

**Stranton and Burbank Community**

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# **SIGNPOST**



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

May 2022

We do not have the words—even the scriptures do not have the words—which perfectly describe the Holy Spirit.

Pope Francis writes of our comforter: “The Holy Spirit is a great worker, not a 'trade unionist'. He is a great worker, and He works in us, always. He does this work of explaining the mystery of Jesus, and of giving us this sense of Christ. Forgiveness is not a result of our efforts, but is a gift.”

The scriptures usually use the word ‘voice’. That does not exactly fit. These very delicate, fine spiritual communications are not seen with our eyes nor heard with our ears; it is a voice that we often feel more than hear.

We can't communicate spiritual knowledge with words alone. We can, with words, show one another how to prepare to work in and through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit itself will help with this process. We just need time to stop, be still and listen because it's often in the stillness and silence that we perceive the moves of the Spirit.

The voice of the Spirit is described in scripture as still and small, almost a whisper sometimes. Yet it can pierce our very soul and cause our heart to burn.

The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting. It never shakes us with a heavy hand. The Spirit whispers. It taps so gently that if we are preoccupied, we often miss or discount it completely.

Occasionally, the Spirit will press just firmly enough or often enough for us to pay attention; but from my experience, most of the time, if we do not heed the gentle feeling, if we do not listen with those feelings, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking, listening and attentive.

I have learned that the very impressive and miraculous spiritual experiences come very infrequently. We can so often wrongly label things as moves of the Holy Spirit. We must be vigilant and always remember that there is a counterfeit.

We cannot force spiritual things. A testimony is not thrust upon us; it grows. And a testimony is a testimony, and it should be respected, whether it is small or large. We become taller in our testimony like we grow in physical stature and hardly know it is happening. We become more confident in our faith and in sharing God's story in our life with others.

I know that the gospel is true; the Holy Spirit is in it. If you rely on that, if you push into that then you are doing the work of Christ our beautiful Lord and Saviour, our Redeemer. Then in those works of love, of kindness of service to others you will find a deeper relationship with the Father. I know this to be true because of how it softened my heart and curbed my judgement (of myself and others), when I began to truly know Papa and to love and live from that place.

It is in knowing that the Holy Spirit lives, knowing/feeling His voice when He speaks, in knowing Him, and living a life that bears witness to that knowing, that's where our souls find rest and true freedom presides.

The Holy Spirit is a voice that we feel as much as we hear. My prayer for us all is that we'll hear Him clearly and heed Him quickly.

Amen

**Rev Michelle**

# Mothers Union

Thank you to those members who were able to join with us for our Holy Week meeting. We next meet on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 1.30pm when we catch up with what is happening in our Diocese of Durham after the changes in Diocesan President (Carole Hopkinson) and other positions. Pam Harding (St Luke's MU Branch Leader) has asked Carole to come to their meeting and we are invited too. I'll let you know when this will take place.

Hopefully you will have received your Newsrounds Spring/Summer 2022 by the time you are reading this. Don't put it away for later as it has many interesting articles and insights into other MU groups in our Diocese.

This year we are able to attend our Festival Service in Durham Cathedral on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm – the first time for 3 years. The guest speaker is MU Chief Executive Bev Julien. I aim to go and hopefully some others will join with me.

At our next meeting I will be bringing something for you to take home – so do join with us.

Please pray for our branch, our church, our town, and for other members and Branches here in our country and around the world. When you read the midday prayers focus on the names of the overseas and British members going through changes and facing difficulties. Our God knows each of us vowed to do this and will act upon the prayers we offer. Please pray for members who are not in good health – for healing and peace.

God Bless  
**Ann Courtenay**



## From the Home Front

I have felt that the last few weeks have been a time of searching and looking, alongside a time of waiting, but then having to accept the end results.

We went to Dundee for a break in Holy Week. A city we have passed through but never stopped to explore. When we looked online at the attractions we wished to visit we found several were closed on the days of our visit, so we had to rethink our itinerary. While in the city I had hoped to buy two things – Keiller’s marmalade and Dundee cake, both of which I remembered from my childhood. Despite looking in shops, tourist centres and delicatessens we could not find either! Keiller’s factory in the city had long since been demolished and the delicious ‘orange jam’ is produced in Arbroath, but outlets are difficult to find. As for the Dundee cake, which was originally also made by the Keiller family since the 1700s, that proved just as elusive. Having been sent to a local bakery we discovered that ‘due to shortages’ they were not making Dundee cakes at the moment. A sad disappointment, but we did manage to find another local cake – Kirriemuir Gingerbread, which although totally different, was delicious.

As spring crept into our garden this year we watched for signs of growth on the apple, pear and plum trees we bought and planted last year. As it was a lockdown they were purchased online, what a disappointment! They arrived as three large twigs with roots in a box. The roots had no soil or protection and there was no ‘how to care for’ or planting instructions... We looked up how to plant fruit trees and all year we cared for them. Not a leaf or sign of growth was observed. So we looked hard again as spring touched the garden - but nothing. So like the fig tree in the bible, we took them out – the roots had not grown at all since they were planted, they were dead! So we went to a local nursery and purchased replacement fruit trees and they are already settling in, covered in leaves and with hopefully fruit to come next year if not this.

Conversely the rhubarb I planted several years ago has always been pretty stunted in its growth, so last year I bought it a ‘friend’ plant and gave them both plenty of compost. At the first signs of growth this year I covered them with a bucket weighted down with a stone. Two weeks later I went into the garden to find the rhubarb stalks had pushed off the bucket and stone and the first crop was ready for picking! More in that first picking than I had had in the last three years!!

I have learnt a great deal about patience and determination during the stories I have related. I have learnt that no amount of care can resurrect some living things, that the encouragement of friends can be vital to wellbeing. Also that an alternative can give as much, if different pleasure, if you are prepared to be flexible. Lessons for life maybe?

**J.A.R.**



# **Vicar's Report for APCM Stranton Church 2021**

## **Written on Easter Day 2022**

*<sup>10</sup> This is what the Lord says: 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfil my good promise to bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' From Jeremiah 29*

In the time I have thought and prayed about this year's APCM, the above verses have kept coming back as a theme for the Church Community at Stranton. 2021 was the year of continued pandemic and significant transition. Thankfully we have not experienced 70 years exile but we have all been through a tough time. None the less God is with us and I do believe his promise is for His work to continue to prosper in our midst. So then may we press forward in faith.

Many of you reading this will be aware that Julie and I have experienced some very difficult circumstances recently. As I write I am still positive for Covid. I am therefore simply going to put a few bullet points together trusting that this will suffice as my report:

- Teamwork and ministry: Firstly my thanks goes to all who minister here, lay and ordained. The team here is amazing. Increasingly we have seen that we can step away and Church continues to happen. Thank you in particular to Peter Anderson who is stepping down as Church warden after 6 years, I am sure we all recognise Peter works incredibly hard with little or no fuss. Thank you.
- During the year both Clive Hall and Michelle Delves finished their training for ministry and are now recommended to seek a post of significant responsibility. Rachel Price continued as our contextual ordinand while Lizelke Klindt finished early as an MEV to concentrate on her PhD and return to South Africa. In November we were joined on placement by Anita Burke a final year ordinand from Lindisfarne RTP. Mary Tones (reader), Rev Andrew Craig and Rev Kevin Tones also continue to offer authorised ministry within the parish. In the summer Mother Gemma left St Aidan's so the above clergy are now working as a team across three parishes. In July I announced my plans to retire in the summer of 2022 allowing the commencement of a recruitment process which hopefully will culminate in a clergy appointment in June 2022. Thankyou to all those who committed to working with Sheila Bamber in the prioritisation process.
- Pandemic: Early in the year some of the services were streamed from church, but in person services continued throughout the year despite the Delta Wave in November and December. In the summer we restarted singing in person, alleluia! Communion continues to be offered in two kinds

through intinction. We have continued to stream both 9am and 11am, more recently in a simpler way. We returned to offering refreshments in the autumn using the new facilities at the back of Church. We celebrated Christmas in person including hosting the Group Carol service and a Christingle where we were joined by Stranton School. Morning prayer continues daily through the week on zoom.

- The decisions regarding Burbank Community Church were implemented during 2021. Clive Hall led a service of thanksgiving for Burbank Community Church later in the year.
- Bereavement: Sadly a number of long standing key members of the congregation died during the year and others have experienced significant long term health problems. The pastoral care group continues to support the housebound and lonely. Funerals continued through the year with a gradual move back to services in Church. Both weddings and baptisms returned with a bang as the restrictions lifted with really significant numbers of services in the summer. As part of the process towards baptism we restarted 'welcome services' as part of Lighthouse monthly.
- Sunday Club, Messy Church, Toddlers and Cake and Coffee all restarted in the autumn with surprisingly good numbers. Folk really wanted to get out and meet each other. Thanks again to all who make these things happen.
- The St Matthew's Community Centre Committee worked hard to provide a safe place for community use. As the year went on we were able to open up with really good footfall including several new groups. There was a health and safety incident on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 reported elsewhere.
- Schools work has continued either on line or in person depending on the prevailing conditions. Ward Jackson remains a priority for our Church (worship, school visits, governors and chaplaincy) but the clergy team and Communities of Hope team have worked with our regular school contacts: Stranton, Eldon Grove and Kingsley as well across the town St Aidan's, Throston and Eskdale.
- Michelle has maintained our links with Elwick Grange nursing home where monthly communions have now restarted.
- Norman continued as Civic chaplain for another year. We hosted two civic services in the autumn and Norman led the Remembrance Day service at the cenotaph in Victory Square.
- Throughout 2021 we continued to work with asylum seekers. Numbers are lower than previously experienced but alongside a continuing Iranian group we established a small group consisting of Iraqis and Eritreans, this latter group again supported by Jo from Communities of Hope. Thankfully after some very

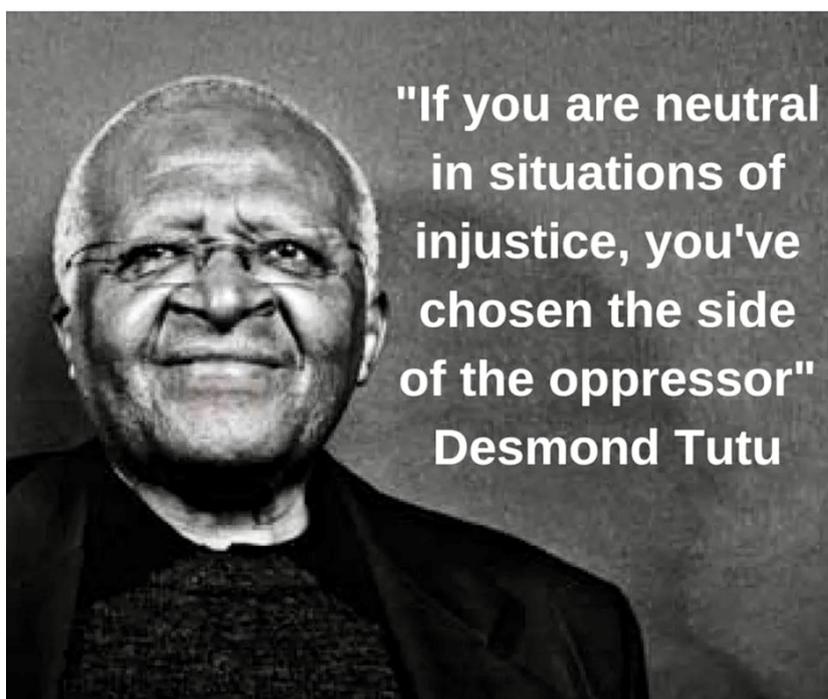
long delays these folk are beginning to get their home office interviews allowing things to progress with several of the Iranians being given leave to remain. In the summer we stopped offering in service translation into Farsi because of a lack of translators. More generally as a Church with the Afghan crisis PCC decided to sign up as a Welcome Church. We also support through a grant 2 weekly English classes for asylum seekers at the People's Centre.

- Communities of Hope established a number of ongoing projects including Syd's Kitchen, The Sewing Bee and a weekly drop in. However we have seen significant staffing changes with Jess leaving to train for ordination and Emma reducing her hours and stepping down as Project Lead. We appointed Aneta Bradley as the new Project Leader late in the year and pray for more stability, the recruiting of a new team and continued effective outreach in 2022.
- PCC reviewed the support we offer to Missionary Societies. During the year we agreed to adopt two new missionaries supported by CMS and also to offer support to the Kilimatinde Trust, maintaining our link with Tanzania rather than Festo and Grace who are now based in England.
- The screens project was completed. There were on going repairs following a leak in the central heating system in the Fulthorpe Chapel near the kitchen. A significant faculty was submitted for work to the Bells which we anticipate will happen in 2022.

There is probably much more to say but hopefully this gives a flavour of the year just passed. Amidst all the struggles, both individual and corporate, God is good. May we together discover a place of wellbeing and community growing in love, peace hope and joy. May we know God given abundant life that ripples out into our town and may God indeed prosper his work.

Every blessing.

**Norman**

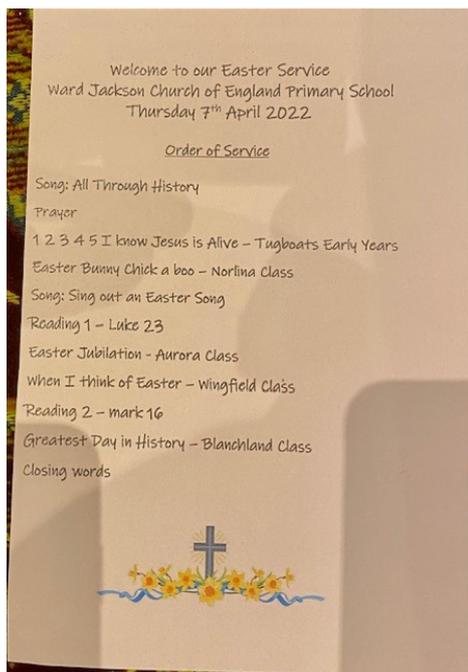


# Ward Jackson School Easter Celebration in Stranton 7<sup>th</sup> April



The pupils were very excited to walk up to Stranton for the Easter Celebration, even though it was cold and wet. The children were thrilled to see so many parents, family members and carers fill the church to hear and see them perform their pieces. Rev Clive was unable to be in church due to Covid – he was greatly missed by all. Mr

Akers stood in to introduce each class and the readers. It was a packed programme and all the children performed very well – beautiful singing and clearing reading and speaking.



Norlina class perform Easter Bunny Chick a boo



Mr Akers rounded off the programme with prayers thanks and farewell wishes to Mrs Campbell.

# Maundy Thursday

Fellowship was shared across the three churches when St Luke's laid on a simple meal of bread, cheese and drinks in their church rooms. Conversation flowed with everyone helping out wherever they could – serving, cleaning, washing up, tidying etc. Due to clergy members contracting covid the Rev Andrew Craig kindly stood in at the last minute to lead the diners in Holy Communion and then the stripping of the church in preparation for Good Friday.

It was an evening of friendship, food and worship – thank you to Julia and St Luke's congregation for organising the evening. It brought into sharp focus the meaning of the Last Supper and its aftermath.

**J.A.R.**



## Easter Eggheads

It was decided this year to hold Easter Eggheads during Holy Week. We had up to 21 children there each day. They played games, made Easter Cards, Easter Rocks, decorated eggs and iced cakes.

These activities were followed by a well-earned drink and a movie (The Miracle Maker) about the first Holy Week, then a quiz of university challenge quality on the movie. There followed talks from Michelle, Anita, Rachel and myself.

Many thanks go to all who helped in so many ways, we now have more games to play and more importantly we have successfully restarted Eggheads again after the pandemic.

**George Bainbridge**

# Messy Easter!

On Good Friday morning, more than 40 children came to St Matthew's with their parents or carers to take part in Easter Messy Church. Some of the children had also attended Easter Eggheads during the week, and returned for a final Easter session.

After waking everyone up with an action song, we recapped the events of Holy Week for the children who hadn't been to Eggheads, before the story of the first Good Friday and Easter Day were told. Then there was a quiz to check how well everyone had been listening, and both teams scored full marks, leading to a tie break! After another action song, there was a short talk explaining why we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at Easter.

Next we all transferred to the large hall to tackle the crafts and activities: constructing an Easter garden (complete with live bugs), painting Easter pictures, hunting for eggs and birds to decorate an Easter tree, completing puzzles, making beautiful stained glass window decorations and edible open tomb scenes from jammy dodgers, green icing and mini eggs!

Meanwhile, the kitchen team were busy toasting hot cross buns to go with the chocolate krispie nests which were then served up to all the hard working and hungry participants, and which went down a treat!

Many thanks to all our Messy Church Team and Eggheads team for a great time.

Our next Messy Church returns at the usual time of 4pm on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May - all welcome.

**Mary Tones**

## He is Risen Quiz - ideal with an Easter Egg or a Cuppa

- H** Which **H** was a puppet king in Galilee
- E** Which **E** is another word for Communion
- I** Which **I** was Judas surname?
- S** What **S** did the weather become at the crucifixion?
- R** What two **Rs** were crucified with Jesus?
- I** What **I** comes before Nazarens, Rex, Ivdaeorvm  
(You can't have all easy ones!!!)
- S** Which **S** was from Cyrene?
- E** What **E** was the tomb on Easter day?
- N** What **N** were hammered into Jesus wrist and feet?

# Easter Sunday

Following much prayer, Rev Clive recovered from Covid in time to lead, along with Rachel, the Easter Sunday Services in Stranton. The 11am Family Communion was a lively affair, with loud joyous singing, an amazing visual sermon and culminating in an Easter Egg hunt.

It was wonderful to see the church full with many families home for the weekend. After two years of restrictions all those in church rejoiced in this the culmination of our Lord's life and death – His resurrection and the promise of eternal life for all who believe in Jesus.



Clive showed us using a glass of water how sin contaminated the world. And after adding a colourless liquid the water turned red.

After adding another clear liquid to try to take away the 'red sin' human attempts made the water turn black!

Clive then put the cross, representing Jesus' death for our sin, into the glass and as soon as the cross was moved – the water went clear again.....

Clive had us all baffled!



The Church was beautifully decorated in the porch and on all the window ledges inside to reflect the joy of Easter.



The Sunday Club children all received Easter Eggs and all the children in church enjoyed small eggs from the hunt. Thankfully the adults too received a chocolate lamb/rabbit/chick so they didn't feel left out.

**J.A.R.**

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# Peace be with you

After Jesus had died on the cross and was buried in a closed tomb for three days, we read that he appeared to his disciples. Luke Ch 24 :36  
Jesus stood among them and said “Peace be with you” I had always thought that He said those words because they were terrified and thought that He was a ghost.  
Matthew Henry’s commentary says “Peace be with you” are words of comfort. Jesus visits them out of love and friendship”

I want to suggest that Jesus is reminding his disciples that ‘He’ is their peace. He is telling them that He died and rose again so that we all could have peace. Peace that we can be right with God. Peace in the knowledge that our sins are forgiven. Peace knowing that when He is with us we do not have to fear. Jesus is our peace. The world that we are living in is not at peace and we can let fear in. When fear comes in where does it settle? In our minds.

Later on in the same chapter of Luke, Jesus asks the disciples  
“ Why are you troubled? And why do doubts rise up in your mind?”  
Jesus knows our minds are our biggest battle field and He speaks peace into the disciples and our minds.

In verse 49 He goes on to say that: “I am going to send you what my Father has promised you”, He sends the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God’s presence within us.  
We no longer have to grieve Jesus’ absence, as the Holy Spirit is in every believer.  
Jesus is seated next to His father interceding for us. His Holy Spirit is our comforter, our counsellor and convictor. When we know that the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is living in us, we do not have to fear.  
We can have His peace and in turn spread His peace to others.

Where are you letting fear into right now?  
Are you allowing your own fears to spill into the lives of those around you?  
Have you taken your eyes off Jesus, the author of Peace?  
I invite you to pray with me now:  
Jesus thank you that you died on the cross to conquer sin, death and fear.  
I repent of the times where I allow fear to settle in my mind and to infect my life and the lives around me.  
This Easter I ask you cleanse me of my sin and to refill me with your Holy Spirit and fill me with your peace.

Amen

**Ang Hall**

## Anita Burke (ordinand in training) Final Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April



Anita preached on the passage from John 20 about Thomas and his doubts about the resurrected Jesus. She told us of her Holy Week visit to Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland and retold the story of Max Kolbe, a Franciscan friar and Catholic priest, who sacrificed his life for another man in Auschwitz. After 14 days of being confined in a prison cell without food or water Kolbe was murdered by SS guards. His faith and trust in Jesus was inspiring.

Anita has been on placement in Stranton for six months. She has built relationships within the congregation and her preaching has been thought provoking and blessed.

She has asked that we pray for the timing of her imminent hip replacement, so that she is able to walk down the aisle of Durham Cathedral for her ordination on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July.



Norman asked for prayers and words from God for Anita. Jean, Jacqui, Mary Julie and Clive all felt moved to speak God's words, reassurances and love into Anita's future.



Anita is to be curate in Washington after her ordination. Anita left with the prayers of the congregation for her future ministry. Anita has been a blessing to us here in Stranton and her smiles and evangelical zeal will be missed by all the

churches in the Central Group.

**J.A.R.**

## Birds of a Feather

More pink shoots are appearing on the Tamarisk tree – hopefully by the time you read this it will be into splendid blossom with people passing by asking what sort of tree it is! It is still fairly open and the nest ownership is still to be settled, but once the plumes open I suspect the blackbirds might be the winners this year.

I now await the arrival of the swifts coming all the way from Africa. Swifts manage to catch little sleeps on the wing – quite amazing really! The spring flowers are getting past their best now and will soon have to be moved to a sheltered spot to wilt down and go to sleep until sorted out in the autumn. The summer plants will take their place.

I'm still feeding the birds as although we have had a few sunny days it's still cold at night and early in the morning – lovely sunrises though...

The grass is growing well again after lots of dog's feet trampling over it. The gooseberries are shooting up and the roses are making good growth. I visited a friend who has an immaculate garden but noticed a lack of bird life. I'd rather have the scruffy garden and plenty of birds!

The tiny wrens are very fond of the ivy that trails along the ground. They are a bit difficult to spot, unlike the wood pigeons who stand out in both plumage and size. The wood pigeons have beaten the wrens to first place in the RSPB Bird Spotters League this year.

Watching the birds I see that God doesn't have favourites but is within a prayers reach and available to all.

**Ann Courtenay**

## Forest Church



Our next Forest Church will be on 29<sup>th</sup> May at 3pm at St Aidan's School  
Come and join us for family fun, worship and food



# Boys Brigade



## Open Night

On Friday May 20<sup>th</sup> we are holding our first Open Night since the pandemic, at St Matthew's Community Centre at 7.15pm.

Our special guests are Rev Clive and Angela Hall and Mrs Cheryl Mills of Stranton Guides.

Our Members will display some of their many talents and receive their awards for the current Boys Brigade Session.

If you would like to pop in to see us in action everyone is most welcome.

## Camp

So far we have 19 people (Lads and Leaders) going to camp and plans are being finalised for an exciting and challenging time from the 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July.

## Summer Programme

We intend to use St Matthew's car park and plan other activities such as visits to the swimming pool (followed by a visit to the chip shop), Stranton Church, the Blue Lagoon and Seaton Carew for sand castle building plus ice cream inspection - not a hard job to lick!!

## Summer Fayre

Bargains Galore can be found at our Summer Fayre on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June - where it's only a quid entrance and it's free for kids.

We are collecting bric a brac so if you have any and would like it collected please ring George Bainbridge on 07816445829.

You can see more of our Company in action on our Facebook page.

**George Bainbridge**

## Answers for — He is Risen Quiz

|   |   |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| H | Which H was a puppet king in Galilee              | Herod Antipas           |
| E | Which E is another word for Communion             | Eucharist               |
| I | Which I was Judas surname?                        | Iscaiot                 |
| S | What S did the weather become at the crucifixion? | Stormy                  |
| R | What two Rs were crucified with Jesus?            | Robbers                 |
| I | What I comes before Nazarenvs, Rex, Ivdaeorvm     | Iesvs - Latin for Jesus |
| S | Which S was from Cyrene?                          | Simon                   |
| E | What E was the tomb on Easter day?                | Empty                   |
| N | What N were hammered into Jesus wrist and feet?   | Nails                   |

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Your gifts this Christian Aid Week could help Jessica (and countless others like her) to set up water taps on her farm, learn to grow food, and provide seeds that thrive in drought – giving her all she needs to turn her dry, dusty land into a garden of hope.

Join us this Christian Aid Week, and help turn hunger into hope. With every gift, every action, every prayer, we celebrate and share hope with our sisters and brothers facing crisis around the world, from Ukraine to Zimbabwe.

### **Stranton All Saints' Church Christian Aid Week Appeal 2022**

This May we're fundraising for Christian aid to make a real difference to families like Jessica's. By supporting our fundraising with whatever you can afford, Christian Aid partners can help Jessica to learn how to sow drought tolerant crops, learn how to grow food in dry seasons and build a storeroom to preserve food and bounce back from future droughts. Please give today, and help this loving mum provide food - and hope - for her family. Thank you!

Copy or type this link into your browser to give directly, or hand in your donation in a Christian aid week envelope at Church with your regular offertory

<https://giving.give-star.com/microsite/christian-aid/christian-aid-week/fundraising-page/stranton-church-christian-aid-week-15-21-may-2022>



## 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.*

### **V**

When you pick violets, submerge them completely in water for several minutes before arranging.

### **Y**

Rub yoghurt on terra cotta pots to give them that old look.

### **Z**

Zinnias – place stems in boiling water for one minute then plunge into cold water.



# Mary Baines' Recipes Revisited

## Danish Cod

¼ lb streaky bacon  
¼ lb button mushrooms  
¼ lb cooked frozen peas  
4 cod pieces  
1 oz butter  
Seasoning

Chop bacon and arrange with the whole mushrooms and peas over the bottom of a buttered oven proof dish.

Place cod on top and sprinkle with seasoning.

Dot with butter

Cover with lid or foil – bake for 20 minutes at gas 4 or 190C, remove lid and bake for another 20 minutes.

Serve with new potatoes – serves 4.

## Carrot Cake

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 4 oz soft brown sugar | 2 oz raisons                              |
| 4 oz marg             | 1 teaspoon salt                           |
| 8 oz grated carrot    | 1 teaspoon cinnamon                       |
| 8 oz flour            | 2 oz chopped walnuts plus few for surface |

In saucepan mix the sugar, marg, raisons, carrot, spices & two tablespoons of water and bring to the boil for three minutes stirring continuously. Cool until it is just warm.

Mix in the salt, flour, cinnamon, nuts and stir until the consistency of a thick batter. Add a little water if it seems a little dry.

Place in 8" greased cake tin and cook at Gas 4, 190C, 180C fan for about one hour leaving the tin to cool for about ten minutes before turning out onto cooling tray.

# Simon



I travelled a long journey from afar  
Cyrene a town in ancient Libya,  
To see the Passover in Jerusalem,  
To visit the temple and old friends.

However the sight I saw was one of shame  
As I saw a criminal drop again.  
He struggled to carry His cross  
probably due to heavy blood loss.

This tortured soul collapsed in front of me  
I felt a spear in the back, 'Hey you pick that up  
And don't back chat', the soldier said  
For he could see this prisoner was half dead.

I froze for a few seconds I knew not what to think.  
Why would I want to be associated with this guy?  
He was badly wounded, weak and on His way out,  
Reluctantly I picked up the heavy load of shame.

The crowd jeered as I carried this load  
Even then the victim they still did goad.  
As we struggled down the Via Dolorosa  
Aiming for the skull hill of Golgotha.

They still whipped Him,  
Hurt Him in every way,  
Yet not a bad word did He say  
On this His life's final day.

We got there in the end, the soldier released me  
As I had done my sad and painful public duty,  
But I had changed my thoughts of Him  
He was far from being another criminal.

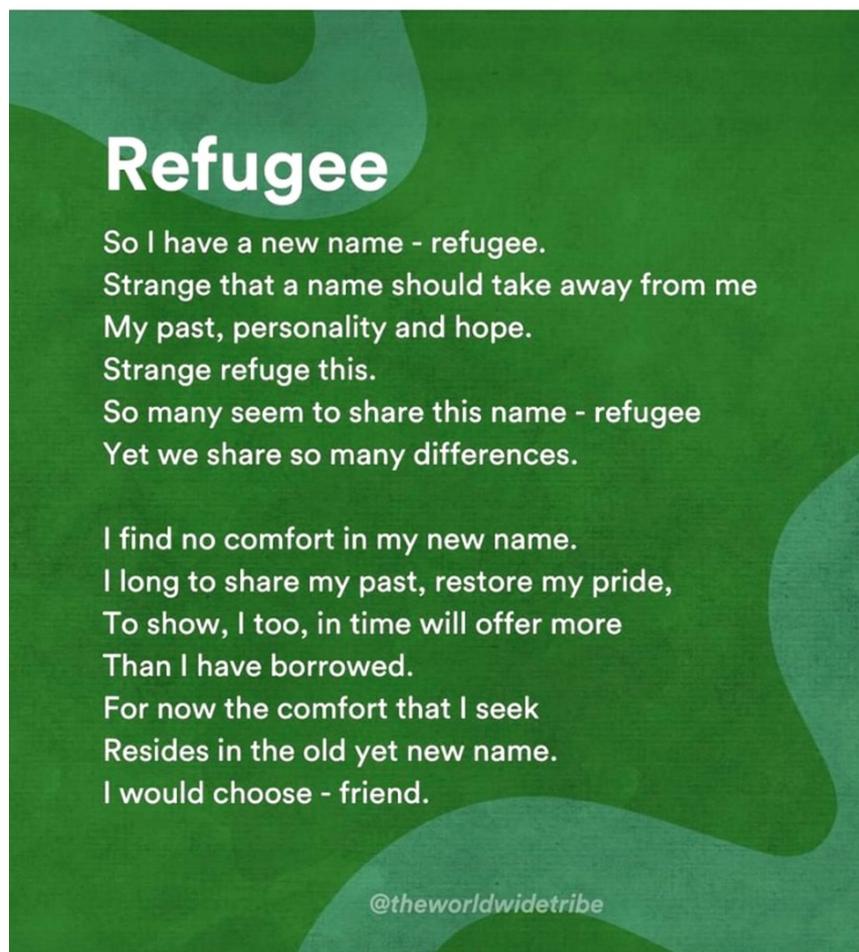
For as rough iron nails fixed Him to His Cross  
It flicked through my mind what a terrible loss,  
For apparently He had preached of love  
Even miraculously fed several thousands.

Now my own sons Alexander and Rufus follow Him  
Although many years have passed since that scene  
Telling all about the part I played in a divine plan  
How the Son of Man was aided by Simon of Cyrene.



**Please continue to pray for the people of the Ukraine using Psalm 31**

Beautiful words by 14-year-old Rubimbo  
Bungwe from Zimbabwe ✨



# United By Hope



We believe in something radical: equality for all.  
And although injustice divides us,  
hope unites us;  
bringing us together in faith,  
inspiring us,  
and driving us to action.  
Because hope makes peace possible,  
hope makes freedom unquestionable,  
hope brings a better tomorrow for everyone.  
Just because life isn't fair now,  
doesn't mean it can't be  
and it starts with hope.



# CELEBRATE!

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

**to**

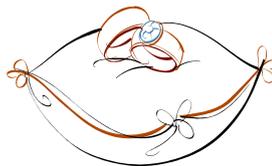
**May**

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



**Wedding Anniversary**  
**May**

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



If you have something to celebrate we would love to share it - email  
[admin@stranton-church.org.uk](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 May

Worship continues on Sundays at 9am and 11am.

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

### May

|                       |   |        |
|-----------------------|---|--------|
| Tues 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Stranton Standing Committee, Fulthorpe Chapel | 7.30pm |
| Sat 7 <sup>th</sup>   | Cake and Cuppa, St. Matthew's CC              | 2.00pm |
| Sun 8 <sup>th</sup>   | Messy Church St Matthew's CC                  | 4.00pm |
| Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> | Stranton PCC, Fulthorpe Chapel                | 7.30pm |
| Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup>  | Open Skies Forest Church, St Aidan's School   | 3.00pm |
| Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup>  | Group Council, Fulthorpe Chapel               | 7.15pm |

### June

Wed 1<sup>st</sup> Interviews Planned for Clergy Appointment to the Group

### Advance Notice

Norman and Julie's final Sunday will be **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June**.

We are planning one united group Communion service at **Stranton at 10am**.

A ceilidh is planned for **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June** in St. Matthew's Community Centre

### On a personal note...

Julie and Norman would like to thank everyone for their prayers, support and encouragement in what has been a very difficult time for them through April. They have now recovered from Covid although Julie has some continuing fatigue. During May they will continue to need to support Norman's mum in Morpeth after Geoff's death.

*St Matthew's  
Community Centre  
Elwick Road*



*Please come and join us*

*Saturday 7th May 2022*

*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*

# Who's Who

|                      |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| <b>Church Office</b> | St Matthew's Community Centre<br>Arncliffe Gardens TS26 9JF  |  |
| <b>Administrator</b> | Trish Playfor "Tues- Fri, 9.00 to 11.00am" 01429 894006<br>or 07305 550009<br>E-Mail: <a href="mailto:admin@stranton-church.org.uk">admin@stranton-church.org.uk</a><br>Web Site: <a href="http://www.stranton-church.org.uk">www.stranton-church.org.uk</a> |  |

## Vicar

Revd Norman Shave 34A Westbourne Road 233609  
E-Mail: [nshave1@btinternet.com](mailto: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

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Church Wardens</b>        | Angela Craig 57 Claremont Drive 234279<br>Rohan Wanduragala 62 Clifton Avenue 223751 |
| <b>Music Group</b>           | Julie Shave 34A Westbourne Road 233609   |
| <b>PCC Secretary</b>         | Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266   |
| <b>Treasurer</b>             | David Craig 57 Claremont Drive 234279  |
| <b>Asst. Treasurer</b>       | Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266   |
| <b>Loyalty Treasurer</b>     | Ken Shepherd 251 Park Road 268007  |
| <b>Notice Sheet</b>          | The Office (Notices by the preceding Wednesday)                                      |
| <b>Signpost Editorial</b>    | Jacqui Rogers 19 Trentbrooke Avenue 265527   |
| <b>Signpost Advertising</b>  | Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266   |
| <b>Signpost Subscription</b> | Maureen Anderson 22 Thetford Road 871266   |
| <b>St Matthew's Booking</b>  | Trish Playfor Church Office 894006   |

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

