

Stranton and Burbank Community

SIGNPOST



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

November 2024

What is our why?... (The musings of a priest)

What is our why? We often spend time talking about what we do, but how often do we stop and ask ourselves why? Why are we doing this? What purpose does it serve? And is it serving its purpose (or as I suggested in October's musings, could it be simply serving to distract us)? These questions apply to us as individuals as much as they do to our churches, our PCCs, our church-run activities, and so on. Why do we continue to do the same things, if they no longer serve their purpose? It might be a service that's very poorly attended, an activity that's a drain on resources and is no longer relevant, or a charity/cause we've supported for so many years, that no one remembers why we started in the first place. At an individual level, it might be the role we do that we don't really enjoy, or have been doing for years because it was right at the time but no one else has come forward to take it on since. Do they simply distract us from doing something bigger and better?

So the question is **'What is our Why?'**

Why are we doing what we are doing? What's the end goal behind it? As a church, does it serve our mission, our vision? As an individual, does it bring joy to our lives, does it enable us to flourish and grow?

I'm not for one second saying everything needs to change (please don't all stampede to the door!!). But I'd like us to think about why?

Ultimately, everything is (or should be) about mission. How does it serve God, and the vision God has given us for this place? This is equally valid for us individually, and as part of the wider church (our parishes, our group, the diocese, and the national church). Everything should be pointing others towards God and our vision for this place. So what is that vision? 'What is the why' behind why we are here, doing what we are doing?

This is something we need to understand so that we can be as effective for God and the Kingdom as possible. It's important that we explore this, because our vision can change, our 'why' can change. A vision that we might have had 20 years, 10 years, 5 years or even only 1 year ago, might no longer be valid. It is right to challenge what we do and why we do it. This is something I'd like us all to think about over the coming months, so in the New Year, we can really start to explore the 'why' that lies behind what we are doing, what we are wanting to see.

Our Group of churches is great, the breadth of worship, the shared worship, our coming together and supporting each other, and so many other things – but what is our purpose? What gifts do each of us and each of our parishes bring to help serve that purpose?

Similarly, our individual parishes do so much and offer so much, but what is at the core of this? Why do we do what we do? Who can support us? What help can *you* offer (or what help do you need)?

There is so much potential, so much opportunity for us to engage with but we can't do it all. This is why it's important that we understand the question that started this off... *What is our why?*

This is something for us all to explore as we seek to grow individually and together, coming back to the heart of worship, and pondering the question 'what is our why'?

Grace and peace,

Revd John

From the Home Front

He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:2-4 New International Version

It is hard sometimes to process this passage - what does it mean ‘to become like a child’, to think and act like a child? If you watch young children you begin to understand why Jesus made this analogy.

Recently I went with my daughter and five year old grandson to see Jurassic Earth, it is a children’s theatre production which uses animatronic and puppet dinosaurs interwoven with actors to tell a story. Watching my grandson’s face when the ‘dinosaurs’ were on stage I saw a reflection of his awe, wonder and delight to see something he knew was no longer alive, moving around in front of his eyes. He believed they were real and he was filled with joy!



Likewise on a recent visit to RHS Wisley Gardens we witnessed the unusual sight of a group of koi carp coming almost out of the water in order to reach a small child who was feeding them. The child was ecstatic to see them so close, he was just about in the water with them... His delight was visible and audible.



On the same visit we went into the glass house and saw so many cacti and succulents in bloom. The flowers were exquisite, the colours startling and shapes and sizes mesmerising. As we looked at each one we just saw the artistry of our amazing creator God.



In early October we were fortunate to witness the Aurora Borealis - the Northern Lights - in the skies above Hartlepool. I felt overwhelmed to see this incredible display of moving colours. I certainly felt as if God was putting on this magnificent display for us His children's delight and pleasure. It was good to look through the eyes of a child again...

We need to accept this life and all it offers with awe and wonder, acknowledging that God made every aspect of this world and that He is real in our lives and around us every day. His love is tangible and He is faithful in that love to each one of His children. Trust and believe just like children.

J.A.R.

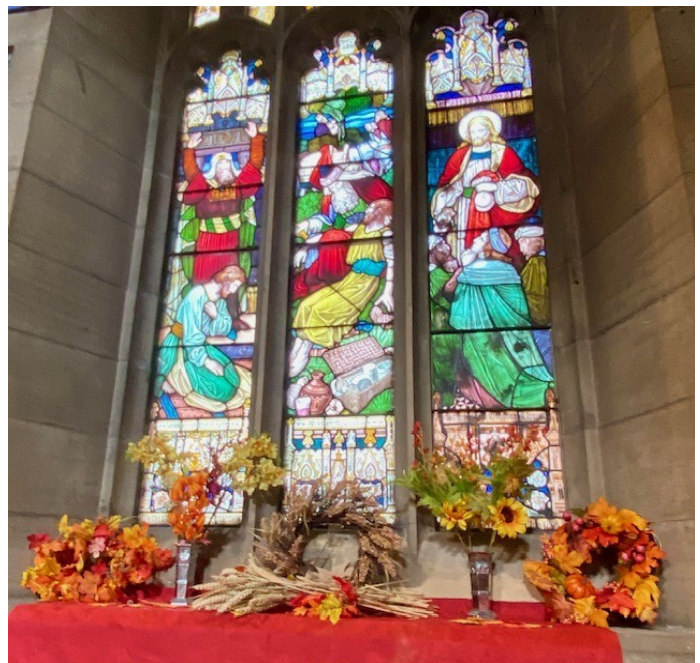
Harvest Festival 29th September with parade of uniformed organisations.



Parading the flags



Donated produce for The Food Bank and prayer stones.

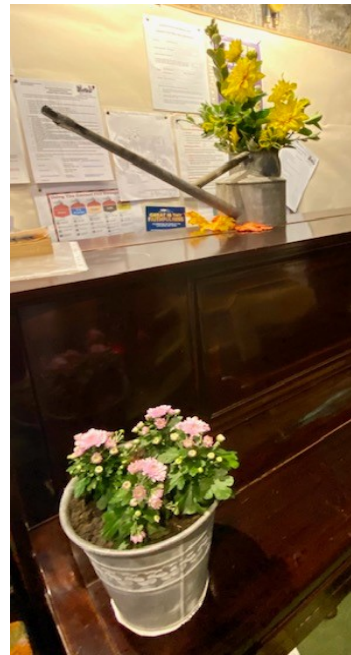


The church was decorated by the various groups attending.



Brownies and Guides

Display by Boys Brigade



Messy Church and Toddlers also made colourful displays



Ward Jackson CE Primary Harvest Festival in Stranton Church On 8th October



Revd John welcomed children staff and families to Stranton for the Harvest Celebration. It was wonderful to see so many parents and carers despite the awful weather.

Headteacher David Akers introduced all the readers and songs.





Recording the proceeding under the watchful eye of Y6 mentor.

Revd John talked to the children about growing and learning and ended with prayers



A lively Harvest Samba to end the service.

School Council met with [Hartlepool Foodbank](#) today and helped hand over the very generous contributions that our community had put together.

Thank you so much to everybody who was able to make a contribution, whether through attending our Harvest Service and sharing joy with the children or by providing spare food to donate to those most in need.

We also received three nominations for those who may need that extra bit of help and those will be delivered as soon as possible.

This really shows true community spirit!
[#thewardjacksonway](#)



Ward Jackson CE Primary Update

As part of their enquiry learning, Tugboats went to [Preston Park Museum and Grounds](#) to look at how people lived in the past. They had the best day riding on the bus, exploring the museum and even having time to play in the park. 🏆



Blanchland Class have been working scientifically this afternoon when dissecting pig hearts. They understood the health and safety rules and worked incredibly well together to observe and identify the different features of the heart that we had been learning in previous weeks. [#wardjacksonway](#) Thank you to [Roy Blyth Family Butcher](#) for their incredible specimens.





Ward Jackson Primary School

3h · 🌐

Norlina class had the best day at the [Heugh Battery Museum](#)! They learned lots of facts about the Hartlepool bombardment to help with their enquiry topic.



Enjoying the sensory experience

Bonfire Night Quiz

- B** Which King **B** saw the writing on the wall?
- O** Which **O** means last?
- N** For which King **N** did Daniel interpret a dream?
- F** Which **F** tree was cursed by Jesus?
- I** What **I** will melt when God sends the wind?
- R** Which **R** describes a young man who met Jesus?
- E** Which **E** means provided the poor widow with oil?

- N** Which **N** completes the hymn ‘_____ my God to thee’?
- I** Which **I** is the patron saint of St Ives?
- G** Which **G** fought the Midianites?
- H** Which **H** is eve of all saints day?
- T** Which **T** has two epistles?

A Joyful Announcement

After discussions with the diocese Revd John is to become a Training Incumbent for a curate beginning next year.

John has now announced (with great joy) that a current ordinand, Claire Mead will be joining the Central Group (licensed to Stanton and St Luke's while serving across the Group) following her ordination on the weekend of 28th/29th June 2025 (TBC). Claire is currently an ordinand in Gainford, Ingleton, Staindrop and Winston parishes, studying in a mixed mode pathway at Cranmer Hall. Further information will follow next year.

Also Nathaniel Jackson (a member of St Luke's) is now serving as a Ministry Experience Volunteer within the Group, having started in September. The scheme runs through to June/July next year and he is already working closely with the Friday Drop In. Nathaniel delivered the talk at our Group service at St Luke's on October 20th.

Frank Endean **April 1941-September 2024**

Frank moved to Hartlepool when he retired from being a London Black Cab Driver. He was born in Tottenham and lived in London but came to love Hartlepool when he moved here to look after a relative.

He was a member of Stranton Church and acted as a sides-person for several years. He was well known for his suits and array of snazzy ties. He was quietly spoken and very interesting to talk to. Frank was a gentleman with a deep faith which shone through his actions and words. He enjoyed long visits to Canada to stay with his brother and his family.

Latterly Frank suffered from dementia and was cared for in Sheraton Court Care Home and Warrior Park Care Home and he passed away peacefully in Butterwick Hospice at the age of 83. He has been missed from our church family in recent years.



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and looking for a venue?**

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A tale of two St Mary's

I was blessed on holiday in October to have the opportunity to join Christians in worship in settings and circumstances very different to what I am used to. It seems on my return home to have been a sort of "Tale of two St Mary's".



At the end of September I set off by train with my bike to Penzance to join a group of friends from our time together in Christian Union at College in the 1970s for a week's cycle trip – on this occasion from Land's End to Bristol. We have an annual reunion of this kind in different parts of the UK. Despite some horrendous weather, we had a successful ride, including on the Sunday morning being able to start our day after attending 8.00 am Holy Communion in Truro Cathedral, a most impressive Victorian masterpiece built between 1880 and 1910 on the site of the parish church of St Mary. It would be an understatement to say there was a contrast between the Cathedral's magnificent High Gothic architecture and decoration and us itinerant cyclists in "High Vis" jackets and shorts. Still, the Service brought home to us the holiness and timelessness of God and of his Glory and promise of Eternal life in Jesus Christ - before we set off to enjoy torrential rain as we travelled over the cycleways and steep back roads of Cornwall.

Two weeks later Angela and I were on an altogether more relaxing break in Turkey, and shared some time with a newly retired Priest from Milton Keynes, Revd Paul and his wife Jeannette. We asked them what they were doing on Sunday, and they said they were going to join the expat Anglican community's service in Didim, just over an hour's drive away on the tourist coast. We said we would like to go with them and ended up having a most interesting time.



Can you spot us? Angela and David with the congregation in Didim.

The Service in Didim was taken by Fr James Buxton of the Anglican Diocese of the Mediterranean, who had travelled three hours by bus from the Church of St John in Izmir to be there. The congregation of about 25 filled the simple chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary at the end of a dusty village road. It is a restored Greek Orthodox building, rebuilt in recent years from its dilapidated state as a cowshed following the population exchanges that took place between Greece and Turkey over a hundred years ago. The hymn books that we used had been donated by a Roman Catholic parish in Huddersfield. After the service we gathered to share a meal – at the Irish pub in the nearby town, where everyone was equally at home, especially the Irish Catholic lady who divides her time between Dublin and Didim. There was genuine sharing in fellowship and support - in the very part of the world where according to tradition John the Evangelist looked after Mary, mother of Jesus, following His direction from the cross.

The two services and settings were so different, but each in its way opened fresh avenues of worship and community. Sometimes I think we need to experience unfamiliar surroundings and new people to be more open to the promptings of God's Spirit for worship and faith to thrive.

David Craig

Never Blotted Out



When the family heard their news of
gloom
They inscribed this on their son's tomb.
They hoped the country would appreciate
The great sacrifice their family had made.
For all their hopes had totally disappeared
Replaced by grieving loss and sorrow
For he had lost forever his own tomorrow
Only to live as a memory in their mind's
furrow.



Another Father experienced that pain
Of a Son who died in pain and agony
And like that young soldier many years
ago
It was a sacrifice made for you and me.
His glory was not blotted out
For from His death it grew
As He gained life anew.
An offering with remembering
Is still available to me and you.

**THERE IS NO WRONG
WAY TO PRAY.**

Sognare un mondo senza
Do it in church.

Do it at home.

Do it kneeling. Or standing.

Do it out loud. Or In silence.

Do it alone. Do it with others. Do

it however you want.

Just do it.

Amen if you believe!



**"There is a time for
everything, and a season
for every activity under
the heavens:"
Ecclesiastes 3:1
(Look for Him in every season)**



BB

Harvest Festival



All our members helped to create a fantastic Harvest Festival Display in church (Pics on Facebook) and those who came to the service enjoyed a tasty bacon butty prior to the service.

Activities - So far have included devotions based on the story of Noah, the Anchors and Juniors have done dot to dot of Noah building the Ark (I got the image from Germany I wonder if it gave the FA an idea!!), a lollipop Ark and a sticky rainbow - all of which were popular with the Boys.

The Company Lads are improving their drill work, drumming, games skills and have taken part in Kim's game, post card observations and Hypotheticals (regarding the BB).

Future Activities include Remembrance Day and Christmas Activities.

Uniform - Our Juniors have changed their uniform to a royal blue polo shirt and we are investigating the possibility of the Anchor Boys moving to a red polo shirt (If you have any contacts about polo shirts please contact us).

Recruiting - at the time of writing we are working through the paperwork for a new leader and we need new members, especially in the Anchor Boys (5-8 year olds) on a Friday Night from 6.00-7.00pm at St Matthew's CC.

Christmas Fayre - is on Saturday 30th November from 9.30 till 12noon in St Matthew's CC.

BARGAINS GALORE GUARANTEED.

We are collecting Bric-a-brac (No clothing) for the Fayre and if you need anything collecting please ring George Bainbridge on 07816 445829.

Christmas Carol Service - we are holding our Christmas Carol Service on Friday 13th December at Stranton Church - more information will follow in next month's magazine

If you would like to see pictures of the Boys/Lads in action please visit our Facebook page

George Bainbridge

07816 445829

BB Safari Game



Bonfire Night Quiz - Answers

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| B Which King B saw the writing on the wall? | Belshazzar |
| O Which O means last? | Omega |
| N For which King N did Daniel interpret a dream? | Nebuchadnezzar |
| F Which F tree was cursed by Jesus? | Fig |
| I What I will melt when God sends the wind? | Ice |
| R Which R describes a young man who met Jesus? | Rich |
| E Which E provided the poor widow with oil? | Elisha |

N Which N completes the hymn '_____ my God to thee'?

- Nearer**
*** Ia (An Irish saint)**
Gideon
Halloween
Timothy

I Which I is the patron saint of St Ives?

G Which G fought the Midianites?

H Which H is eve of all saints day?

T Which T has two epistles?

*Information note:

Ia went to the seashore to depart for Cornwall from her native Ireland along with other saints. Finding that they had gone without her, fearing that she was too young for such a hazardous journey, she was grief-stricken and began to pray. As she prayed, she noticed a small leaf floating on the water and touched it with a rod to see if it would sink. As she watched, it grew bigger and bigger. Trusting God, she embarked upon the leaf and was carried across the Irish Sea. She reached Cornwall before the others.

Kilimatinde Trust Update



The Kilimatinde Trust

Kilimatinde village is in Sub-Saharan Africa, under the diocese of the Rift Valley, in Central Tanzania, approximately 110km from Dodoma.

Healthcare

It has a voluntary, mission hospital, a primary and secondary school for vocational studies including nursing and engineering, plus a pharmacy, shops and housing.

Kilimatinde Hospital responds to emergencies, urgent care and has some outpatient provision as well as inpatient wards, theatres, maternity, antenatal and post-natal care and more recently has an ultrasound to aid in this. Kilimatinde hospital has a valuable role to play in the future serving the needs of its catchment area and wider population, but it needs to provide specialist clinics which don't exist in other hospitals for a viable prospect of sustainable income generation for the hospital.

The Burns Unit

The 8-bedded burns unit was opened in 2018. Kilimatinde has pioneered burns treatment to serve the community, including the use of banana - leaf dressings, with skills and techniques that the staff have learned using internationally recognised gold standard training from Interburns.org. People now travel for miles to receive this specialist care! The fear of the cost of hospital treatment results in a delay in seeking help and this increases the damage and results in wounds which are beyond healing.

The Kilimatinde Trust provides a small fund which enables the first 10 days of treatment to be free. They have been able to plant banana trees to create a good food supply and use the leaves to create the dressings. The ease of removal is of great benefit in reducing pain and wound debridement.

Education

There are currently 82 pupils studying at the primary school in Kilimatinde and 147 at St John's secondary school. The students' exam results are good year on year, and we still support student sponsorship through the Trust. Earthquakes last year affected the classrooms, and dormitory buildings.

There were also floods last winter due to heavy rains. The school cultivated 10 more acres for maize production and adapted by growing different crops like beans and sesame. The community worked hard to supplement the food supply for Kilimatinde, but a difficult harvest has added pressure to many families this year. Many of the students have helped with a school garden project and students are now eating vegetables 4 times a week! We wish them all luck in their upcoming exams in October/November.

Vocational training continues in mechanics and tailoring for older students. Any additional funding coming to the Trust, is directed to where it is needed most. Each year it funds what it can, prioritising where the needs are greatest.

Projects for 2024-2025

For education This year, our focus is a **Sleep Well Learn Well project**, raising money for mattresses for St John's Secondary School boarders.

When two of the trustees, Mike and Jill visited in October 2023, they found that some of the students were sleeping on the floor as the mattresses were worn and didn't fit the bed frames available and they weren't able to concentrate well in class. We have been able to repair and adapt the bed frames and now need new mattresses. This will allow better rest and a more productive education for our students and will attract more students to come and study at St John's. Our goal for 2024 is for good sleep for all and we have a target of £3,600.

For the hospital Anaesthetic equipment would also aid better debridement in the burns unit and improve the facilities further. The Burns unit cannot operate as a level 2 facility without safe anaesthesia. There is a total cost of 22 million Tshillings, (£7,270) which we are aiming to raise for this.

They still have a food scheme supported regularly by a few kind donors, whereby the poorest and most malnourished patients, who would benefit from additional nutritional support, can be identified and food funded for them. This has meant the hospital can purchase more eggs, chickens and milk to provide a protein-rich diet for wound healing. The hospital garden is home to a variety of vegetables to supplement this food supply.

If you can make a small donation each month or make a one-off donation, we would be so grateful. You can follow the link below and indicate the project you would like to allocate your donation to.

<https://www.justgiving.com/thekilimatindetrust>

or send a cheque made payable to The Kilimatinde Trust to Mrs J Barrett, 108 High Street, Hartlepool, TS24 0QY

and remember to please fill in a gift aid form if you are able in the link below, as this will make your gift go further, or we can send you one out in the post

<https://www.kilimatindetrust.org.uk/support-us/donation--giftaid-form-8445.php>

via **Jill Barrett**

Some musical reflections Salvation Style

Have you ever considered taking a couple of steps outside your normal musical comfort zone? Just a little way outside the box perhaps; a couple of steps even. I suppose that familiar feeling then creeps up on us, “Well I know what I like and that will suit me fine - I don’t think I’ll bother”. What are you missing? You won’t know until you have tried and tasted; and by twiddling a few knobs in a different direction on the radio or CD player or entering the world of YouTube on the computer, you could open up a magical wonderland of new musical experiences.....perhaps!

Here is one which you might like to start with in your exploration. It is a Tone Poem, written for Brass Band by Eric Ball entitled RESURGAM (I shall rise again). It was based on these words from The Wisdom of Solomon in the Apocrypha (Chapter 3 vv 1-3)

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, And no torment will ever touch them; In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died, And their departure was thought to have been an affliction, And their going from us to be their destruction. But they are at Peace.

Eric Ball was a Salvation Army Officer, a pianist and organist as well as a brass instrumentalist, trainer and conductor. He worked for many years in the Salvation Army Music Department in a range of roles and duties, culminating in taking the baton for the International Staff Band in 1942. However in 1944 he resigned his post and left the Salvation Army due to some ideological differences. His loss to the S A was a gain for the outside Brass Band world. He took on conducting, training and composing roles and quite a number of his compositions, over the years were used as Test Pieces in Brass Band Contests, including Resurgam in 1952.

The range and output of music from the Salvation Army is quite phenomenal to cater for the wide range of musical ensembles found in that organisation, including male and female and mixed voice groups as well as the traditional brass instrumental groups.

I recently came across a couple of these and which you might like to make a note of, the first of which is “When God comes near”, which I first heard during lockdown, being performed and recorded by a “Zoom style” mixed singing group. The simplicity of the lyrics and the lilting melody allows you to sit back and close your eyes, with the feeling that

despite all the vicissitudes of life you will come to no harm “When God comes near”

Here is the first verse and chorus. Words by James Birney Music William Himes.

*When I'm alone and there's no one to talk to,
The world's so big and I feel very small,
Then God comes near and puts his arms around me,
And says "My child I've waited for your call,*

Chorus

*When God comes near it is a special moment,
He calms my spirit,
He takes away my fear,
O such an hour of sacred blessed friendship
That special time, when God comes near.*

The other very simple piece is a very personalised and reflective one “In this quiet moment” with words by John Gowans and music by Ivor Bosanko.

*In this quiet moment, still before your throne
Conscious of your presence, Knowing I am known,
In this quiet moment, set my spirit free,
In this quiet moment. Make me a better me.*

And so whilst you are still You Tubing for these two and RESURGAM, why not listen to the William Himes arrangement of the hymn tune SAGINA (And can it be) played by the New York Salvation Army Staff Band. Look for the title Amazing Love.

Happy listening

Jeff Parsons © in conversation with J Cornelius Starbuck

Fundraising for
MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU



Many thanks to all who came along to our October Coffee and Cake afternoon

We raised £265

Every penny we raised means Macmillan can help more people with cancer live life as fully as they can

**St Matthew's
Community Centre
Elwick Road**



Coffee or Tea, Cake and Company

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

Saturday 2nd November 2024

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



CELEBRATE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

to

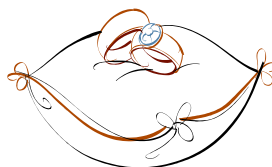
November

Jenna Bruce
Daniel Busby
Ray Clark
Sally Clarke
Linda Cartwright
Jasmine Padgett
Sylvia Shepherd
Mike Weimer



**Wedding Anniversary
November**

John & Rebecca Bell



If you have something to celebrate we would love to share it - email
admin@stranton-church.org.uk
or phone 894006.

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

Dates for the Diary

November

Sat 2 nd	Coffee, Cake & Chat All Souls service	St Matthew's CC St Luke's	2.00-4.00pm 6.00pm
Sun 3 rd	All Saints service Bereavement Service	St Aidan's Stranton	3.00pm 4.00pm
Sun 10 th	Remembrance Day Messy Church	Stranton St Matthew's CC	10.45am 4.00-5.30pm
Sat 30 th	BB Christmas Fayre	St Matthew's CC	9.30-12noon

Hartlepool Central Group New Year Meal

The Den at the Golden Lion has been booked for our Group New Year Meal on Friday 17th January 2025, to arrive at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. The cost is £28 for 3 courses and £22 for 2 courses.

A menu can be printed out on request or collected from church in order to book your place, with deposit payment and dietary details (gluten free, vegetarian and vegan choices can be requested in advance). Any allergies also need to be advised please.

On the night there will be a raffle to raise funds for the Thursday Kitchen at St Aidan's.

Can all menus and a £5.00 non-returnable deposit for each meal be returned to Helen Rochester via Church Wardens by 6th December 2024 and then all balances will be due by 7th January 2025.

Who's Who

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