

Stranton and Burbank Community

SIGNPOST



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

February 2022

Hope is Happening

Hope is indeed happening. I am sure we all hope that the darkness and challenges of the last two years are passing, and that brighter days lie ahead. I truly believe that they do. Whilst I do not know what lies before us in terms of Covid, what I do know, is that we have a group of churches, a project and a team of people who are committed to bringing hope, faith and love to our town.

Those who have experienced it, know the love of God surpasses all understanding. It is like no other. Our faith in Jesus and the transforming power of the spirit gives us a hope that cannot be shaken. The hope we speak of, makes all things new, bringing freedom and wholeness to all. How can we keep this hidden? We can't, can we? This is the reason I have recently taken up the role as Project Lead at Communities of Hope. The good news is too good not to share.

The CoH team (including staff and volunteers) have already brought rays of light and love to our town. So much amazing work has happened, despite the challenges that lockdown and social distancing have brought. The project has established Open Skies Forest Church. We have worked in schools delivering Open the Book, prayer spaces and emotional literacy sessions. We have supported families and ran three community experience days. We have helped furnish houses, reused and recycled and enhanced community spaces. We have fed the hungry and supported people at the margins. We have created support groups, delivered bible studies and an Alpha Course. We have started creating a community. A Community of Hope. This is just the beginning. There is so much more work to do.

What are our plans? We are looking to expand our team and deliver volunteer training, so that we can respond to the new opportunities arising. We aim to engage with more schools, more children and create more opportunities for sharing the love of Jesus with those we meet.

I am excited to work with you all, to transform our town, into a beacon of God's love and hope.

Aneta Bradley (CoH Project Lead)

Mothers Union

Hopefully we will be able to meet in February to begin 2022. The decision not to start our session in January was not taken lightly, but based on the rise of Covid cases, putting Hartlepool very high on England's number of Covid cases. I will be in touch before February, when Covid numbers will have hopefully fallen.

Please continue to pray for MU members throughout the world affected by the virus and for those who have lost loved ones. Please use your MU Prayer Diary in the months to come to pray for our country and meet with the thousands praying throughout the world. If you have lost your copy, let me know as I have a few spares. This year the Prayer Diary has been updated and includes the whole year in one copy. Each month has its own prayer, a reflection and a creative prayer to inspire us. All over the world we meet with other MU groups and join together throughout the day with a true union, with sisters in Christ, praying together for those MU groups near and far.

I'll finish with the prayer on the front of the Prayer Dairy:

As we approach another year's beginning we are reminded that God's mercies are new every morning. We have held each other in prayer and in love, knowing that our togetherness makes us stronger, especially as we go through difficult times. Great is His faithfulness to us; great is our gratitude to one another.

Please remember to pray for our branch too and for all who aren't well.

God Bless,

Ann Courtenay

Booster Quiz

- B** Which **B** was where Jesus was anointed in Holy week?
- O** Which Mount **O** did Jesus and the disciples go to prior to His arrest?
- O** Which **O** was a prophet and an Old Testament book?
- S** Which **S** was a son of Noah?
- T** Which **T** was known as Didymus?
- E** What **E** road was Jesus walking to on the evening of the first Easter Sunday?
- R** Which **R** brought food to Elijah?

From the Home Front

After a stressful run up to Christmas and an extremely busy Christmastide with a house full of children and adults I was feeling very tired and weary, but also in need of peace and quiet. The phone call from my sister asking me if I could go and dog sit (she has nine working Labradors and spaniels), whilst she and her husband went on a visit to Yorkshire was an answer to prayer.



Her home, high in a quiet valley in the Scottish Borders has long been my release place – but to be on my own would make it even more special. Walking trained dogs is a joy – they return when called and their boundless enthusiasm and joy of life is inspiring. As we walked in the hard frosted and snowy field and garden it gave me time to talk to God and to try and straighten out my frazzled mind. The days on my own gave me down time where I didn't have to meet anyone else's needs or keep to routines. I read, slept, and watched the birds which all day mob the feeders outside of the kitchen windows – finches of many varieties, sparrows, blue tits, coal tits, long tail tits, starlings, blackbirds and even a woodpecker jostle the crows and pigeons for the nuts, scraps and fatballs. It was an ever changing picture as birds came and went constantly – searching for food to survive the cold winter days.



The verse from Matthew 6:2 came to mind each day *'Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?'*

When the snow fell, enabling me to stay two extra days it was wonderful to walk up the road to the ruined castle and to climb up its wall to view the beauty of the valley covered in a blanket of snow, to hear the whoops of the children and watch as they sledged and skied on the surrounding hills (they had not returned to school at that point).

Because my return was delayed to a Saturday I had a relaxing drive back through the countryside on nearly deserted roads until I reached Ponteland. The Lord had provided tranquillity, rest and a meeting place with Him so that I returned renewed and strengthened and 'fed' for the next onslaught life was going to through my way - Covid arriving in our house!!

J.A.R.



Anita – our ordinand in training



“The last 3 months seem to have flown by and I am already half way through my 6 month placement with Central Hartlepool Churches! I’ve managed to visit each of the wonderful churches in this group and I’ve experienced the beautiful diversity in worship and service. I have also experienced what each has in common – a warmth and love of Jesus, which is tangibly and visibly lived out in the welcome and work of each church.

Most memorable moments so far include:

- my first ever experience of wearing robes under the watchful care and guidance of Brian.
- attending zoom morning prayer, made all the more special by the ecumenical make-up of the group, a humbling reflection of God’s people together in prayer and worship to our loving Father God – and the bonus of learning much about the saints commemorated in the various feast days!
- attending the Christmas services was very special – and seeing the churches so lovingly decorated in seasonal glory celebrating the birth of our saviour.

My final Sunday with the Hartlepool group will be by 24th April but there’s much to fit in before then. In my remaining time here, besides continuing to attend and contribute to regular Sunday services, I am looking forward to observing the active ministries within the local community

My first ever visit to Stranton Church was in 1990, attending a military wedding with my husband-to-be, little did I know then that I would be returning 32 years later on placement as an ordinand, He does indeed work in mysterious ways!”

Kind regards

Anita

Andy & Kati Walsh CMS missionary link visit 9th January



Our new CMS missionary link Andy Walsh came to Stranton to tell us about himself, wife Kati and daughter Eva. With only ten days to go before their departure, Andy came alone from Birmingham. He told us of how God has prepared him over the last 20 years and Kati since their marriage for their outreach and mission work, which they are to undertake via the

Vineyard Church in Florianopolis, Brazil. Their work will be in the Favela, adult male prison and amongst the abused and exploited. Favelas are shanty towns built on hillsides with no building safety regulations, the houses are prone to collapse, they have limited electricity and sanitation, no health or care services and are usually rife with crime and drugs. Prisons in Brazil have no rehabilitation or support when prisoners are released.

The Walsh's will keep us updated on their work. We pray for a safe journey and the safe arrival of their possessions, also for protection as they do God's will.

In terms of keeping communication lines open:

Firstly the link to our Facebook page can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/AndyKatiBrazil> We are keen to develop our profile with our supporting churches over time of course.

I also share a link to our CMS profile here <https://churchmissionsociety.org/people-in-mission/andy-and-kati-walsh/>.

In the event anyone who was unable to attend last Sunday (or if the sound wasn't so clear at the first service) I also include a link to the same presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVT5GFkPD94>
J.A.R.

The future for Rachel and Seth Price

As many of you will be aware, my time in Hartlepool and ordination training is coming to an end in a few months and I wanted to let you all know about my next steps coming up this summer.

I am hugely thankful to have been offered a curacy in St Peter's, Bentley, a parish on the north side of Doncaster in the Diocese of Sheffield. The parish has similarities with what I have experienced in the North East – an industrial past and strong sense of community identity – and the church is outward-looking, aiming to make a difference beyond the church walls and inviting people in. If all goes to plan I will be ordained deacon on Sunday 26th June in Sheffield Cathedral.

I'm really excited to step into a new role; it will of course be sad to leave the Central Hartlepool Group after only really a year of relatively unrestricted time here, but I am grateful for the opportunities you have all given me to minister and grow, which I feel have prepared me very well to move on.

Seth and I sense many answers to prayer in making the decision to move to Doncaster and away from the North East – the place we both came as undergrads in 2014 and where we have experienced such blessing and growth. There are still some significant unknowns – where we will live, what Seth will do after finishing his PhD later in the year, and I also have to finish my training at Cranmer Hall before leaving, so your prayers particularly for those things to become clear and smooth would be greatly appreciated.

In the meantime, I'm looking forward to the final five months I have here and hope to continue learning from the congregations and communities I feel so privileged to be a part of. I'm also compiling a bucket list of "things to do in Hartlepool before we leave" – any suggestions welcome!

Rachel

Answers for Booster Quiz

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| B Which B was where Jesus was anointed in Holy week? | Bethany |
| O Which Mount O did Jesus and the disciples go to prior to His arrest? | Mount of Olives |
| O Which O was a prophet and an Old Testament book? | Obadiah |
| S Which S was a son of Noah? | Shem |
| T Which t was known as Didymus? | Thomas (Greek for twin) |
| E What E road was Jesus walking to on the evening of the first Easter Sunday? | Emmaus |
| R Which R brought food to Elijah? | Ravens |

Central Group Churches joint Christmas Meal 16th December at The Golden Lion



Good food, fellowship and a glass of Christmas cheer was shared and enjoyed by congregation members of St Aidan's, St Luke's and Stranton.

Many thanks to Katherine Batty who organised the joint event.



Eulogy – Carol Joan Moore

6th January 1945 – 24th November 2021

Carol was born on 26th January 1945, this was in Hertfordshire to Joan and Bill, she had two sisters Margaret and Mary and the late William. She moved to Hartlepool when she was about 5 years old and lived near the hospital. She went to Jesmond Road jail house, which was the nickname of the school and Rossmere and Brierton Schools.

When she left school she worked at the Siemens Factory and a few other jobs including being a bar maid at the Woodcutter. When Carol was just 17 she met Arthur at the Rink, an extremely popular place for everyone in Hartlepool to attend at that time. When Arthur met Carol's dad for the first time it was said he was impressed with Arthur because he wore a suit. It was also said that when Arthur asked Bill for his daughter's hand in marriage he said - yes but it won't last? Carol and Arthur proved him wrong on that account. They got married in June 1963 in Seaton Carew Church. Starting their married lives living in a shared flat with an older couple living in the downstairs bit and they lived upstairs. The family then started to list all the different streets that they moved to in Hartlepool, which was quite a few.

Carol loved to sing and so loved musicals, she would watch Annie, Wizard of Oz, Hairspray, Cats and Mary Poppins and sang along with them all.

Carol attended the West Hartlepool Operatic and Dramatic Society. They were going to be doing the show, My Fair Lady, and Carol would be singing in the show, but Mary decided to be born just before the show started.

So now with all four children born, camping trips started to happen, there were memorable trips to Gunnerside, Dent and the High Force. Trips often alongside Keith and Cathy. Who was Arthur's sister and their family and their camper van. There was lots of family get togethers and good New Years Eve parties when they could have a good buffet meal together.

Carol was involved with a number of projects. She helped at the Mission Hall and Sunday Clubs. She helped at the Boys Brigade she even went to camp with them and she was the cook for the week. She did like to make people laugh and when family had sleep overs they often played at dressing up and there was always just so much laughter.

Carol and Arthur came and joined the Burbank Community Church, which I was the leader of, we quickly saw how much Carol loved to sing when she would just burst into song in a prayer time and we would all join in with her. Carol had a deep faith and loved to sing and write about it. Millie in 2016 helped Carol to have a little booklet published with some of her writings in it.

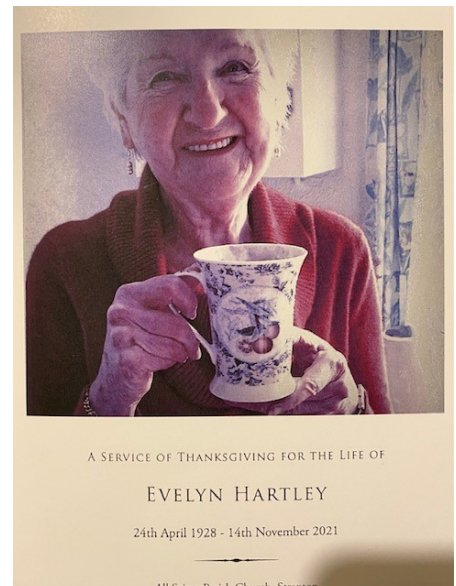
It was illness that kept them from church but I often went to visit them, Pamela Stockton a pastoral visitor from Stranton also went to see them and actually got to see Carol a few weeks ago and they were able to have home communion together.

Carol has had her fair share of illnesses over the years. Eloise said, "but she always kept positive". When I went to visit Carol at home she would often tell me

of her ailments but I was also surprised in just how much details she remembered things. She would say: I have Angina and I am on Ranexa medicine and I take 375 mg twice daily. Then for my blood pressure I am on Propranolol 80 Milligram". How did she remember the names and then the exact amount she was taking? The good memory was also shown when Arthur would be telling me a story. Such as we got a bus to hospital and Carol would say you mean taxi, Arthur says ok, and then say we went to ward 10, 11 chimed Carol, she just seemed to be able to recall so much detail within her memory's. I was delighted that even though she felt poorly Carol was able to make it to Evan and Eloise lovely wedding day.

We know you will lots of great memories of your own we have shared these few to just to remind you just how special a lady Carol Moore was to all who knew and loved her. She will be sorely missed.

Rev Clive



Two Lovely Ladies – Evelyn Hartley and Carol Moore

It was my pleasure and privilege to be the pastoral team contact for both Evelyn Hartley and Carol Moore over the last few years. It was a great loss to those who knew them when, first Evelyn and then shortly afterwards Carol, passed away in November. Two very different characters, but both active members of our congregation over many years. More recently both were unable to attend church because of ill health, but for me, when I remember them, the thing that stands out above all others, is their shared deep and lasting Christian faith, which sustained them to the end.

Evelyn had lived independently in a downstairs flat near the Burn Valley for many years and managed, with the support of her two daughters, to stay in her own home until a few weeks before her death. After suddenly becoming ill in August, she was admitted to hospital, where she then caught Covid. When she was discharged, she went back to her flat to be looked after by one of her daughters while she recovered. However, it became apparent during this time that she could

no longer manage in her own home, and she moved from the home and garden that she loved to Charlotte Grange nursing home. Unfortunately, a few weeks later she succumbed to a further bout of illness and was readmitted to hospital, where she died on 14th November, aged 93.

Evelyn was a quiet and unassuming lady, but she had an inner strength and determination and a steadfast faith. Of all the things I remember about her, the thing that always amazed me, was that I never heard her complain – about anything! This was despite her being housebound, suffering from several health problems, having difficulty walking and spending most of her time alone, especially during the lockdowns. Her home was an oasis of peace and calm and she was quite happy to be on her own, with daily phone calls and weekend visits from her daughters. She told me that she was never bored, though she did once express some regret at the things she could not do any more. She just quietly got on with her life, accepting whatever it threw at her. During the lockdowns, I had to stop visiting Evelyn, but she was grateful for phone calls and, as always, was content with her lot.

On the day of her funeral, a committal at the Crematorium was followed by a service of thanksgiving at Stranton, where both her daughters (Pam and Christine) spoke about Evelyn's life and character. Evelyn had experienced great adversity during her life, having had a difficult childhood when her mother had to work hard to keep them both following her father's early death, and then losing her husband many years ago. It seems she became self-sufficient and happy with her own company through these life events. It was after she lost her husband that she became involved in church life, becoming an active member of the congregation, enjoying social events and helping to manage church accounts, using the skills she employed in her job.

The intriguing thing about funerals is hearing information about someone's life that you did not know during their lifetime. There tends to be a lot we don't know about the lives of our more elderly church members, especially when they are no longer able to be active in church life. It is easy to forget that they were faithful members of the congregation, in the case of Evelyn (as recalled by Norman, who led the service) sitting in the same pew every week alongside her good friend Audrey, and that they have experienced a lot of life, often very interesting and sometimes surprising, before growing old. It is a revelation to hear about their younger years and the different stages of their lives and we saw some lovely photographs at Evelyn's funeral that illustrated these stages of her life.

Two very memorable things that stick in my mind from the eulogies given by Pam and Christine were as follows. Pam posed the question of whether or not Evelyn had had a good life and, after some pondering, concluded that, yes, she had had a good life, though not an easy one. Chris recounted movingly that Evelyn had told her that she was ready to die, because she looked forward to seeing Jesus face to face. The service was a fitting celebration of someone who will be sadly missed here, but who has now gone to be with the Jesus she so wanted to see.

Whilst Evelyn's death was in the end expected, Carol's was sudden and came as a shock to her family and friends, although she had struggled with a number of health issues for many years. Carol passed away on 24th November, aged 76. She was still living in the family home, but sadly without Arthur, who has been cared for in

Brierton Lodge for some time as a result of advanced dementia. He, of course, is part of Carol's story and we remember him in our prayers.

My memories of Carol are of someone who was kind, gentle, generous, grateful for anything you did for her and steadfast in the faith that supported her through life. Her two great loves, apart from her family, were children and music. I first met Carol many years ago when I took my younger daughter to SMACC (Stranton Mothers' and Children's Club!), where she looked after the children while the mothers did a bit of bible study and enjoyed a cup of tea and some much needed peace and quiet. Carol often talked about having a house full of children and teenagers as her own family were growing up and she showed me children's stories that she had written and had published. She had four children (John, Philip, Paul and Mary) and several grandchildren and she always talked about them when we met, but not exclusively because she was always interested in what was going on in my family too.

You couldn't be with Carol for long before her love of music manifested itself. When we were having home communion, she would suddenly launch into a worship song and I would join in as best I could. She had an amazing memory and seemed to know all the words of any song you could think of, as well as having an extensive repertoire of Bible verses. She recorded many songs and enjoyed singing as a way of ministering to others, for example in local care homes.

Carol's funeral service was at Stranton, followed by a committal at the Crematorium. Both services reflected Carol's deep faith and her love of music, with some of her favourite pieces of music and two poems which she had written. Her eldest son, John, gave a moving tribute to Carol which was full of happy memories from childhood, love and humour. Clive, who led the service, also paid tribute to Carol, who, with Arthur, had for many years been a regular member of the Burbank congregation.

Carol too endured hardships in her life, not least her long struggle with health problems, including cancer and more recently Parkinson's disease. As her son, John, told us in his tribute, the family had been summoned to her hospital bedside some years ago because she was not expected to survive. A naturally sociable person, she missed not being able to get to church and see people and life became harder when Arthur became ill with dementia, eventually having to go into care. However, Carol still found opportunities to share her faith with others, including the doctors, nurses and patients she met during her hospital visits, which were numerous, to the point where it was sometimes difficult to find a time to see her because so many days were taken up by appointments.

One thing that stands out for me when I think about Carol and for which I am grateful, is her affirming spirit. Whatever was going on in her life, she was grateful for anything you did and she treated you as if you were special. She knew that she was God's child and she made sure that you knew that you were too.

One of the hymns at Carol's funeral was 'O Jesus, I have promised' and the last lines of this hymn seem a fitting way to end:

"O guide me, call me, draw me, uphold me to the end;
And then in Heaven receive me, my Saviour and my Friend."

Pam Stockton

Adam Barton
Joiner & Carpenter

*Time served joiner,
Maintenance work carried out,
Internal replacement doors a speciality*

07877 316030
adam.barton@live.co.uk

Steven McConnell
Roofing Contractor

37 Greta Avenue
Hartlepool
TS25 5LE

Tel: 01429 221784
Fax: 01429 281609
Mobile 07850 925183

*Member of the National
Federation of Roofing
Contractors*



THE CARPET DOCTOR
COMMERCIAL & DOMESTIC
CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING
www.thecarpetdoctor.co.uk



TELEPHONE
01642 566551
Mobile 07770 451111



Victoria House
FUNERAL SERVICE

Under the personal guidance of



Carl Mean
Dip FD, MBIE



Apolena Wilson
Dip FD, MBIFD



Andrew Evans
MBIE



Andrew Gardner
Dip FD

TELEPHONE: (01429) 234777 • 26 VICTORIA ROAD, HARTLEPOOL TS26 8DD
WWW.VICTORIAHOUSEFUNERALSERVICE.CO.UK

Hartlepool & District Hospice

Provides free palliative care for patients.
Offers of voluntary help are always welcome ,
as are donations.

Please contact us at:

**Alice House Wells Avenue
Hartlepool. TS24 9DA
Tel: 01429 855555**



Stranton Business Centre

**Colin B Griffiths, FBII
49 Stockton Road
Hartlepool
TS25 1TX**

Telephone: 01429 280444

Mobile: 07932333779

Email: strantonbusinesscentre@hotmail.co.uk

www.strantonbusiness.co.uk

Joanna's Poochies Paradise

**147 Elwick Road
Hartlepool
TS26 9BW**

**Pet Shop
&
Dog Grooming**

01429 270056

K. W. Monkman Building Services

**Joinery, Glazing, Property
Repairs & Building Work**



**Reg. Office:
104 Elizabeth Way
Seaton Carew
Hartlepool**

**Telephone:
01429 277385**

BRABINER CARPETS

249 – 251 YORK ROAD
HARTLEPOOL
TS26 9AD

TEL: (01429) 272298



Established for over 75 years

Atkinson Print

& Printability Publishing

Proud to support Stranton Church News

Please get in touch with your Print requirements

- DISC TO PRESS - PC & MAC • COMPUTER TO PLATE • FULL COLOUR PRINTING
- LAMINATING • PRINT MANAGEMENT • DIGITAL COPYING & PRINTING
- FULL FINISHING SERVICE • PUBLISHING & RETAIL

10/11 LOWER CHURCH STREET HARTLEPOOL TS24 7DJ

Tel: (01429) 267849

www.atkinsonprint.co.uk • enquiries@atkinsonprint.co.uk

LET US HELP YOU GET THROUGH YOUR LOSS

We'll guide and assist you through all the
funeral arrangements.

Call us 24 hours a day.

**MASON'S
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
01429 862021**

129 Park Road, Hartlepool.
TS26 9HT



Our Stranton care team has been
providing award winning quality
home care since 1989.

We offer you a one to one live in care
service which enables you or your
loved one to remain at home with
compassion and dignity.

**To find out more, call:
0808 180 1033 or visit:
www.helpinghands.co.uk**

Keith Walker Ophthalmic Opticians

28 Victoria Road, Hartlepool
Tel: 01429 275551

Sunday Club Christmas Party!

We had a lovely three course mini meal for our Christmas party and the children enjoyed a fruity starter, turkey sandwich main course with cupcakes for dessert.



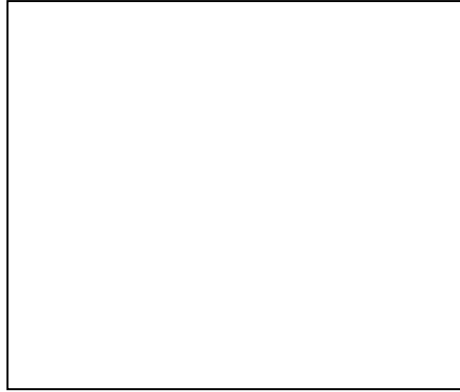
Ward Jackson Christmas Service in Church 17th December



Unfortunately due to rising Covid numbers parents were unable to attend, so the service was recorded and streamed for all to see. It was a fun-filled time with carols and wonderful songs and readings by each class, ending with balloons and confetti to celebrate the gift of the Son of God. Rev Clive gave a final prayer and blessing.

Sunday Club Nativity 19th December

With a reduced cast of children – Tyler, Lorelai, Melissa and Noah were helped out by Clive and Angela, Gill and Pam under the directorship of Kate. With traditional carols and enthusiasm the wonderful story of Jesus birth in Bethlehem was retold.



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.

S

A mulch of crushed pine needles will give strawberries added flavour.

An edging of pyrethrum around strawberry bed will keep many pests away.

Strawberries appreciate a feed about August. Thrive on dried blood or blood & bone.

Strawberries' friends are beans, borage, lettuce, nectarines, peaches and spinach.

Squash & sunflowers go together.

When sowing seeds mix with dried herbs to help keep away birds, mice and slugs.

With the first warm days snails will come out of hibernation. Protect tender shoots of perennials by encircling them with ash.

Snail bait – set small jars into the ground & fill with beer on which snails & slugs dote.

Slugs & snails being a nuisance – sprinkle crushed egg shells around your plants. Save your own seeds by tying a paper bag over the seed head as they begin to ripen.

Plant sage with cabbages, carrots, marjoram, strawberries, tomatoes – but not with cucumbers.

When arranging stock, remove most of the foliage. Crush & scrape the stems, place in boiling water for 2-3 minutes. Add one tablespoon of salt to half a litre of water in the vase.

For sweet peas plunge into hot water, then into cold. Add 2 tablespoons of sugar in one pint of water in the vase.

When transplanting shrubs put potato peelings into the hole – plants will not look back!

It is tempting to grow a single row of sweetcorn – but don't! it is wind pollinated and that happens better when it is planted in several short rows in a plot.

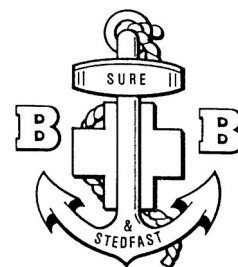
The Olive Branch Allotment Stall at Christmas Fair



Boys Brigade

New Year Plans

Our plans for the New Year include following the story of Jonah (including drawings, crafts, dot to dot, crosswords etc), a collecting and trading cards project, introducing drumming and potentially a summer camp, plus all the favourites such as games, exercises and most important of all friendships.



Plus we hope to recruit new starters in all sections to boost our numbers. - see below

Christmas Fayre

A BIG THANK YOU - although storm Arwen did it's best to stop the fayre, the final amount raised was just over £900.00 ... thankyou to everyone who helped and supported our fayre.

Recruiting Information

Anchor Boys (For 6 - 8yr olds) every Friday from 6.00 - 7.00pm

Juniors (For 8 -12yr olds) every Monday from 6.30 - 8.00pm

Company (For 11 - 18yr olds) every Friday from 7.15 - 9.00pm

Subs are £1.50 and all meetings are at St. Matthew's Community Centre Elwick Road.

If you would like to see more of our BB Company why not visit our Facebook page.

George Bainbridge

Birds of a Feather

The last few days I have been walking my dog (a black Labrador called Ember) in my local park at Seaton. The usual walk on the beach is deserted now as a warning of dogs of being sick and having diarrhoea has been issued. Ember loves the park she spends a lot of time sniffing about on her long lead and following scent trails of foxes and other animals.

Yesterday the day was very foggy and the seagulls and other birds were also in the park, but ignoring the few dogs that were there. About ten oyster catchers and other birds were there, these were a bit smaller, brownish with orange/red legs and slender bills. I looked these up when I returned home and they were red shanks. They weren't there today, but lots more oyster catchers were prodding the ground searching for food. Lots of common gulls were wading and bathing in the pools left behind after the recent storms along with their chicks, now full sized, but still in their first year brown plumage.

The park is still being tidied up after the bad weather before Christmas. A few of the larger older trees fell and have had to be removed. One of the memorial trees has been taken out, but the marker remains.

Sometimes the dog and I just sit and take in the fresh air and go home refreshed.

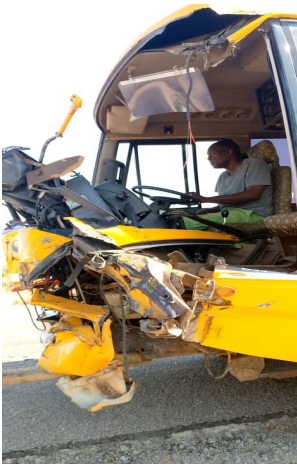
God gives us these times, sometimes in the midst of difficult or sad situations, when we feel on our own. He gives us the peace we need to continue, through a walk, a friend, wading birds or just the knowledge that we are not alone and we are loved and saved.

God bless

Ann Courtenay



Kilimatinde Update



Here is the news about the school bus.

We have bad news for St. John's English medium pre and primary school. Yesterday the school bus had an accident when the driver was driving to enter the main road at Chikuyu, 18 kilometres from Kilimatinde. We thank God nobody was injured. It looks like a write off and not sure raising funds for this is doable but they have asked me to share it.

However, the school bus is needed in order to continue with carrying students from home to school and from school to home. The truth is this, we don't have money currently.

Photos show the damaged school bus□

Kilimatinde

Happy New Year and thank you to everyone for reading the news about Kilimatinde. Thank you too for, praying for those who live and work in Kilimatinde and Manyoni, the patients who attend the hospital and burns unit, and the teachers and children at St John's school.

In 2021

We built a girls toilet block, assisted in the sponsorships of primary secondary and nursery children at the school and assisted in food provision,

At the hospital we continued with our commitment to providing the first 10 days of treatment free to all who are cared for in our little burn unit. The money required for this amount to £3000 per year and this year most of this has been raised from the Bear Lady project, so thank you to those who have contributed to this by buying bears or coming to events it's been lovely to share with you and see some of you. It's made such a big difference,

Below is a message from Canon Rafael Silla, who is a gifted priest, pharmacist and nurse who works in the Hospital mainly on the children's ward and in particular the burns unit.

Hi Jill

Hope your day is going well, I am on duty today, it is good to give you some data concerning the burns unit. From January 2021 we have received 15 burns patients, and most of these accidents, but only one, a boy of 15 years who is epileptic and he is living 45km from our hospital and is difficult to benefit him with my pharmacy program to supply medicine free of charge, but I tried my level best to discuss with the family to comply with daily medication.

On 19/01/21, we lost one patient who was referred from Manyoni, a two years old girl she was having a burn of 28%, and she is the only patient who died, cause of death septicaemia as her wounds when arrived at our hospital was already septic, we tried to rescue but in vain, we are so sad, as we always tell our clients and the Manyoni doctors not to retain burns patients since they don't have a burns unit.

We are happy that we have reduced the average hospital stay to our patients, the average now is two to three weeks, previously was one month to six months

Today we have discharged two patients and we remain with two old women and man, although in one to two weeks we expect to discharge them. An 18 years boy

has an interesting story as he was thrown in flame of 🔥 after being suspected of stealing a mobile phone; he was lucky as he managed to escape and run away

from fire. We thank you for your support and prayers for our burns unit, we have seen our potential to help people with burns. May God bless all who contribute in one way or another to sustain our burns unit.

The only challenge I see is that most of the burns patients are poor and to pay the total treatment cost is a problem. Meals is another obstacle to the healing process; healing is quicker for those who can afford a balanced diet.

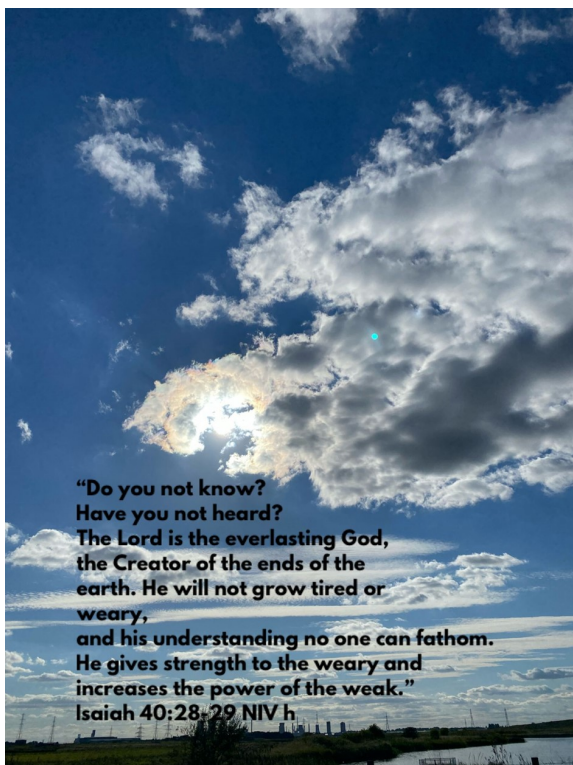
Thank you and stay blessed.



This year in 2022 we will continue to send more news from Kilimatide and the Bear Project, which will be ongoing with a teddy bear's picnic planned, Also, this year Bishop John Luppa from the Diocese of the Rift Valley will be visiting in August and Stephen Taylor will also be here at the same time (he was well known to Stranton church and founded the Kilimatide Trust.)

Thank you for your continued long-standing support to the Kilimatide Trust and the people of the Diocese of the Rift Valley.

God Bless you
Jill Barrett



Tony & Katherine Paton's visit 5th December 2021



Name: Katherine and Tony Paton and family now relocating from: South East Asia

Their role: Tony was chaplain for an organisation working across the country and pastors Church of the Holy Spirit.

Katherine supported Tony, looking after the children and teaching Sunday school.

Dear friends,

It has been a long time since our last letter. In common with the rest of the world, these months have been difficult. I write this not only so you can pray for us but also for others going through challenging transitions.

We have been back in the UK since 30 July. Our final year in South East Asia would have been traumatic without COVID-19. It was a wrench to leave our life of more than sixteen years. For all its challenges, it was home as well as work. It was friends, colleagues, classmates, brothers and sisters in Christ, roles and routines that had become very familiar in the best sense of the word. There were many things that could have led familiarity to become contempt: poverty, injustice, corruption, inadequate health provision, very bad driving, etc. However, we learned, if not to tolerate such things, at least to cope. We were to a large extent within our comfort zone and getting to that point had not been easy. Our final night was more frantic than we would have liked. With most of our furniture disposed of, Katherine and I lay down on cushions with a sheet spread over them. The alarm was set for 5.45am, as friends were picking us up early to take us to the airport. When we switched the light off it was 5.15 am!

Our memories of saying goodbye at the airport are rather hazy. Being so tired probably softened the trauma. Despite the early morning, a number of our friends came, which was lovely. I hate saying goodbyes, but knowing we are loved when we have to leave does help. Flying home during COVID-19 was surreal. We flew first to a ghost-town-like Kuala Lumpur airport, with few people and shops closed. However, Changi Airport in Singapore took top spot in the seriousness with which it was dealing with the pandemic. Chairs were covered to prevent people from sitting and we were divided into groups by destination, then assigned a minder who gave us instructions and guided us around the airport in single file. It was like something in nursery – but we did feel safe. Flying from Singapore to Amsterdam in an almost empty jet was undoubtedly our best experience of long-haul travel ever! Singapore Airlines in-flight service is very good under normal circumstances, but this was what I imagine travelling in a private jet is like. I told the children to make the most of being able to stretch across a row of seats for a good night's sleep. Our youngest, Eilidh, however, determined instead to watch almost everything she could on the in-flight entertainment. Getting a good night's sleep is

evidently not as appealing when you are nine years old! We landed at Amsterdam and were shocked by the difference in approach to keeping people “safe” from COVID-19. Social distancing was not being observed to anything like the extent it had been in Asia. While most people were wearing masks, quite a number had noses showing. After feeling so protected earlier in our journey, we felt much less secure. Because we had been living in a country with lower vaccine availability, none of us had been vaccinated. We therefore felt vulnerable when other people weren’t appearing to be careful. Despite looking forward to our flight to Aberdeen, following the coast of Scotland, it was a cold and almost deserted airport that welcomed us back to a cloudy UK. From the taxi to our house, despite the familiarity of some things, seeing changes since we were last “home” left us feeling as if we were aliens landing on another planet. This story is just part of my attempt to record our experience, as a way of trying to make sense of it. The whole is far too much detail for a link letter, so if you are interested in finding out more about our adventure

this far, do contact us. To fast forward from quarantine till now...

Praise points:

- We came back partly to help Anna, our oldest, settle into university life in the UK. Praise God, she seems to be doing well, was given a place in university halls, is enjoying her course (biomedical engineering), making friends and getting involved in CU and a supportive church in Glasgow.
- We came back to be nearer family, especially Tony’s elderly parents, and we are grateful that though their health is not as robust as it was, even on our last UK leave, we feel a sense of the “locust years” of our living so far away being restored. We are able to enjoy and appreciate seeing more of each other and doing things together, which is wonderful. There are many more but these will do for now.

Prayer points:

- Tony needs to find the right job as a full-time minister. Housing and schooling are to a great extent affected by where work is, so this prayer request is a really urgent priority.
- We have a house, which is a praise point, but having two teenaged sons and a nine-year-old daughter staying in a small bedroom together does not make for harmonious home life. Our two-bedroomed, terraced former council house, with neighbours on both sides, is bursting at the seams and we really hope we will find a bigger place sooner rather than later – see point 1!
- The children are settling in reasonably well at school. Although we might only be in our current location for a year, pray that this will be a positive experience for the children as they transition to life in the UK.
- We have done our first link visit. We hope to do as many as possible face to face. Pray for journeying mercies as we travel around the country and for encouraging and worthwhile visits.
- Please pray for our friends in SE Asia, dealing with further lockdown restrictions as community transmission rates rise with a large proportion of the country unvaccinated.

More to follow in our next link letter. God bless you and yours as we prepare to celebrate Advent and Christmas. May it be a time of great encouragement and hope for us all. Tony, Katherine, Anna, Innes, Euan and Eilidh



Divine Encounters - Divine Exchange

From the start of a New Year these words have not left me.

This is the year of divine encounters with the Holy Trinity.
 God wants to speak into your life and into your hearts.
 He wants you to be open to divine encounters with Him.
 When we encounter His holiness we are forever changed.

He wants you to pursue divine exchanges with Him.

Bring your anxiety to Him and He will give you His peace.

Exchange your indifference for His love.

Give Him your grief and He will give you His joy.

Pursue intimacy with Jesus invite him to sit with you as a friend would sit. Talk with him, be sure to listen as He has so much to share with you.

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”

Jeremiah 33:3 NIV

Invite the Holy Spirit to show you the areas of your life that need to be handed over to Him.

Invite Him to consume your whole being and have his way in your life.

I invite you to pray this prayer with me:

Holy Trinity at the start of this New Year, I invite you into every part of my life.

Thank you that you are holy, just and faithful.

I repent of my waywardness and lack of consistency.

I desire divine encounters and divine exchanges with you.

Open my eyes to see what you are doing so that I can join in.

Open my ears so I can hear what you want to say to me and others.

Open my mouth so that I can speak your truth boldly.

Thank you

Amen

Ang Hall

Stranton Church Loyalty scheme 2022

On behalf of Stranton Parochial Church Council, I would like to express thanks to all those who support the work of Stranton Church through regular giving by loyalty scheme – whether by weekly envelopes, bank standing order or the Parish Giving Scheme: I know we have all had a very difficult couple of years with lockdown restrictions limiting church services, so on behalf of the Church I would like to say how encouraged we are by the response of individuals who have continued to set aside financial support regularly through the loyalty scheme in its various forms, and by other specific donations to meet needs as they have arisen.

The Bible teaches that, by faith, we should be motivated to respond spiritually and materially in service, in prayer, and in our financial giving, to God's great generosity to us in the ministry and sacrifice of Jesus, and also in the support of our Christian brothers and sisters - not out of any sense of guilt or obligation, but out of love and grace and commitment to the Kingdom. We are taught the principles of "tithing" our income and of making a considered commitment in advance to regular giving. The need? Our Church faces many challenges and in particular some recent deaths from among our faithful fellowship and expected retirements and changes of circumstances would be likely (without any other response) to result in our regular income falling by around £8,000 this year.

If you are not currently a member of the Scheme and would like to contribute regularly, or if you wish to simplify and update your membership, I would encourage you to think about using the Church of England's approved "Parish Giving Scheme" ("PGS") through which you can manage your financial support to Stranton Church with the parish incurring less administrative cost and (if you are a taxpayer) enabling swift Charity Gift Aid recovery of tax (paid by deduction from your income). Since PGS started a few years ago Stranton Church through PGS now raises more than one third of its regular annual income.

A copy of an application form (including a direct debit mandate) is enclosed, which if you wish you can complete, sign and send **to the Parish Giving Scheme at the address shown**. Details on how to join online are also included weekly in Church Notices and the website <http://www/.stranton-church>. Donations made via PGS can be made anonymously, and an allowance may also be made for annual inflation [org.uk](http://www.org.uk) ; or you can join directly via:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/stranton-all-saints-ts24-7qt/> to help meet future rising costs. Regardless of your personal choice and method of giving, all donations are handled confidentially and the details members provide are used only in connection with necessary scheme administration, unless you have given written permission for any other uses.

Do please call **David Craig** (the Treasurer) 07960 829102 or send a note or email via the church office if you have any queries on the scheme. Many thanks!

CELEBRATE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

to

February

Caitlin Bruce
Angela Craig
Alex Craig
Charlotte Gleeson
Alan Harkness
Jeni Hart
Peter Hart
Jaydon Lithgo
Duncan Playfor
Jess Playfor
Jacqui Rogers
Sue Rumney
Connor Scott
Zac Spoors
Ian Taylor
Luke Tones
Gill Siddons
Chris Robinson



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

Dates for February

Worship continues on Sundays at 9am and 11am.

Midweek Holy Communion at St Matthew's 10am on Wednesdays

Tuesday 1st Alpha Course begins weekly, Fulthorpe Chapel

Monday 7th Group Council, St Aidan's Church 7pm

Sunday 13th Messy Church, St Matthew's CC 4pm

Tuesday 22nd Standing Committee, The Vicarage 7.30pm

Sunday 27th Lighthouse Service in Church with welcomes, 11am

Open Skies Forest Church, St Aidan's School 2pm

March

Wednesday 2nd Ash Wednesday:

10am Holy Communion, St Matthew's CC

7pm Holy Communion, St Aidan's

Tuesday 8th PCC, venue tba 7.30pm,

Take Time

Take time to think - it is the source of all power.

Take time to read - it is the foundation of wisdom.

Take time to play - it is the secret of staying young.

Take time to be quiet – it is the opportunity to seek God.

Take time to be aware – it is the opportunity to help others.

Take time to love and be loved – it is God's greatest gift.

Take time to laugh – it is the music of the soul.

Take time to be friendly – it is the road to happiness.

Take time to dream – it is what the future is made of.

Take time to pray – it is the greatest power on earth.

There is a time for everything...

SIX LITTLE STORIES WITH LOTS OF MEANINGS

(1). Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That is faith.

(2). When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them. That is trust.

(3). Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set the alarms to wake up. That is hope.

(4). We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. That is confidence.

(5). We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. That is love.

(6). On an old man's shirt was written a sentence 'I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience.' That is attitude.

Have a happy day and live your life like these six stories.
Remember - Good friends are the rare jewels of life,
difficult to find and impossible to replace!!

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

Vicar

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.

