

**Stranton and Burbank Community Church**

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# **SIGNPOST**



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

**40p**

**November 2016**

# ALL SAINTS CHURCH, STRANTON CHURCH SERVICES

## Sunday

**8.30am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

**10.30am.** Service (with children's groups for 3-14s)

**1st** Sunday of the month will be Holy Communion

**2nd** Sunday of the month will be Morning Worship

**3rd** Sunday of the month will be Holy Communion

**4th** Sunday of the month will be Lighthouse Service

**11.00am.** Morning Worship at Burbank Community Church,  
at Ward Jackson School.

**7.30pm** Youth Fellowship (14 years +)

On the Third Sunday of each month, **Messy Church** takes place at St Matthew's Community Centre at 4.00pm. This is a time for parents/ carers and children to have fun together, doing crafts and various activities, based on a bible theme.

Occasionally, (2 or 3 times a year) the congregations at Stranton and Burbank all come together for the 10.30am service, and this is followed by a bring and share meal.

## Wednesday Morning

**10.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)  
at St Matthew's Community Centre.

**Please note** that the next **Messy Church** will be on **20th November** and will continue to take place on the **Third Sunday of each Month**

# Four Words Worth Saying

If you had to pick just four words or phrases that are worth saying, what would they be? I was recently at a training session on leadership, and this was the last exercise, derived from a challenge by an Australian Bishop, Stephen Pickard. Here are his four key words that leaders should use often – and it strikes me that they are useful not only for leaders but for all of us as we seek to become more like Jesus. I don't want simply to tell you what the four words are, I actually want to say them to you.

First, **THANK YOU**. Thank you to all who form part of the life and worship of Stranton parish across our many congregations, groups, and activities. Thank you for turning up. Thank you to all who serve in particular ways. Thank you for enthusiasm, cheerfulness, good nature, for getting along. Thank you for your faith, and prayers, and commitment to Jesus and to the transformation of our town in his name.

Secondly, **WELL DONE!** More than just thanking you for the things you do, it is important to say well done. Much that happens in our church is done well, and it is worth pausing and acknowledging this. When I gathered those who read the Bible, lead prayers, and act as sidesperson in our services last month, I made it very clear that this wasn't a case of compulsory training or vetting because these things are done badly – quite the opposite, it was a case of sharing good practice, and there was a lot of that in the room.

Thirdly, **SORRY**. I am not perfect, I make mistakes, and we as a staff team are sorry, especially when our mistakes cause problems or hurt. Admitting failure is okay, in fact it's sort of the point. The gospel is not about trying to be perfect, it's about recognizing that we're imperfect, and accepting Jesus' perfect life and his death for our imperfectness. The Holy Spirit is making us more like Jesus, but we're not fully there yet, and we won't be until we reach heaven! So "sorry" remains a really important word – it's okay to get things wrong in this church!

Finally, **PLEASE**. Please keep on going with Jesus and as a part of his body, the church. Please keep on giving and serving and praying as you do. Please also consider taking up something new when we ask. At the moment there are opportunities to serve in our youth and children's work (Matts Mates, BeFree, and groups on a Sunday morning), and also in the team that is being formed to reach out to the area around St Matthew's Community Centre.

Thank you, well done, sorry, please. Words worth saying, by all of us, at the right times, to one another!

**Nick Moore**

# MOTHER`S UNION

We were back at St Mathew's community Centre for the first time since July and we welcomed Rev Norman Shave to our meeting.

Norman brought us a reprise of the first year of Partnership for Missional Church and an outline for year two. Our members recalled Norman's previous visit and the events – the Timeline etc - that followed, and we are indeed praying for the outcome.

Norman also conducted our Membership Service where we welcomed two new members – Carol and Maureen, and also renewed our Purpose, Aim and Object of the Mothers Union vows.

Kathy Webster, Joyce Dryden and I attended an All Committees meeting In Durham in October. Jean Carleton (President) encouraged us with these words – “Nobody knows more than you – they just know different things!” Many of us at sometime in our Christian life feel others are further on than we are – that we haven't the skills needed to come alongside those we meet on our journey. As we get older people refer to us as “Prayer Warriors”, but we sometimes feel lacking in information. Remember to read, listen, mix with others and you will indeed have plenty to pray about and to do.

Please pray for our branch as many of our members are facing challenges – moving home, health problems and caring for families. This has been a momentous year for Mothers Union as we celebrated our 140<sup>th</sup> Birthday, may we find the strength, love and support to enable our branch to continue to attract and welcome new members.

## **Forthcoming dates:**

**14<sup>th</sup> November** 2.00pm St Matthew's Community Centre – ‘Count your blessing’- come with a blessing and take one home!

**5<sup>th</sup> December** - To be confirmed – 12.00 Marine Hotel Christmas Meal – Let Ann know if you would like to come.

**12<sup>th</sup> December** 2.00pm St Matthew's Community Centre. Wave of Prayer and Carol Service.

God Bless

**Ann Courtenay**

# From the Home Front

September saw a new chapter start in my life. In my fortieth year of teaching I have started phased retirement and have moved to working only three days a week. A four day weekend has been a lifetime ambition and at last it is realised!

I have thoroughly enjoyed my teaching career. I have worked with children aged from three to nineteen, in leafy suburb schools and deprived sink estates, in dilapidated Victorian building, uninsulated sixties boxes and brand spanking new schools. I have been lucky enough to teach some bright inquisitive youngsters with a yen to learn; but also children disaffected, coming from third generation unemployed parents, who saw no value in education; to children so disabled only their eyes were able to interact and react; kids who didn't know when their next meal would be, who had no bed or clothes to call their own, with parents who were addicts or violent and they didn't know when the next police raid on 'home' would be... I have taught children who have no bedtime and no boundaries, children showered in material possessions - but totally lacking in parental time and attention. I have had devoted parents who would do anything in their power to help their children to learn and become good adults. Over the years there has been a rise in children with an ever increasing variety of special needs to be supported in the mainstream classroom.

I have met some amazing classroom teachers and headteachers, who enthuse and ignite the learning fire, who give selflessly of time energy, who bring in food and clothes for children in need (paid for from their own pockets). These dedicated professionals get incredible results through sheer hard work. I have met other headteachers who have left staff demoralised, and feeling so worthless they have left the profession. I have endured about thirty Ofsted inspections (none enjoyable!), I have seen curriculum changes come and go, 'new' ideas introduced, cast off and returned again with another name. Assessment of children and staff proliferates now, targets are always being raised with teachers' overworked and criticised and children being made anxious and feeling failures!

I have adapted and changed, retrained, relearnt, jumped through hoops, upped my game with the whims and fancies of successive governments. My maxim has always been 'If I ever think I know it all, then I need to leave the job!' Kids I have worked with have gone to University, gained qualifications and got jobs, they have succeeded in life, started their own families. But because I work with so many children with challenging backgrounds and special needs I am often saddened to read in the press or hear of those who end up in prison, have become addicts, have died untimely deaths, become sex workers or who have perpetuated the horrors of their own childhood into their children's lives...

But every child who crosses my path has the ability to learn and achieve their potential, live life to the full and I see it as my job to encourage, support, guide and help each one in any and every way I can. I feel the same way about the staff whom I work alongside, be they caretaker, dinner-supervisor, teaching assistant, secretary, classteacher or Headteacher. That is because my original vocation grew from my faith and the knowledge that God loves every person from conception. I know how He can change lives and I try to live and work how Jesus instructed – I don't always manage it, but I persevere.... Who knows how much longer I will be working in schools – but I know I will continue to enjoy every aspect of helping the next generation to develop knowing kindness, firmness and fairness in their search for knowledge as they grow into adults and become full members of the family of God.

**J.A.R.**

# Open for All Weekend

From 16th–18th September we were joined by a team of four ordinands (trainee ministers) and one tutor from Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, one of the Anglican training colleges. Between them they were involved in a total of 16 different events, ranging from 4-year-olds to 16-year-olds in school, Foodbank, a men's breakfast, football, nail painting, Boys Brigade, Messy Church, pottery painting, and more. Here are some reflections on the weekend.

## 1) It's Not Rocket Science!

A lot of effort went into the weekend, on the part of both the home team and the visiting team, and many thanks are due to all who were involved in hosting team members or organizing events. At the same time, it was not hard or complicated to create good events that people enjoyed. Of the 16 events, 7 were happening anyway (church services, Boys Brigade), 5 required a minor tweak of things we normally do (e.g. a men's group meets every 2-3 months for an evening meal, we simply switched this to breakfast), and only 4 were completely new events (pottery painting, nails, and an evening "real lives" event). All that is needed is a little imagination and we can create good events that people love to come to. The pottery evening in particular went well: Hartlepotz were keen and welcoming as a venue, once they were booked and tickets available the whole thing flowed from there. It's not rocket science!

## 2) Come and See!

A big series of questions the weekend raises for all of us is about whether we as a church have a culture of invitation. Do we have friends?! Do we spend time with them? Do we have confidence to invite them to church or to church-related events? Are we praying for opportunities to talk with them about the hope we have found in Jesus? Do we work hard at being truly welcoming as a church, whatever the venue and occasion? There is much to celebrate about our church in these areas, but there is plenty of room for us to grow and improve as well. People who came to the Open for All events with friends who aren't part of church commented on how much those friends had enjoyed it and felt a real sense of peace, even (or perhaps especially!) when hearing a team member share about Jesus' impact on their lives. From 2<sup>nd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> March 2017 we'll have a bishop and team visiting Hartlepool for a similar weekend of events called *Talking Jesus*, organized across the town. Let's build the confidence to say to our friends, "come and see"!

### 3) Stay Awhile!

We may connect with people in all sorts of ways, but after an initial contact – a Sunday service, a special event, a baptism or funeral, a church social – do they come back, and do they have opportunity to explore the Christian faith further? Our small groups are key in this, and it would be great for any who are members of small groups to have eyes open for new people who might like to join them. After the *Talking Jesus* weekend we also plan to set up a group looking at the building blocks of Christian faith (perhaps using Alpha or Start); could you invite a friend to this and come with them? Or would you be able to help host, lead, or cater for it? This is one way among many we can make our church the kind of place that new people want to stay awhile!

**Nick Moore**



**The Team**

# Interview In the pew

This month we say a *warm hello* to...

**Rachel Kathryn Wilson**



Hello, I'm Rachel (although I've always been known as Ray since birth really).

I'm 44, 45 in November yey!

I sit at the front, near the music group as I press the buttons for the words that come up on the screens.

I've been a Christian for 12 years. I grew up in a non-faith family. When Malory my daughter was born, I decided that I wanted to go to church and I wanted my daughter to grow up with faith in her life – it's been the best decision I've ever made!

I grew up in Hart with my parents and younger sister.

I'm the director of a chemical company. We manufacture and supply the automotive industry with products that make vehicles run more efficiently (more miles per gallon) and with less emissions (greener). I feel very lucky and blessed that I love my job.

I've been a greeter and sidesperson, but I now press the buttons.

I was on the Shared Ministry Development Team and now I'm part of the PMC (Partnership for Missional Church).

I think it's important to have a role to feel part of the church family – everyone should help in some way and feel the benefit of belonging in a helpful way.

The film Paper Moon (adapted brilliantly from the book by Addie Pray) has been a life-long favourite that has stood the test of time. Ryan and Tatum O'Neil star in this perfect black and white road-trip film of a Bible salesman.

I guess I have collected art over the years. I love original, one-off pieces. I have a beautiful, large painting on canvas of this church, done from life, which I love.

My favourite Bible passage is Philippians 4:4-9 a beautiful message of how everyone should live...

Communion is my favourite part of the service – each time it brings me closer to the Holy Trinity in a profound way. I do enjoy all the different styles of service and worship we have here – always something renewing and something to learn. The variety is indeed a blessing.

I love 'Oceans' by Hillsong (although Katie Greenwood does the best version by far!!)

Also 'Jesus Christ, all your love (sweeping over me like a flood)' is wonderful.

And 'The Servant King (hands that flung stars into space)' is also beautiful.

All who know me would probably say that my positivity is my God given talent, so I'll go with that!

Let's be thankful for Rachel and for this interview and let us value her in our lives and prayer life...

# Thanks from Kilimatinde

Festo, Grace, Zephiniah, William and Patrick all say a BIG thank you for the gift of £750 which enabled their roof to be fixed.

In June Grace wrote: "We were overrun by termites and all the ceilings were falling in, but thanks to your help and that of other friends the termites have been eliminated and new ceilings have been put across the whole house. It is a definite improvement especially for Zeph, Will and I who were all allergic to the dust.

We have had two new additions to the family since Zeph and I visited in June 2014. William was born on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and is now a happy one year old - just walking. Patrick is a local boy, now 12 years old, who came to our attention in August 2015 as someone who needed a place to call home. Personally I have found the last 12 months hard, being a mum of two little ones and juggling life here and my work responsibilities. I think I am now feeling more on top of things, but it is the reason why you haven't heard news regularly.

St John's Secondary continues to grow in strength, for which we praise God alone. The last year's results were good with no fails. We know they were an exceptional class, but we were pleased with progress. It is still a challenge to keep teachers year on year, for someone who has a degree there are so many opportunities in Tanzania and living in Kilimatinde is not the most attractive... So we continue to pray for this and to pray for teachers that can grab onto God's/our vision for St John's.

We are now in our third year at St John's Nursery and still going strong, with on average 90 students attending. We are still in the process of building - we now have enough funds to put a roof on the building - so the Nursery will be moving from our house into its own building once that work is done. The building will simply be useable (by Tanzanian standards), but not yet complete. We still have hopes that we might be able to start a Primary School as well.

Our volunteer programme is also going well, we currently have one person with us from CMS and in August expect two from DMG (German organisation like CMS). One previous volunteer is coming back in August for a month with a friend to visit/help and another has since been accepted for a mission partner with CMS and will return next year for a further 3 years – very exciting.

Of course there are many challenges too, here are a few things for which we'd appreciate prayer:

Spiritual nourishment for us Family time      Funds to finish building projects  
Committed teachers      Patience and wisdom as we lead St John's

We continue to pray for Stranton and the ministry in Hartlepool. We are thinking about when we can next come to England to visit all our supporters – we will be in touch. Love to you all

**Festo, Grace, Zephiniah, William Kanungha and Patrick"**

# Harvest Celebrations



Although we are an urban coastal church we are close to the countryside so we do not forget the good gifts which God provides from farms as well as the sea and we give special thanks at this traditional harvest time. Stranton and Burbank both had Harvest Festival services on October 9th and the generous contributions were donated to The Foodbank and the Women's Refuge.

## Harvest Ceilidh

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October saw a getting together of Stranton and Burbank families and friends plus Burn Valley Residents for a Ceilidh evening ably led by the Sunnside-up Ceilidh Band. It was an evening where from the youngest to the oldest, those new to Stanton (it was great to see our Iran friends enthusiastically joining in) and new to Hartlepool (the newly arrived Portuguese vet did seem a little perplexed by proceedings!) all enjoyed socialising, dancing and eating together.



It never ceases to amaze how some people walk onto a dance floor and immediately forget their left from their right! Others become so engrossed in the moment that they forget to listen to the instructions – the ensuing chaos was hilarious to watch and even fun to be part of...

The children were keen to join in and with a little help and guidance managed most dances well. Although my other half was somewhat miffed to find himself standing on the side-lines, when one little boy cut in and appropriated his partner mid dance!!



The bring and share food was a wonderful variety of British, Iranian and European buffet food. There was something savoury and sweet to tempt every palate.



The evening was enjoyable for dancers and watchers – so a huge thank you to Trish and her hard working team for organising such an enjoyable evening.

Remember the family that plays together, stays together...  
**J.A.R.**

## Wanted

Bottles: Trish is running a bottle game stall at the Boys Brigade Fayre and BNVRA & St Matthew's Fayre at the end of November. She would welcome any donations of bottles (alcohol, pop, water, bubble bath and bubbles) for the stall. Thank you for your help. All Money raised goes to Stranton Social Fund.



# The Uchendu Family in Nigeria

I have heard back from Keyna on behalf of the family and have included photos of them all taken in Abuja, Nigeria, where the family are now living and the children have begun attending an international school.

The Uchendus miss our Church family back in Hartlepool as we miss them, and they appreciate and value our support and prayers during this crucial time of settling in...

Since arriving back in Nigeria as a family on 1st September, they are all doing well, but still adjusting. Their new family life in Abuja is a far cry from the one they led in Hartlepool!

- Christine, Jennifer, David and Jed have begun to adapt to their new home and school environment now and are beginning to make a few new friends.
- Keyna is enjoying being a full time mum and wife after her busy time in Hartlepool managing the pharmacy service at Asda alongside caring for the family. She's getting used to driving on the other side of the road in Nigeria, as she takes the 30-minute drive with Emmanuel to drop the children off at school while she learns the roads.
- As well as overseeing the building project at his business, Emmanuel is guiding the family through the settling-in period as they get to grips with the different culture, currency and everyday life in Nigeria and their newly-adopted hometown Abuja.

Emmanuel and Keyna would love our prayers for :

- God's provision as they meet the additional costs of living as a family in Nigeria full-time.
- Wisdom for Emmanuel as he leads the family's transition into their new life.
- The safe arrival of the container with their belongings from the UK which is already due, and slightly late in arriving.

Anyone who would like to get in touch with Emmanuel, Keyna and the family are invited to write to them via email :

[uchendu67@yahoo.com](mailto:uchendu67@yahoo.com).

Keyna was pleased to give an update to us all and wants to pass on their "Thanks for all the prayers and our love to all our Church family. Keyna--on behalf of the entire family."

Pam Harkness



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# Persecuted Church; Open Doors updates:

NIGERIA: 21 CHIBOK GIRLS FREE - REPORTS CLAIM

13 October 2016

A spokesperson for President Muhammadu Buhari has stated that 21 of the Chibok girls have been released. This was 'the outcome of negotiations between the administration and Islamist militants,' he said. The girls were freed in exchange for four militants, the AFP news agency reports, quoting local sources. The released girls are with the security forces. Negotiations are continuing for the remaining abducted girls, the President's spokesperson says.

PLEASE PRAY:

Praise God for the safe release of these girls. Pray for their healing and recovery after their horrific experiences at the hands of Boko Haram militants. For the safe release of the girls who are still being held captive. For wisdom for those working for the release of the missing girls.

BRING HOPE TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Open Doors is launching a global, seven-year campaign to mobilise Christians around the world to bring hope to the Middle East - and we need you and your church to be a part of it.

Syria and Iraq are in crisis. War and Islamic extremism have caused millions to flee, while millions of others are displaced within the region, struggling to survive, often too poor or unwell to leave.

Christians in the Middle East are in desperate need of hope. War and severe persecution threaten their very survival. Many have fled their homes to escape Islamic extremists intent on destroying the church. But many courageous Christians have chosen to stay. They want to shine in the darkness with the light of Christ, now and in the future. They believe they have a vital role to play in rebuilding their shattered societies.

Pastor Edward, one of our key local partners in Damascus, Syria, says, "We are very thankful that Open Doors combines not just relief and humanitarian work but also spiritual impact. And also they actually follow up with prayer: this is amazingly important for us. [Also] Open Doors gives voice to Christians in the area, which is really so helpful."

We asked church leaders and Christians from Syria and Iraq what would give them hope. They highlighted three things: equality, dignity and responsibility. It's vital that their call reaches the ears of world leaders so that change can happen on the ground. This is only possible with global support – with your support.

One million voices can make this happen. Will you join with others around the world – including Christians in the Middle East – in calling for a hope and a future for Christians and others in that region? Make your voice count - there will be copies of the petition to sign in church, or you can sign it at [opendoorsuk.org](http://opendoorsuk.org)

## SUDAN: UPDATE: IMPRISONED PASTORS SUFFERING FROM 'HEALTH ISSUES'

11 October 2016

Local sources have told Open Doors that imprisoned church leaders Hassan Abduraheem Taour and Kuwa Shamal are suffering from health issues. The two pastors are among the group of four Christians accused of crimes against the state.

"On 9 October, Hassan visited the doctor in Khartoum where he received medication. He contracted flu and still continues to suffer from stomach problems. Kuwa is also reported to struggle with his stomach," reported the source, who is unnamed for security reasons.

"But they remain strong in the spirit," the source concluded.

They are scheduled to appear in court again on 17 October. Please continue to pray for a just outcome to their case.

Hassan Abduraheem Taour and Kuwa Shamal, both Sudan Church of Christ pastors, originally from the Nuba Mountains of South Kordofan, and Abdulmonem Abdumawla Issa Abdumawla, a Darfuri student, are accused by the government of conducting intelligence activities and providing material support for rebels in Sudan's South Kordofan region. There is also a fourth defendant in the case, a Czech Christian aid worker named Petr Jasek.

### PLEASE PRAY:

For the Lord to encourage them in the midst of difficult circumstances

For a fair judicial process, and that the Christians will be acquitted of all charges

Thank the Lord for sustaining the faith of the pastors.

Pray that officials will be convicted by their testimonies and seek salvation in Christ.

[Opendoorsuk.org](http://opendoorsuk.org)

**Mary Tones**

## Ward Jackson CE Primary Update

Before you even noticed they had, the summer holidays were over and a new year started at school. Everyone came back after a great holiday break and we welcomed new children and new staff to the Ward Jackson family.

We had very little time to get back into the swing of things before a visit from Ofsted in the second week back! While it was a challenging time for the school everyone has been overwhelmed with all the help and support given to us and we realised how lucky we are as a school to have so many people who love us and who are willing to give their time for us.

Lots of exciting things have been happening in the school already with a classes having trips out to start their new topics for the term. Recently, our tag rugby team made Ward Jackson history by getting through to the town final of their competition. While we have seen many individuals achieve great sporting success for the school we have never had a team get so far in a competition...and this week our tag rugby team came third in the town final! All the children were amazing!

To celebrate harvest each class put on a performance with songs, poems and a play - making a great time of worship for family and friends. Lots of food was donated to people in the community, the Women's Refuge and the Foodbank.

Thank you for all your love, support and prayers.

**Mary Robinson**

### **Come and meet Super Santa and his Helpful Heroes.**

St Matthew's and Burn Valley North Residents' Association  
will be holding our annual

**Christmas Fair on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

10.00am to 1.00pm in St Matthew's Community Centre.

Come along and join in the family fun as well as meeting  
Super Santa and his Helpful Heroes.

There will be plenty of stalls and activities to keep the children busy  
while parents can enjoy a cuppa and a chat and perhaps a piece of  
home made cake.

Entry to the fair and all children's activities are free of charge.

So come along and partake of some Christmas Cheer!

If you would like more information, call Carol Laud 01429 290290.



## Boys Brigade News



Harvest Festival – we had our first Breakfast Club of the new session at St Matthew's followed by the Harvest Festival service at Stranton.

The church was decorated by a fantastic display of posters and art work done by the Anchor and Company Lads. The Juniors gave a display of Harvest hymns using the hand bells. Images of the day are on our Facebook page at 4<sup>th</sup> Hartlepool BB.

The numbers especially in the Anchors and Juniors are growing, but we still have room for one or two more.

Future plans include street dancing, WW1 project, dot to dot, potted sports and battalion competitions.

Fund Raising – Date for your diary - our Christmas Fayre is on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November** and we are now collecting bric a brac. Please ring 263149 if you would like any collecting.

**George Bainbridge**

The School teacher asked the children "Where does Santa get his presents from?"

Some answered "Lapland" or "The North Pole"

"You're all wrong" said the teacher, "Santa gets his presents from

**The 4th Hartlepool Boys Brigade Christmas Fayre  
on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 9.30 to 12noon**

where there are bargains for everyone and its only 50p and kids go free!"

## Thank You Frances

The Signpost Team would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to Frances London who has delivered copies of Signpost in the Oxford Road area for a number of years, but feels retirement beckons! Her delivery skills have been greatly appreciated by us and those who receive the magazine.



## St Matthew's Community Centre Stranton's Centre Your Centre Planning for the Long term

After many years of hard work and fund raising the Large Hall and the east end of the centre are in a good condition and all hall users are benefiting.

But we are not resting on our laurels – we are now planning a major upgrade to the Small Hall and the rear of St Matthew's – so that all its facilities will be up to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards.

We are appealing now for some bungee connections for St Matthew's, so that we can hold the back door open (definitely not a 21<sup>st</sup> Century solution!!).

Please ring 263149 if you can help  
**St Matthew's Centre Committee**



# Chris & Ros Smith News #7 October 2016

A whole tapestry of events have been taking place since we last wrote. We have been encouraged by responses from different Church fellowships though these are not yet finalised, more follows!

## Teach Beyond

After finishing the WEC orientation course at Bulstrode (as directed by TB) we are looking more carefully at our “supporter situation”. A big part of what we do over the next months will be letting groups and churches know about what we intend to do in the Philippines. There have been many changes in the circumstances of **people** that supported us in the 15 years since we (or, at least, Chris) began this kind of ministry, We have been aware of changes of circumstances, retirements and some have sadly passed away. This leaves us with a big prayer challenge, that we will meet and commend ourselves to new prayer and financial supporters over the next weeks and months.

## Family News

A tapestry of house-sits (or “cat-sits”), short family/ friend visits and a holiday invite have enabled us to have - what not many families got over the summer - to travel to several locations in the UK on a kind of long, five week “holiday roadshow”! We rediscovered the value of our National Trust and English Heritage family passes on the way, as these summer pictures show (Ros **was** with us, although for these images clearly behind the camera!!). The boys got to enjoy a huge variety of histories and stories, from Robin Hood through the Middle Ages to the Roundheads and Cavaliers. It was great fun. We would **never** have been able to afford to stay in so many places over the summer without this kind of help from friends, so we count it a **definite** (if sometimes, with lively boys, tiring) blessing.

As far as the boys’ schooling logistics are concerned for September, we have had to purchase a second car which allows Ros to drive Thomas to Lee Common each day while Chris is free to maximize supply teaching. We got this from **Trust Vehicles**, a car ministry to missionaries, who will buy the vehicle back from us when we no longer need it. The boys are settling well to their new schools and their teachers are enjoying the experience of teaching them.

Chris has the joy of working in one school for the next three weeks with the same class. They are **Reception** (age 5), which can be a joy as well as a huge challenge. Practically speaking we are very glad for the settled work-cum-salary,



but please pray for Chris as he gets the measure of what the children need at this early stage of their school lives. He needs to help them settle, keep routines from their permanent appointed teacher, plan and teach the lessons, and work all this within the school's general expectations. Not easy (although the school is glad to have one single supply teacher!)

**Chris' Mum** has been a big "magnet" for effort over the late summer. She has now been formally identified as suffering from a mild form of Alzheimer's and is being medicated in such a way as to prevent the condition getting worse. If this succeeds over the next four weeks or so, there is a strong chance that Chris and his sister can have her transferred to a better care facility, that is much more positive and affirming in how it lives and celebrates its residents. A simple change of environment of this kind could help her to enjoy three or four years (maybe more) of positive living before the condition becomes debilitating. Please pray that this "care of parent" priority can be achieved well.

Email [chrismiff@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chrismiff@yahoo.co.uk) c/o 28 Springfield Road, Chesham, Bucks  
HP5 1PW

## **Prayers**

**Think of the cross and remember that you are with God who made  
you and loves you:**

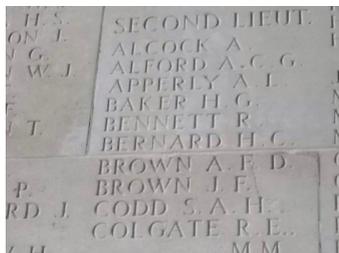
**Lord surround me with your spirit;  
Remove from mind all distractions, inattention, coldness;  
Open my eyes to see you, my ears to hear you  
Help me to be still in your presence  
And hear my prayers For Christ's sake.**

**Remember that God is ready to forgive sin and say:  
Humbly and sorrowfully I long for your forgiveness  
For every weakening thought to which my mind has wandered  
For every failure of self-control,  
For these things I just cannot forget ....  
Lord, help me to know your forgiveness and acceptance  
Help me to let go of the past,  
And live from now on for all that is good and right**

# The Somme and Stranton's Missing Soldiers

During August I visited the battlefields of the Somme, which included a tour of the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing and those with unknown graves.

Four men of Stranton are remembered:



← 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant  
Reginald Bennett



← Pte William Vincent Pike  
who's family lived in  
Wansbeck Gardens

## Stranton and the Somme The Final Chapter

Harold lived at 201 York Rd and was a Commercial Clerk in civilian life. So when the war started he joined The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment ) 26<sup>th</sup> Battalion. This was exclusively for bankers He died of wounds on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1916 as the Battle of the Somme was reaching its conclusion

### Two or Many Stripes

Two stripes remind us of a brave Corporal  
that gave his all

For King, for country, his life was rendered.

Now his grave is occasionally attended.

Then an interest is stirred and he is remembered.

Many stripes in a more violent form

Remind us of another sacrifice made for all.

Although His grave was only temporarily filled

Once again a young man's blood was spilled.

Two men who fought on different fronts,

One for his friends and allies gained victory.

The other one conquered sin at Calvary

And now offers you freedom for eternity.

All you have to do is to join up -

Don't worry there's no recruiting

Sargent to turn the air blue -

Just other soldiers to welcome you, with love,

And a Captain to march eternally with you.



# Autumn Recipes

## Pumpkin & Lentil soup

### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil, plus 1 tsp oil
- 2 onions chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- Approx 800g chopped pumpkin – flesh, plus the seeds
- 100g split red lentils
- ½ small pack of thyme - leaves picked, plus extra to serve
- 1litre hot vegetable stock
- Pinch salt & sugar
- 50g crème fraiche, plus extra to serve

1.Heat the oil in a large pan. Fry the onions until softened & starting to turn golden. Stir in the garlic, pumpkin flesh, lentils & thyme; then pour in the hot stock. Season, cover and simmer for 20-25 mins until the lentils & vegetables are tender.

2.Meanwhile, wash the pumpkin seeds. Remove any flesh still clinging to them, then dry them with kitchen paper. Heat the tsp of oil in a non stick pan & fry the seeds until they start to jump & pop. Stir frequently, but cover the pan in between to keep them in it! When the seeds look nutty & toasted, add a sprinkling of salt & a pinch of sugar & stir well.

3.Whizz the cooked pumpkin mixture with a hand blender or in a food processor until smooth, then add the crème fraiche & whizz again. Taste for seasoning.

4. Serve with a spoonful of crème fraiche, a few thyme leaves & the toasted seeds scattered on the top.



## Tremendous toffee apples

### Ingredients

- 8 small Cox's or Granny Smith apples
- 400g golden caster sugar
- 120ml water
- 4 tbsp Golden Syrup
- 50g unsalted butter
- Wooden lolly sticks



1.Pop the apples in a large bowl, pour over boiling water to cover & then quickly pour it off. This takes off any wax coating from the apples & will help the toffee to stick

2.Polish dry, twist off stalks & push wooden ice lolly sticks halfway into the core of the apples from the stalk end.

3.Combine the caster sugar & water in a large heavy based pan & stir constantly over a low heat with a wooden spoon for about 5 mins until the sugar is dissolved.

4.Add Golden syrup & butter, & stir until melted & combined. Bring to the boil without stirring, otherwise the sugar may crystallise, until the mixture reaches 149-154C (the hard crack stage) for about 15-18 mins. (if you don't have a thermometer, check the toffee is ready by dropping a teaspoon of the mixture into a bowl of cold water. It should harden instantly, & when removed, be brittle & easy to break. If you can still squash it, continue to boil)

5.Remove the pan from the heat, let the bubbles subside a little, then tilt pan, & quickly & carefully dip the apples one at a time in the toffee. Twirl as you dip, to completely cover. Let any excess drip away before placing on a parchment-lined baking tray to harden. If you find the toffee becomes too thick because the temperature has dropped simply heat again.

6.Once set store the toffee apples in an airtight container in a dry place – not the fridge & eat within 24 hours or the toffee will soften & start to liquefy.

# CELEBRATE!



**November  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!  
to**

**Daniel Busby  
Sally Clarke  
Linda Cartwright  
Debbie Coxon  
Ann Cuthbert  
Anna Jennett  
Jasmine Padgett  
Sylvia Shepherd  
Mike Weimer  
Rachel Wilson**



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

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

# Dates for the Diary

## Dates for November

Tues 1 <sup>st</sup>	New Beginnings
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup> -Sat 5 <sup>th</sup>	PMC Study days
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup>	5.00-6.30pm Family fireworks St Matthew's
Sun 6 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am Stranton Sunday - United service followed by shared lunch
Mon 7 <sup>th</sup>	Standing Committee
Tues 8 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm Prayer & Praise led by Clive and Angela, Fulthorpe Chapel
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	Remembrance Sunday
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm Lighthouse Planning, venue tbc
Tues 15 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm Buildings and Finance, The Vicarage
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	4pm Messy Church, St Matthew's
Sat 26 <sup>th</sup>	9.30-1pm Boys Brigade Christmas Fayre, St Matthew's CC.
Tues 29 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm PCC Fulthorpe Chapel
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	10-1pm BVNRA & St Matthew's CC Christmas Fayre

## Mission to Seafarers Christmas Collection

The mission to seafarers have their usual Christmas collection. They are requesting donations of warm clothes (woolly hats, scarves, thick socks etc., chocolate bars and men's toiletries.) They plan to wrap the gifts on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December so donations are requested before this date.



## Christmas Toy Collection

We will be collecting donations of unwrapped toys and gifts, with wrapping paper appropriate for mothers and children in The Women's Refuge during December. If you would like to make a contribution please bring your donations to the services on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December.



## Sidespersons

	8.30am	10.30am
6 Nov	P Thompson	R Anderson P Anderson
13 Nov	M Hutchinson	A Craig F Endean
20 Nov	I Walker	S Shepherd K Shepherd
27 Nov	P Porritt	B Greenwood D Greenwood



## Baptisms

2 October	Jackson McFarlane Adam Wilson
9 October	Erin Smith



## Funerals

30 August	Harry Judson
1 September	James Smith
9 September	Patricia Bye
16 September	Ada booth
22 September	Robert Harold Wheellands
17 October	Melvin Spurs
17 October	Mary Holroyd



# Who's Who

<b>Church Office</b>	St Matthew's Community Centre Arncliffe Gardens TS26 9JF	
<b>Administrator</b>	Trish Playfor E-Mail: <a href="mailto:admin@stranton-church.org.uk">admin@stranton-church.org.uk</a> Web Site: <a href="http://www.stranton-church.org.uk">www.stranton-church.org.uk</a>	01429 894006

## Vicar

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

## Associate Minister

Revd Andrew Craig 25 Egerton Road 422461

## Burbank Community Church Worker

Clive Hall 10 Clarkson Court 278504

## Curate

Revd Nick Moore 40 Browning Avenue 597284

## Readers

Alan Robertson 2 Northbrook Court 276926

Mary Tones 40a Blakelock Road 265625

## Churches Together in Hartlepool

Chair Revd Richard Hetherington,  
Oxford Road Baptist

Secretary Susan Atkinson,  
St Mary's RC

## Authorised Pastoral Assistants

Patricia Vaughan 144 Elwick Road 429178

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Peter Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266

Angela Craig 57 Claremont Drive 234279

## 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.***

