

Stranton and Burbank Community

SIGNPOST



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

June 2023

Pentecost: The Birthday of the Church

Pentecost this year falls on 28th May. But what is it and why do we celebrate it in the church? Well, the word itself comes from the Greek meaning 50th day, which might give us a bit of a clue as to when we celebrate it - 50 days after Easter. It's known as the birthday of the church because it is believed that Pentecost Sunday, 50 days after the resurrection (and 10 days after the ascension), was the day that the promised Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and many others gathered with them. It's roots are in the Jewish Feast of Weeks, when the Jewish culture celebrates the giving of the Ten Commandments by God to Moses, 50 days after the Exodus, hence we read in Acts 2:1 **When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.**

The disciples were doing what Jesus had instructed them to do - they were waiting. And it was on this day that the Holy Spirit fell upon them. It's the birthday of the church because it was the day that Jesus' promise (in John 14) of the Advocate to be sent by the Father is fulfilled, and it's from this point forward that the Gospel started to spread out throughout the world. This is where and when the apostles were equipped to do God's work

It's from this point that we start to see many people being baptised. In fact, in Acts 2, just after the apostles encounter the Holy Spirit, Peter speaks to the gathered crowd and baptises 3000 people. That's the power of the Holy Spirit, the power that the Spirit can have in the world around us. The Holy Spirit that filled the place where they gathered. The Holy Spirit that enabled them to speak in other languages – both natural ones and supernatural ones. The Holy Spirit that drew such a huge crowd that Peter was able to baptise 3000 people!

That's what Pentecost is, and that's why we celebrate it as the birthday of the church!!

Many thanks,
John

Mothers Union

I was sorry to have to cancel our May meeting and hope to be able to get back to normal in this month of June.

Apologies if you haven't received your Durham Diocese Newsround Spring/Summer issue, I do hope to get them to you soon. In the Newsround are Durham dates for our diaries – unfortunately I'm unable to get to some of the meetings but do especially pray for those who can manage to go to the Festival Service on 13th June at the Cathedral.

Let's remember to pray too for our branch, for those who are unwell - for freedom from pain or discomfort and for God's peace. Pray for our church All Saints here in Stranton. Also for John our vicar and all those who minister to us.

Thank you
God Bless
Ann Courtenay

Birds of a Feather

The gardens - front, back and side, are all really busy lately with lots of parent birds seeking food for their chicks. Fights break out quite often with small birds taking on starlings and even pigeons.

The weather has been quite cool but still many birds turn up daily. I'm very surprised at the dunnocks who get pretty fierce with chasing away their first chicks when fledged. The adults frequently have multiple partners too!

The side garden is becoming rather crowded with bushes needing pruning but that does help to keep avian predators away. I have my friend's dog (Indie) as well as my own dog (Ember), Indie is always stuck behind the bigger garden plants!

Enjoy your gardens big or small and the wildlife at this amazing time of year – God makes space for them all.

Ann Courtenay

From the Home Front



ANZAC Day (the equivalent of our Remembrance Day) was commemorated on 25th April 2023 in Australia and New Zealand.

Whilst in Australia in February I was able to visit the Anzac Memorial and Museum in the seaside town of Albany in Western Australia. Not only was this port the arrival point for some of Australia's earliest settlers, but it was also the departure point for the Anzac forces in World War 1 heading for Gallipoli and

France. It was a very moving experience to climb to the top of the hill to the Memorial and to look out over the Bay and its islands and try to imagine what it must have felt like for those about to leave their loved ones to go to war at the other side of the world.

The Museum enabled its visitors to experience a personal journey through the war by allotting you an individual soldier on your entry ticket. As you progressed through the building and the events of the war, by placing your ticket on a contact point, the life of your soldier unfolded in words and pictures. My young soldier was Otto. I discovered all about his family - where they had emigrated from and where they had settled in Australia. Also insight into Otto's close family, his education and working life. I found out through family letters, newspaper articles and battle diaries all about his voyage to Gallipoli, the landings and the fighting. How he was wounded, recovered and was then posted on to France. He fought in more battles – always downplaying the fighting, injuries and death going on around him when he wrote home to his family. Otto was captured in Northern France and sent to a prisoner of war camp in Eastern Germany. He was malnourished, and sick from his unhealed wounds received during his capture. However he remained a POW for several years and communicated with his family, but three weeks before the war ended he contracted pneumonia and died. He was in his early twenties. I remember tears falling as his story unfolded and when I found out about his death. The futility of war and man's inhumanity to man, mixed with such bravery and feats of endurance led to a tsunami of emotions.

This wonderful sculpture showed the bond between cavalry men and their horses. But these hardworking loyal animals were all euthanised at the cessation of fighting – of the hundreds of horses transported from Australia to Europe only one horse returned to Australia – that belonging to the General in charge of the Anzac Force.



I watched this butterfly land and rest on the handrail leading up to the memorial. When it took flight it was caught in a current of air and blown straight out across the bay. Life is fragile and we never know when or where the crosswinds of life will take us. I felt that my faith in God and my Saviour Jesus has been, and will continue to sustain me through the good and bad events in my life. In Him can I trust when there is nothing

else left – His unconditional love is freely given from birth to death, no matter who or where we are.

J.A.R.

Inflation Quiz

- I** Which **I** is a colour seen in a rainbow?
- N** Which **N** was a cupbearer to a king?
- F** Which **F** was a procurator of Judea?
- L** Which **L** tricked Jacob into marrying?
- A** What **A** meant Father?
- T** Which **T** is a port in Lebanon? (Luke Ch.10)
- I** Which **I** has 66 chapters?
- O** What **O** is a mount?
- N** Which **N** was a disciple?

Rev Clive's final service 23rd April 2023



One final magic trick to illustrate a sermon – turning water into wine!





The Hall Family move into Clarkson Court seven years ago and leave in May 2023 – the boys are now young men and Clive a fully fledged vicar.



Installation of Rev Clive Hall at St Matthew's Withernsea 22nd May

Clive was installed at St Matthew's Withernsea by Bishop Eleanor, Suffragan Bishop of Hull, on a beautiful sunny evening in a church filled with deanery clergy, Methodist and UCR ministers, the Mayor, members of the community, St Matthew's congregation members, and a large contingent from Hartlepool (including three Stranton Vicars!).

It was a joyous and spirit filled service – a mixture of formal and informal; singing was led by the deanery choir and everyone joined in enthusiastically.

Clive led prayers which were inspired by views from the top of the white lighthouse almost next door to the church. A lovely time of fellowship followed during the buffet.

It was wonderful to see God's plans for Clive and Ang come to fruition. They are already feeling at home having been made very welcome by the residents of the town. Both are looking forward to doing the Lord's work in Withernsea.



Bishop Eleanor makes the Declaration and Oaths



Bishop Eleanor anoints and blesses Clive



Clive is presented to his new congregation

A rousing welcome from one and all brings smiles

Cutting the welcome cake



Hartlepool supporters



Rev Norman Shave, Rev Mike Gilbertson, Rev Clive Hall and
Rev John Bell– 20 plus years of clergy at Stranton

Inflation Quiz Answers

I	Which I is a colour seen in a rainbow?	Indigo
N	Which N was a cupbearer to a king?	Nehemiah
F	Which F was a procurator of Judea?	Felix
L	Which L tricked Jacob into marrying?	Leah
A	What A meant Father?	Abba
T	Which T is a port in Lebanon? (Luke Ch.10)	Tyre
I	Which I has 66 chapters?	Isaiah
O	What O is a mount?	Olives
N	Which N was a disciple?	Nathaniel



Thank You



Hi All

Thank you so much for a great send off and for a lovely joint service plus all your kind gifts.

We are beginning to settle into our new parish and the house is starting to feel like home.

With your generous gift we have been able to buy some lovely garden furniture and a three seater swing which when we sit on it, it makes us feel relaxed!

It was wonderful to see such a large group of our church family travel from Hartlepool, Chester le Street and Chester to support us at Clive's installation. Their presence was a real blessing to us both.

God bless you all
Rev Clive and Angela Hall

*St Matthew's
Community Centre
Elwick Road*



Please come and join us

Saturday 10th June 2023

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*

God is still on His throne

Hebrews 1:8 Your throne, O God will last for ever and your righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom.

v 18 You remain the same and your years will never end.

God is still on His throne. When did He ever get off? We may often find ourselves wanting to be in control and try pushing Him off, we do this by believing that we are in control and try to force and manipulate the circumstances in our lives.

How often do we focus on our own issues and make it all about us? Then think that we have to be the answer to the world's issues!

God is in complete control.

Nothing surprises God. Nothing scares God. Nothing worries God.

God is the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end and everything in between.

God is never stumped and thinks 'I don't have a clue what to do next!!'

God has the solution because He is the solution.

God wants us all to remember that when we worship Him we put Him in His rightful place. On the throne.

The throne that never changes, rusts or wears out. He is the one constant in our lives.

When we worship Him, He becomes central and He gets the praise and adoration He deserves. God desires our complete reliance on Him, not on ourselves.

God is our creator He knows what we need even before we do.

God's desire is for His children to come to him first before we start to worry, panic, stress, or spiral out of control.

Why - because He is our loving heavenly Father who loves to hear from His children.

He loves to commune with us. He loves it when we bring everything and lay it at His feet. He loves it when we ask Him questions, then wait to hear his answers.

The chorus from the Hymn 'God is still on the throne' by Kittie L Suffield written in 1929 is still true today in 2023

*God is still on the throne,
And He will remember His own;
Though trials may press us and burdens distress us,
He never will leave us alone;
God is still on the throne,
He never forsaketh His own;
His promise is true, He will not forget you,
God is still on the throne.*

Coronation Cake and Cuppa May 6th 2023



**A welcome for young and old to
celebrate this momentous day**



Eyes down for some hard thinking



**Look who wanted to join
in!**

**Enough food for the
Household Cavalry**



Communities of Hope

- "A Bit of God Time" in St Aidan's Church on Tuesday from 1:30pm to 2:30pm.
- "Play and Praise" toddler sessions (FREE) Mondays, free. 10.-11.15am at St Matthew's
- Women's support group, Mondays 1.00 - 3.00pm at St Matthew's.
- Mothers and Toddlers: Tuesdays 9.00am at St Matthews. Parish Information and Key Contact

**Are you planning a special celebration or party
and looking for a venue?**

**Have you thought about
St Matthew's Community Centre?**

**We have 2 large halls which can accommodate up to 140 persons
as well as 1 large and 2 small kitchens for your catering needs.**

**One hall is even big enough to house a bouncy castle –
ideal for children's parties.**

**We also have our own private car park and some outdoor space if you fancy
al fresco fun for your guests.**

**If you would like further information please call:
Trish Playfor (01429 894006) during office hours,
or Carol Laud (01429 290290)
and we will be happy to help.**

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Stranton Church Bellringing



In answer to the nationwide call to 'Ring for the King' - St Oswald's, St Aidan's and All Saints Bellringers celebrated the Coronation Day of King Charles III ringing in the ceremony. Andrew Frost of Hartlepool Guild of Bellringers reported that the day had gone extremely well, with a total of 20 ringers across the three churches. A 45 minute quarter peel was rung. In addition our Church Tower flag was flying, both bells and flag calling attention to the centrality of our faith in this community and the life of our nation and King.



With thanks to Hartlepool Life photographer

SCRIPTURE UNION

"Equip" is running a further three workshops at Chester Le Street to equip and inspire leaders and volunteers in mission with children and young people.

We'd love to see you at one or more of the 2 sessions to run! Booking link below

o 14 June 7:30 Games and Sports

o 11 July 7:30 Influencers <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx>

HARTLEPOOL Town Pastors

The "Street Angels", are still seeking volunteers.

email: aide.hartlepooltownpastors@outlook.com if interested



Ward Jackson Primary School

24 m · 🌐

Some of our younger children from Tugboats enjoyed a walk to Tesco this afternoon. They bought some yummy treats for the rest of the children. 🧁



Would like to say a big thank you to all the community champions at Tesco, who very kindly donated fruit to help our year six children throughout the SAT'S week. Thank you .

A huge thank you to Jackie who works for the community champions at Asda Hartlepool. Jackie and her team have supported our school on many occasions. This year alone she as donated her time and food to help our year 4/5 cook delicious oriental food. Last week they donated a trolley full of goodies to help the year 6 children with their SAT's. Thank you once again for your excellent support.





Boys Brigade

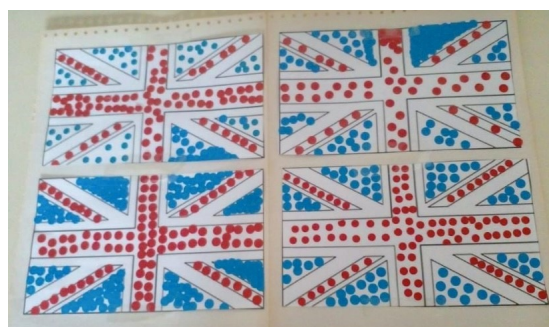
Company lads doing a coronation themed activity and then playing king ball - all as part of earning the special badge to commemorate the coronation of our patron King Charles III.



Profiles of HM The King by the Company Lads



Part of our Coronation display for our Open Night on May 19th



Boys Brigade News Open Night

We held our Open night on Friday May 19th at St Matthew's Community Centre. Our special guests were Rev John Bell and his wife Rebecca and Stranton Church Administrator Mrs Trish Playfor. John led the opening devotions, presented the awards and all the guests inspected the Boys and Leaders.

All the Boys received a Coronation Badge for their work which was on display. We promoted four Lads to Sergeant - Michael Downing, Jake McCarroll, Rowan Turner and Anthony Williams.

Two special Founders Certificates were presented to Finley and Oliver Wright. Finley saw a film on TV about children drinking dirty water and decided to raise some money to help; then the terrible earthquake on the Syria/Turkey border happened, so the boys decided to split the £600 they had raised between both causes.

The Junior Boy of the Year, based on attendance and wearing of uniform, was won by Charlie Brackstone and the Company Champion Trophy was shared between Cpl Rowan Turner and Cpl Jake McCarroll - well done all three.

Summer Programme

Now the weather is improving (at last!!) we are planning various trips to Crimdon Dene, The Blue Lagoon, Seaton (including ice cream), Stranton Church and McDonalds, plus we are pulling together the plans for our camp at Fanwood Scout Centre, South Yorkshire. **George Bainbridge**



Mrs Trish Playfor inspects the sections on parade



It was great to have Rev John attend the evening



Our Company memorabilia and awards table



Fun with the parachute

Congratulations to our hardworking lads



Boys Brigade Summer Fayre

**The 4th Hartlepool Boys brigade presents it's Summer Fayre
on Saturday 17th June**

at St Matthew's Community Centre from 9.30am - 12noon

Admission is £1.00 Children free

Stalls include Cakes. Pies, Books Toys and bargains galore guaranteed

**We are collecting Tombola prizes and for Bric a Brac (no clothing) and if you
need anything collecting please contact:**

George Bainbridge on 07816445829

Bottle Stall

**Stranton is having a Bottle Stall
at the Boys Brigade Summer Fayre on June 17th
to raise funds for social events.**

**If you can donate any bottles – drinks, sauces, shampoo etc
Please take them to the Church Office or give to Maureen Anderson**

Andi and Kati Walsh update from Brazil

Dear friends,

As we approach 15 months in Florianópolis, we find that we are well-established in our way of life as a family, as members of Vineyard Floripa and serving on a number of fronts across the city. With the unfolding of time, we are becoming clearer still with the areas we are to focus on, the timeliness for our being here and how we are meant to do this. It is of a great importance to us that Eva is happy, healthy and doing well at school. Having an outgoing personality, Eva is popular in her class and is almost on a par with the other 4-year-olds in terms of her Portuguese, which is fantastic! Eva has the native accent, which puts her Dad to shame! As a family we only speak English at home to ensure Eva grows up bilingual. At home we also are teaching Eva how to read and write which is perhaps a little advanced. Eva thrives at children's church at the Vineyard each Sunday morning, even though all the children are older.

At the end of December, we had the wonderful privilege of being invited by CMS to join with our partners in mission going to Ushuaia, Argentina, the most southerly city in the world. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the region, and to network with other missionaries serving across Latin America. We received Bible training on missions, with indigenous tribe leaders from northern Argentina sharing their experiences of being engaged by CMS over many years. The highlight for us personally was the contribution from Pastor Javier Campero, a leader of "Iglesia Gran Rey" local church, who provided us with a compelling account of the very first missionaries that went to Ushuaia (1844–1887). In fact Ushuaia is where the story of the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) first began. Of course, SAMS only merged with CMS in 2010. We were overwhelmed by the harsh living conditions and inspired by the personal sacrifices these pioneers made, as they persevered in establishing Christian mission stations among the Yamana, a nomadic canoe-people living in the southernmost channels of the Tierra del Fuego. Overall, the experience we had in Ushuaia, despite this being for a few days only, was very helpful to us as new mission partners and in orienting ourselves towards working as part of a larger team working with the same objective albeit across diverse contexts. Over the last few months, while we continue working in partnership with local leaders, it has become increasingly evident to us that we also need to take responsibility for being ready at short notice to fill gaps and lead in certain situations. Often we find activities are not particularly structured or organised and we have to be patient and flexible in the way we work with people here.

This is accentuated in our ministry settings, i.e. prisons, drug rehab

centres, hospital and street evangelism. We are learning when it is best to support and be “onhand” while on other occasions needing to step up and lead. We sense that in this upcoming 6–12 months, we will need to transition to taking the lead role more in order to progress our work. We are pleased that the restructuring process at Vineyard Floripa has concluded. Kati and Andy form part of a larger leadership team where we all have clearer accountabilities. As our relationships have become more profound, with greater awareness around our areas of strength, the leaders have sought to draw more on what we are able to offer. In this upcoming period, for example, we are seeking to train church members how we can all become involved in local mission. Our work in the favela has needed to change in order to work around risks in working in this environment. Kati now takes the initiative to volunteer in a local project called “Familia de Cristo”, which Vineyard Floripa supports in a variety of ways. Working with the team, Kati is engaged with prayer ministry, evangelism and helps to distribute food parcels to the residents of a local favela as well as street homeless people on weekday evenings. Andy goes into the prison regularly to preach the gospel, and invite people to respond to a call to follow Jesus. As I (Andy) have been accompanying the leader, observing the ministry Pastor Antônio has been leading for the last 33 years, I’ve been attentive to the fact that due to prison logistics, we’re rarely afforded opportunity to meet particular men on a recurring basis. We are directed by the staff to visit different wings in each of the two prisons we go into together. For this reason, the emphasis to date can only be on evangelism. We often share space in a courtyard with the inmates, but on other occasions groups of 10–12 men huddle around us on the other side of the bars while we preach the gospel. We pray for them and their families. We note the names and prison numbers for those who wish to be baptised in the prison and these moments are always very exciting.

So with some of these constraints in mind, coupled with the missional areas that we are called to, Andy has met with senior officials in both prisons to present details of a discipleship course (Prison Fellowship International) to provide follow-up for those individuals that make a commitment to following the Lord. This would mean I could deliver an 8-week course in some of the classrooms that are normally used for literacy and numeracy lessons. These are very confined spaces but we could get 8–10 people in attendance there each time.

We would welcome if you could join us in prayer for a good outcome!

Andy and Kati

I LOVE YOU

I love you,
Not only for what you are
But for what I am
When I am with you.

I love you
Not only for what
You have made of yourself
But for what
You are making of me.

I love you
for the part of me
That you bring out;
I love you
For putting your hand
Into my heaped-up heart
And passing over
All the foolish, weak things
That you can't help
Dimly seeing there,
And for drawing out
Into the light
All the beautiful belongings
That no one else had looked
Quite far enough to find.

I love you because you

Are helping me to make
Of the lumber of my life
Not a tavern
But a temple;
Out of works
Of my every day
Not a reproach
But a song.

I love you
Because you have done
More than any creed
Could have done
To make me good,
And more than any fate
Could have done
To make me happy.

You have done it
Without a touch,
Without a word,
Without a sign.

You have done it
By being yourself.
Perhaps that is what
Being a friend means,
After all.



Roy Croft

GARDENERS (and cake lovers)

St Luke's Church are holding a PLANT SALE and Cake Stall
On Saturday 3rd June 10.00- 12.00.

If anyone has gardening items to donate for them to sell,
contact St Luke's Tel 01429 281122 (Julia)
Email: enquiries@stlukeschurch.plus.com

Burn24/7 Teesside Event May 13th Stranton

The Burn 24/7 event brought continuous music worship to Stranton from 3-9pm on Saturday afternoon. An enthusiastic congregation sang and praised the Lord.

Our own Music Group Leader Jordan played the first hour with a variety of well known and less known songs.



Refugee Worship Group from Stockton

July 6th - 9th



TALL SHIPS RACES 2023

Hartlepool Churches Stall
Creatives Work Needed
Christian Related & Nautical Theme

Painting - Photography -
Authors - Craft Workers -
Jewellery - CD's

For further info contact
Viv: vivneville20@gmail.com
Amanda: churchsecretary@wvbc.org.uk

The Fourfold Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with **discomfort**. Discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart. *Amen*

May God bless you with **anger**. Anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace. *Amen*

May God bless you with **tears**. Tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain into joy. *Amen*

May God bless you with **foolishness**. Enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done. *Amen*

CELEBRATE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

to

JUNE

Peter Anderson
Paul Anderson
Riley Bruce
Emma Craig
Tim Craig
Millie Dobbin
Mike Dodds
Bill Greenwood
Pam Harkness
Simon Jennett
Tim Jennett
Tyler Lithgo
Doug Macaskill
Kelly Spoors
Ramona Thornhill
Kevin Tones
Pat Vaughan
Stan Vaughan



Wedding Anniversary
June

Ann & Andrew Cuthbert
Ray & Paul Clark

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 June

Stranton

Sat 10 th June	Coffee, Cake & Company St Matthew's CC	2.00-4.00pm
Sat 10 th June	COH Vision Day, venue to be announced.	10.00-1.30pm
Sun 11 th June	Messy Church St Matthew's CC	4.00-5.30pm
Sat 17 th June	BB Summer Fayre St Matthew's CC	9.30-12.00 noon
6 th – 9 th July	Tall Ships in Hartlepool	

St Luke's

Sat 3 rd June	Plant Sale	10.00-12.00noon
Sun 4 th June	Joint group service for Trinity Sunday	9.15am
Sun 18 th June	Confirmations at Holy Trinity Seaton	9.15
Sat 1 st July	St Luke's Summer Fair	2.00-4.00pm

St Luke's

We have a new Scout group starting on
Wednesdays 4.30-5.30pm
for 4-5 year olds, called 'Squirrels'.
Contact Louise Moriarty 07807 142755



Who's Who

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Administrator	Trish Playfor "Tues- Fri, 9.00 to 11.00am" 01429 894006 or 07305 550009 E-Mail: admin@stranton-church.org.uk Web Site: www.stranton-church.org.uk
To contact clergy by E-mail	E-Mail: clergy@stranton-church.org.uk

Priest in Charge	Revd. John Bell 34A Westbourne Road	07512 481115
Email:	revdjohnbell@stranton-church.org.uk	
Reader		
Mary Tones	40a Blakelock Road	07972 342890

Churches Together in Hartlepool

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St Mary's RC

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Treasurer	David Craig 57 Claremont Drive	234279
Asst. Treasurer	Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road	871266
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