday. We went Carol singing into the old people's homes and even around the estate. Many people remember the Christmas service we did around the big Christmas tree in the Community Garden - it was -10C! We wanted to show and tell people about Jesus in as many ways as possible.

This was always done with the members of Burbank Church, we were a family a close family. Lots of people would come through our doors and after a while leave again, hopefully more refreshed than when they came. For me I always think back to the time when we lost a large number of people in a short space of time due to their relocating. The loss of 10 people really rocked the boat. I remember thinking

a big boat can let 10 people off and it would make no difference, but 10 people on a small boat would upset the balance. It did.

When Jesus called his disciple he was not calling them to a life which would never have problems and that God will provide all your wishes. Even though Burbank numbers and workers had dropped, on the Sunday we were blessed, and the spirit of God never left us, regardless if there was 8 or 18.

The disciples were adding to their numbers daily. God asked us are you being fruitful. This was the start of a process of asking people to pray, having church meetings, being open about what we felt God was doing and then we closed for the Pandemic. In all our prayer times and discussion we concluded that God had closed Burbank and He said do not re-open.

So we are very thankful for what God has done over the years for people of Burbank Estate, for the people who attended church and personally for the experience of being a shepherd to the sheep of God.

God called his disciples and they took his work to the surrounding areas. I now believe that in my calling as a priest God wants me to be a shepherd of a new flock. I do think the timing of this service, which was planned months ago, was preordained. We say good bye to Burbank Community Church and now I am going for an interview next Wednesday to be the vicar of three small parishes, which was described to me as 'they are sheep that need a shepherd'. I am excited about this call. There are also two other people being interviewed, so do pray that the will of God will be done through this time.

Rev Clive



Coffee or Tea, Cake and Company - 6th November



Folk from 4 to 90 years old enjoyed a choice of delicious cakes, tea or coffee, a Royal Quiz, Craft Corner, crochet support and a very good chat and catch up.

Please come along and join us at St Matthew's Community Centre on Saturday 4th December between 2pm and 4pm – we would love to have your company.....



St Matthew's
Community Centre
Elwick Road



Please come and join us

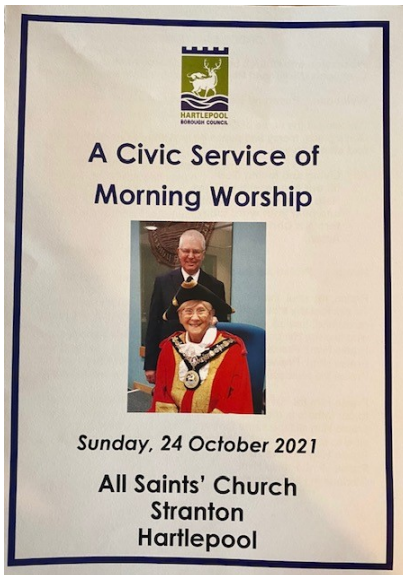
Saturday 4th December 2021

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Coffee or Tea, Cake and Company

*A time to spend together,
meet new people, make new friends*

Civic Service 24th October 2021



The Mayor Councillor Brenda Loynes and her consort Councillor Dennis Loynes Process into Stranton Church.

The Mayor's daughter Mandy receives chocolates for her birthday.

The Civic Party



Everyone joins in with the action song.



Councillor Dennis Loynes reads Colossians 3:12-15



Mayor Councillor Brenda Loynes reads Matthew 5:1-12



Fundraiser from Alice House Hospice explains the work of the Hospice which is the Mayor's charity along with Miles for Men – Walks for Women.



Stranton Sunday Club

This month in Sunday Club we have been thinking about how God protects us and Remembrance. Our fun activities have included making origami art, creating shields and decorating cakes.



We decorated cupcakes to look like poppies for Remembrance Day.



Here is Tyler and Trinity carefully painting their

Here are our finished cupcakes. Noah, Trinity and Melissa really enjoyed themselves especially getting to eat their cakes!



We created shields as we were learning about the Armour of God.

Lorelai and Noah both really enjoyed decorating their shields.



What's coming up:

December Dates for the Diary:

5th December – Christmas Dinner/Party

During our usual Sunday Club session, we will be having a special Christmas Dinner/Party. The children will get to enjoy a three-course meal (all snack size portions) of a starter, main and dessert. The children will also get to enjoy some Christmas games and listening to some Christmas music.

All children are welcome to come to our Sunday Club celebration! Please let me know if you wish your child to attend for catering purposes.

19th December – Nativity

This week there will not be a Sunday Club as we will be enjoying our nativity service. Our Nativity service will include Christmas hymns, prayers and Bible readings as well as some wonderful acting by our Sunday Club children!

If you would like to join in or help, please let me know, everyone is welcome to

either help or just to enjoy the service.

Our theme for January is 'Children of the Bible'.

9th January - David and Goliath

This week our bible reading is 1 Samuel 17:1-5. Our story can also be found on page 173 in the Beginner's Bible.

16th January – The Boy King Josiah

This week our bible reading is 2 Kings 22:1-23:3. Our story can also be found on page 235 in the Beginner's Bible.

30th January – Jesus is Lost!

This week our bible reading is Luke 2:14-52. Our bible story can also be found on page 296 in the Beginner's Bible.

Our theme for February is 'Moses'.

6th February – The Burning Bush

This week our bible reading is Exodus 3. Our bible story can also be found on page 98 in the Beginner's Bible.

If you have any questions about Sunday Club, please contact the church office or speak to me in church.

Enjoy,

Kate

Stranton Sunday Club Leader

Christmas Quiz

- C** Which **C** was called by the Roman Emperor?
- H** Which **H** was known as The Great?
- R** In which, **R** a town where there many tears?
- I** What **I** is the collective name for the children murdered by the King's soldiers
- S** Which **S** appeared in the sky?
- T** Which **T** is missing We _____ Kings of Orient are?
- M** Which **M** followed a heavenly sign?
- A** Which **A** ordered the Census?
- S** Which **S** were working on the hill side?

- Q** Which **Q** was the governor of Syria?
- U** Which **U** is missing? _____ us a boy is born?
- I** Which **I** was full?
- Z** Which **Z** was the father of John?

There is nowhere that God isn't already there

"You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you."

Psalms 139:5-12 NIV

These amazing verses have been going over and over in my mind this past week.

There is NOWHERE where God is not already there!

If I am awake in the early hours of the morning frustrated that I cannot sleep, your Spirit is there.

When I am walking into a freezing cold sea, your Spirit is right there with me.

When I'm rushing in between two doctor's surgeries because I went to the wrong one, your Spirit is reassuringly there.

When I'm sat in a grand church waiting for a funeral to start, your Holy Spirit is there.

When I'm praying and my prayers are not getting answered. When I'm not sensing God's closeness. Even in those times - your Holy Spirit is leaning close to me.

Mind blowing isn't it?

The Holy Spirit is always with those of us who love and follow Jesus.

He wants to speak into every situation of our lives. My/our job is to listen and obey his promptings.

A prayer for us all

Holy Spirit I repent of the times I hear you speaking and I don't respond.

I welcome your presence, your guidance, your counsel, your conviction.

I ask that you flood my mind, body and soul with your presence,

So that wherever I go I will be used to change atmospheres and bring your light into the darkness.

May I bring glory to your name.

Amen

Ang Hall

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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.

Q

Quinces go hand in hand with garlic.

R

If rhubarb starts flowering the plant is either short of water or food.

Short sticks of rhubarb buried in and around your cabbages will help protect against club root.

Rhododendrons like a dose of Epsom Salts.

Rosemary helps beans, cabbage and carrots grow well, but not potatoes.

Raspberries grow well with tansy.

Ranunculi – pick when the centres are smooth and before pollen ripens. Boil the ends for 30 seconds and soak in deep water before arranging them in a vase.

Roses – cut stem diagonally quarter of an inch above the spray of five leaves, never three leaves. A new flowering shoot develops in the fork and this method of pruning will give you a much longer period of flowers. Plunge stems immediately into boiling water. Bruise and scrape stems and leave in cold water.



Rose spray to control aphids – boil a few rhubarb leaves, cool and use. **Warning** this mixture is toxic so use and dispose of with care. Ensure any pans used for boiling are thoroughly cleaned.

Answers

Christmas quiz

C	Which C was called by the Roman Emperor?	census
H	Which H was known as The Great?	Herod
R	In which R, a town where there many tears?	Ramah
I	What is the collective name for the children murdered by the King's soldiers?	The Innocents
S	Which S appeared in the sky?	Star
T	Which T is missing We _____ Kings of Orient are?	Three
M	Which M followed a heavenly sign?	Magi
A	Which A ordered the Census?	Augustus
S	Which S were working on the hill side?	Shepherds
Q	Which Q was the governor of Syria?	Quirinius
U	Which U is missing? _____ us a boy is born?	Unto
I	What I was full?	Inn
Z	Which Z was the father of John?	Zechariah

Birds of a Feather

This time last year I decided to cut back my side garden to let the light in over the winter months. What I hadn't realised was that the foliage and branches which were hacked and sawn did indeed act as a wind barrier. Every time I went into my kitchen I was reminded of this. The birds too became targets for the 'raptors'. So this year only a minor trimming has taken place, I'm moving the bird tables out into the wide open spaces to ensure that the feeding birds don't become food themselves! I already have a young raptor – a merlin perhaps blown over from Scandinavia (lots of mixed greys) – coming into the courtyard at the back of the house. As this space is more open I assumed that the usual birds would be on guard. I forgot about the wood pigeons who are excessively greedy! My next door neighbour spotted an injured bird on his kitchen roof, unfortunately too far gone to save. The wood pigeons made me smile throughout the year but were always too hungry to fly away when the more aware birds did. This made me think of how we can forget our teaching and dwelling in God's word. We forget and refocus on things that get in the way of Christian life, things that can perhaps seem good for us, but can obscure what is really more beneficial for our development as being more mature and secure in God's love for us.

As we go into a new year, let us refocus on what God wants us to do, to be a channel of His love for our particular place in His world.

Another woodpigeon has appeared to join the lonely one – let's hope this one is a bit more aware!

Ann Courtenay



Christmas General Knowledge Quiz

- 1) Which king of England was crowned on Christmas Day?
- 2) Which sides played football on Christmas Day in 1914?
- 3) What were the three gifts given to Baby Jesus?
- 4) Who was Scrooge's dead partner?
- 5) Who mixed up an order in the movie Babes in Toyland (1934)?
- 6) Who had a Royal City?
- 7) What happened in 34th Street?
- 8) How many Wisemen were they?
- 9) Which country administers Christmas Island?
- 10) Which princess organised a Christmas box for the troops in 1914?

Do You Know My Name?



I was spotted a long time ago
By some fellows you will know,
These were instrumental guys right from the start
So much so, their story you'll know it by heart.

Their gifts are well known, what they brought
Gold, frankincense and myrrh have their fame.
They even accidentally gave me my name
Now that's a very welcoming thought.

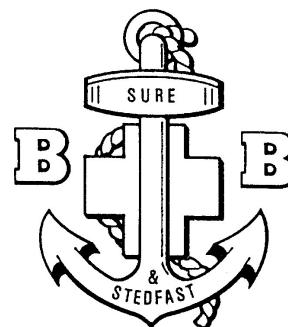
Mind you there was a little consternation
When they got confused with the location
They misplaced a palace for a birth of a king
For that, later there was much suffering.

But eventually they got the co-ordinates right
For over a lowly stable I shone my bright light.
Shepherds visited and soon were worshipping
Even the choirs of heavenly angels joined in.

Now to the point of this mysterious game
Have you guessed how I got my name?
You see those Magi star gazers travelled a far
Because of that, I am named the Bethlehem star.



Boys Brigade News



Christmas Plans

We have several activities happening, including our Christmas Fayre, charity selection box wrap (The Anchor Boys colour the tags the Juniors and Company wrap them), Christmas presents, activities (including snowball fight - with fake snowballs) and a Christmas meal.

Promotions

We are promoting two young leaders to Staff Sergeant, and five Lads to Lance Corporals, this will mean that they will be given more responsibility in various Boys Brigade Sections and can attend our Leaders' meetings.

Remembrance

Our Juniors made a display which was exhibited in Pools Surplus shop window in the run up to Remembrance Day.

All sections learnt about former BB Members who served in WW1 and WW2 who won the Victoria Cross. Also our Juniors were visited by Captain S Wells of the Cadet Corp who spoke about his visits to France and Belgium.

New Year

We intend to start a new recruiting campaign to boost each section and the Company section Lads will be starting a big project and hopefully getting the details of Camp 2022.

All at the 4th BB wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

George Bainbridge

Why not follow us on Facebook

Answers Christmas General Quiz

- 1) Which king of England was crowned on Christmas Day? William the Conqueror
- 2) Which sides played football on Christmas Day 1914? Germany & Britain
- 3) What were the three gifts given to Baby Jesus? Gold, Frankincense & Myrrh
- 4) Who was Scrooge's dead partner? Marley
- 5) Who mixed up an order in the movie Babes in Toyland (1934)? Stan Laurel
- 6) Who had a Royal City? David
- 7) What happened in 34th Street? Miracle
- 8) How many Wisemen were they? We don't know
- 9) Which country administers Christmas Island? Australia
- 10) Which princess organised a Christmas box for the troops in 1914?

Princess Mary

Link Letter no.2 October 2021



The waiting wait is finally over! Kati and I are so excited to be with CMS now, undergoing their training, and that we're on track for departure to Florianopolis, Brazil in January, just three months away!

Visa

On 12th October, Kati finally acquired her British citizenship, meaning we were in the clear to join CMS as mission partners in training. As you can imagine, we were overjoyed to receive this news after such a protracted, costly and complicated process.



Here is Kati, collecting her certificate at the ceremony which marks the end of a process which started the moment Kati first arrived in the UK in 2014!

In stark contrast, we were able to collect Eva's Brazilian passport in August on a morning when we popped into the Brazilian consulate in London! So in summary we're all set on the visa front! Thank you so much to those of you who have prayed and stuck by us throughout these years. We celebrate this moment with you as we now respond to our call to mission.

Kati at the ceremony for British citizenship on 12 October.

Eva at kindergarten in Oxford.



Joining up with CMS

So, having handed my notice to my employer, effectively marking the end of a 20-year professional career, we made the journey to Oxford, where CMS are headquartered. We teamed up with other people who are also participating in the residential training programme led by CMS. It's been really great to live in this community setting and getting to know other people being sent out to different parts of the world and learning of their stories.

Eva has now started attending kindergarten, which she has been really ready for. On week one, Eva was quite apprehensive around us leaving her there and now she now runs to embrace the teacher each morning!

The CMS course is intensive and we have already engaged with a wide range of seminars, most of which are face to face, while others are online. The workshops are diverse, ranging from theological practice and cultural preparation to offering opportunity for corporate prayer and worship and time to discuss readings we share together. CMS have a fantastic library – a great resource and Kati and I are working

through some books on pioneering mission in line with the future work we will be engaged with when we're overseas. Shared evening meal times have been good fun. We've now done around four weeks and we complete the course in the second week of December.

Practicalities during this period of transition

During October and November we will be visiting our supporting churches. This is essential to forge strong relationships for prayer and financial support while working in some challenging environments. We are so grateful for those churches who have committed to partnering with us. However, at this stage, we are still quite a long way off from having the funds needed to proceed with our move to Brazil in January 2022 as planned. We are now praying for more individuals who would be willing to journey with us in prayer and financial support. This will help sustain our work for the future. If you would like to partner with us and sign up for our regular updates, please visit <https://churchmissionsociety.org/people-in-mission/andy-and-kati-walsh/>.

Being forward-thinking, we've already enrolled Eva at a bilingual (Portuguese/English) infant school in Brazil which we've had recommended by her aunt who lives in Florianopolis. We know that Eva is going to really enjoy this school, which will be a short commute from where we anticipate we will be living. The school offers a range of interesting outdoor activities which we sense Eva's going to love.

Penitenciaria de Florianopolis, the prison for adult men.



A favela in Florianopolis.

Plan for when we arrive and outlook in Brazil

We recognise that we are arriving at a difficult time given the ongoing pandemic and changing regulations around traveller entry requirements. Recently, the Brazilian government introduced new quarantine measures for travellers from the UK and we trust that these measures do not become more complex before we depart.

Of course, we have been maintaining regular communication with the pastor at the Vineyard church where we will be members. The pastor has already made the leadership team aware of our approaching arrival. As you can imagine, we are all looking forward to meeting one another in person soon.

We anticipate we will hold regular prayer meetings on an ongoing basis with the leadership team to seek the Lord's will around groups which we should target such as the favela community, prison leavers, homeless people or refugees.



Favela children Kati will be supporting. We are conscious that as action-oriented people, we must be careful with getting busy quickly with mainstream church-related activities when we know our continuing focus will be on marginalised groups of people on the fringes of society. We understand the need to keep in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25).

There are many communities across the city that need to be reached with the gospel. Clearly we will pray and work closely in partnership with the leaders of the Vineyard church to understand how and where the Lord wants us to start.

Andy and Kati Walsh

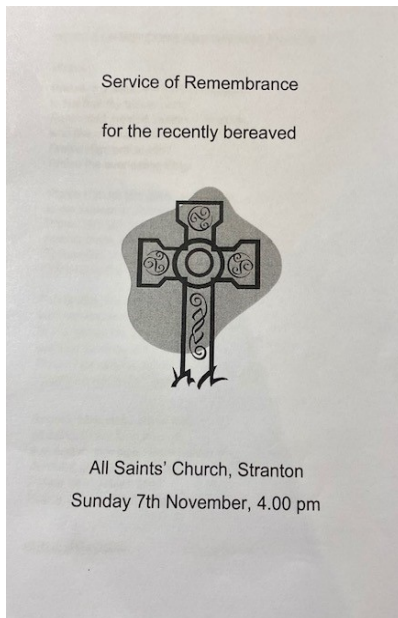
About Andy and Kati Walsh

We know this city well and that it is home to unreached and diverse marginalised communities. Over time, we will concentrate on engaging subcultures on the fringes including impoverished migrant communities and people that get caught in the cycle of crime just to survive.

Our outreach focus will be integrated with Vineyard Floripa, a church planted by fellow CMS mission partners. We will assume a training role at Vineyard Floripa's discipleship programme, with our activity centred on equipping and releasing its members to live out their mission focus – to make new disciples of Jesus.

Andy is a dual British/Argentine citizen fluent in Portuguese, and Kati is from Brazil, so Latin America has always been part of our lives and close to our hearts. Before we were married in Florianopolis in 2014, we had a profound sense based on our experiences that we were called to serve among the socially excluded and disadvantaged sectors of Brazil.

We are really up for the new challenges that lie ahead and we will of course be drawing on our personal experience. Kati, who is trained as a lawyer, has enjoyed mentoring young people in the past – particularly teenage girls who are susceptible to abuse and exploitation. Andy has over 20 years' experience leading mercy ministries through the church coupled with managing UK government-funded projects to help tackle homelessness and drug-related crime and initiatives to rehabilitate people caught up in the cycle of re-offending. In Leeds, Andy worked in a senior management position for a national housing association that provides housing solutions and specialist services for young people and adults who are socially excluded due to disabilities, mental health issues and homelessness.



A quiet time for reflection, grieving and tears, with support, love and God's promise of eternal life – much needed after the strange and sad times we have all endured....

A Big **THANK YOU**



All Saints Stranton Church

for supporting Hartlepool Foodbank
with your amazing donation of 154.40kg

Your donation is equivalent to 367 meals and will make a BIG difference to local people in crisis.

Hartlepool foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust's UK wide foodbank network.



Registered Charity Number:1152046 | Registered in England and Wales

Blast from the past – Mary Baines’ Festive Recipes

Tomato and Mint Soup

2 tins of chopped tomatoes
2 tablesp tomato puree
2 medium onions chopped
1 clove of garlic – crushed
1 tablesp brown sugar
1 tablesp olive oil
 $\frac{3}{4}$ pint vegetable stock

Seasoning

1 oz mint leaves

Dash of lemon juice

Saute onions in hot oil with garlic. Add tomatoes and mint – simmer for 7 minutes

Add tomato puree, seasoning, stock, lemon juice and sugar – simmer for further 5 minutes.

Serve with a blob of Greek yogurt & more chopped mint.



Christmas Compote

4 oz dried apricots
4 oz dried figs
4oz dried prunes
4 oz raisons
2 large oranges
 $\frac{1}{2}$ pint cold water
12 fl oz port

To serve – 2 oz flaked or sliced almonds – toasted

Place fruit in large pan. Scrub one orange then slice into thin rounds cut each round into 4 (save any juice)

Add these together with raisons to rest of fruit in pan and pour on water and simmer for 15 minutes.

Squeeze the juice from the other orange and when the fruit is cooked add to the pan together with the port.

Leave to cool then refrigerate for 24 hours to develop flavours. Serve sprinkled with toasted almonds and single cream or ice cream.



The Bear Ladies

CHRISTMAS EVENT

AND CRAFT SALE

@The Duke of Cleveland

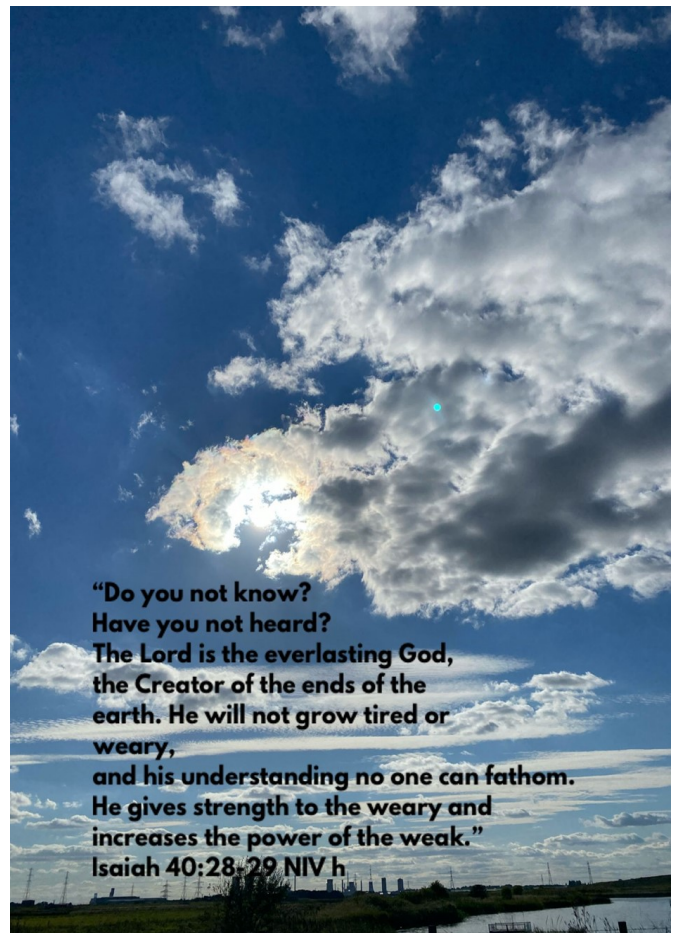
Bears and crafts for sale followed by mulled wine and Xmas nibbles

Saturday December 11th 2021
10.30 am - 1.30pm

For more info contact Jill Barrett
Tel: 07790110086

BEAR LADIES
SUPPORTING KILMATINOE BURN UNIT

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"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."
Isaiah 40:28-29 NIV

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me, I'm glad I've bought fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.

On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard, as we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.

On the third day of Christmas we'd people from next door, the turkey tasted just as good as it had the day before.

Day four relations came to stay, poor Gran is looking old, we finished up the Christmas pud and ate the turkey cold.

On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes flurried, but we were nice and warm inside – we had the turkey curried.

On the sixth day I must admit the turkey spirit died, the children fought and bickered, we ate the turkey fried.

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love gave a wince, when he sat at the table and were offered turkey mince.

Day eight nerves were getting frayed, the dog had run for shelter, I served up turkey pancakes with a glass of Alka Seltzer.

On day nine our cat left home, at lunch dad began to cry, he said he couldn't face the thought of eating turkey pie.

By day ten the cake had gone and chocolate yule log too, as if it wasn't bad enough we suffered turkey stew.

On the eleventh day of Christmas, the Christmas tree was moulting, mince pies were hard as rock and the turkey was revolting.

On the twelfth day of Christmas at last dad smacked his lips, the guests had gone, the turkey too,.... we dined on fish and chips.

Anon J.A.

CELEBRATE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

December

Noah Coils
Siobahn Connell
Ann Courtenay
Eloise Dobbin
Chloe Greenwood
Diane Greenwood
Benjamin Hall
Joseph Hall
Pam Hutchinson
Heather Jennett
Catherine Padgett
Julie Shave
Robbie Spoors
Ella Spoors
Lilly Spoors
Mary Tones
Mark Tones
Josie Watson

January

Tyler Anderson
Frances Boyd
James Boyd
Michelle Butler
David Craig
Nancy Fearnie
Clive Hall
Daniel Hart
Doreen Lathan
Callum Lithgo
Carol Moore
Trish Playfor
Catriona Robertson
Kieran Scott
Isabel Spoors
Luke Tones
Alice Gilhespy- Swann

Wedding Anniversary

Jack Rogers & Gina Guo
Rob & Michelle Butler
Eve & Ben Coils

Congratulation to

to Jenny & James
On the birth of Poppy Rae on 8th November
weighing 6lb 12oz
First grandchild for Mary & Kevin Tones

If you have something to celebrate we would love to share it - email
admin@stranton-church.org.uk
or phone 864006.

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

Dates for the Diary

Christmas Services 2021

Sunday 12th December

Christingle Service

4.00pm at Stranton Church

collection for the Children's Society

Sunday 19th December

Nativity Service

11.00am at Stranton Church

Carols by Candlelight

6.00pm at Stranton Church

traditional carols and readings

Christmas Eve 24th December

Family Christmas Service

4.30pm at Stranton Church

short all-age worship

Midnight Communion

11.00pm at Stranton Church

a traditional service to see in Christmas

Christmas Day

Family Communion

10.00am at Stranton Church

Join us for a special Christmas celebration

Boxing Day 26th December

Holy Communion

10.45am at St Aidan's

Other dates:

Saturday 4th December Coffee or Tea, Cake & Company 2.00pm St Matthew's CC

On **Sunday 5th December** we welcome the Paton family, our link missionaries. We give thanks for their ministry in East Asia and pray for them as they move on to a new ministry.

On **Sunday 9th January** we welcome the Walsh family, who are to be our new link missionaries with CMS. They are preparing to leave for Brazil in the early part of 2022.

The next Forest Church is **30th Jan - 2-3:30pm** (winter hours!) – All welcome

Evelyn Hartley

The death of Evelyn Hartley on 14th November was announced in church. She was a quiet stalwart within Stranton for many years. Ray Waller always called her one of the 'Golden Girls' – who gave encouraging words and with whom you were guaranteed reassuring conversation.

When David Craig first became Parish Treasurer she was already in place as Assistant Treasurer. He remembers her as being very supportive, she knew what needed doing and just got on and did it. She was efficient and extremely thorough in her work. Her quiet dependability made David's job so much easier and he learnt from her knowledge and professionalism. Evelyn faced life's challenges head on, depending on her faith in God. She was a devoted Mum to Christine and Pamela. Her involvement in the life and work of Stranton was appreciated by all who came into contact with her, she was respected and loved by many and will be sadly missed.

Evelyn was a good and faithful servant who will receive her heavenly reward.

J.A.R.

Who's Who

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

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Revd Norman Shave 34A Westbourne Road 233609
E-Mail: 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

Church Wardens	Peter Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266 Rohan Wanduragala 62 Clifton Avenue 223751
Music Group	Julie Shave 34A Westbourne Road 233609
PCC Secretary	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
Treasurer	David Craig 57 Claremont Drive 234279
Asst. Treasurer	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
Loyalty Treasurer	Peter Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
Notice Sheet	The Office (Notices by the preceding Wednesday)
Signpost Editorial	Jacqui Rogers 19 Trentbrooke Avenue 265527
Signpost Advertising	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
Signpost Subscription	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266
St Matthew's Booking	Trish Playfor Church Office 894006

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

