



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2020

August Sunday Services Outside at Stoke





11 am

SEPTEMBER

WORSHIP, PRAYER AND COMMUNITY IN OUR VILLAGE CHURCHES

 Monday-Saturday

 9am Mon-Fri
 zoom.us/j/385426921

 10am Sat
 Zoom Meeting ID: 385-426-921

 (except Weds 9th and 23rd September, see * below)

Sunday 6th September

Stoke Holy Cross Churchyard

Sundays from 13th September 10.30 am Stoke Holy Cross Church

We are online every Sunday morning on Youtube "Venta group of churches"

Wednesday mornings

10am Caistor St Edmund Church

9th Sept 23rd Sept Communion service Praise & Worship

*We hope to broadcast these 2 gatherings live in place of our morning prayer meeting on our Facebook page "Venta group of churches". Caistor church is normally open from 10-6 on Wednesdays and 12-6 on Sundays, and Stoke Church from 11am-12.30 on Saturdays. Things keep changing at the moment for us as well as everyone else, so please keep checking our website, Facebook, and Youtube. Please get in touch if we can help you in any way.

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ecently I have been wondering how much we doubt whether God truly accepts us. We certainly doubt whether people accept us, don't we - and sometimes with good reason. Think about the Black Lives Matter movement, which is very much to do with someone being equally accepted and valued no matter what they look like. Think about how so much on social media is to do with being accepted: I write or post things that I think will please a certain group of people out there, and I will be accepted by them. I do the right thing, I say the right thing? Notice that the first one of those is about simply being accepted for who I am, and that the second one is about doing something in order to be accepted.

But what about God? Does God accept me? Can I know that? And does he simply accept me for who I am, or is it about me doing something in order to be accepted? In the book of Acts, Peter and Paul, two of

the earliest and most influential followers of Jesus, are trying to work out what it means to be accepted by God.

We are sure that these Jews on the one hand, Jesus's own people group, are accepted by God, but on the other hand are what the bible calls the Gentiles. That is everyone else, that is me, and probably you. It was always God's intention that the Jews should be his way of blessing the whole of humanity, but now the plan expands and says that the gospel is for everyone, and the gospel is going to work through everyone.

But other people start to push back. The acceptance of God is too radical. The grace of God is too free, and people start to say, "You have to be circumcised to be saved." You have to do the right thing, you have to look the right way. I.. errm... hopefully no-one was checking, but you know what I mean. People are keen on measuring acceptance by whether others do the right thing, or look the right way. But God hasn't opened a door of obedience, or appearance; he has opened a door of faith.

The demand is repeated: "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses." For those people, acceptance is not about faith; it is about obedience, and appearance.

But gloriously Peter will not have this. He says that far from looking out the outside, at appearance, "God sees the heart." It is a consistent message of the Scriptures. God sees the heart.

For Peter and for Paul there is no difference between people: we are all equally in need of the saving grace of Jesus. There is no question of their acceptance being earned, because it is through the grace of Jesus. So you can know that God accepts you. You can know because God looks at the heart that is looking to him, looks for faith rather than only obedience or appearance. You can know because God does not discriminate against anyone, and does not demand anyone more than he does of anyone else.



VICAR OF THE VENTA GROUP

Stoke Holy Cross with Dunston, Arminghall and Caistor St Edmund Rob Baker, The Vicarage, Mill Road, Stoke Holy Cross, NR14 8PA rob@venta-group.org **01508 492305**

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

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CURATE

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CHURCHWARDENS

Stoke Holy Cross & Dunston Viv (493438) & Roy (493595)

> Arminghall Annie (495580)

Caistor St Edmund Jani (493572) & Lia (494137)

ST GEORGE'S HALL BOOKINGS:

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IN A FUTURE MAGAZINE

just get in touch and we will see what we can do!

Email: ventafree4all@outlook.com

FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERAL

St Faith's Crematorium MARGARET MACKLEY Monday 3rd August

Stoke Holy Cross Church MICKY WELLS Friday 7th August

We continue to pray for all those who have lost loved ones recently, or are remembering someone particularly at this time of year.

We are always happy to record the names of anyone from the villages whose funeral has been held recently, even if it wasn't taken by a member of our ministry team.

NEXT EDITION

Items for the next month's magazine please send by email to Henry and Eostre Caswell by email to

ventafree4all@outlook.com

By 10th of this month please. The 10th of the month will be the deadline for all copy for the next magazine for the time being.



We are now able to be back to meeting together at church

e are delighted to have been able to start meeting together again at church at both Stoke Holy Cross and Caistor St Edmund.

With the lockdown restrictions eased somewhat for churches we have been able in August to have a few services outside on Sundays at Stoke and inside at Caistor with appropriate Covid 19 precautions and social distancing. We had to have our proposed outdoor one on August 16th inside at Stoke due to the showers.

The pictures are mainly from outside at Stoke church where we have been enjoying picnics together too after the Sunday service. And as you can see we were able to cater for all age groups too. There is one photo also showing us seated well apart inside on the rainy day.

From the 2nd week in September services will be inside the churches as you will see from details on the front cover. We take full Covid 19 precautions, with well-spaced seating, hand sanitisers and masks, so we do hope you will all feel safe to come and join us.







News from the Beech Cottage mini Garden Centre



OUR APOLOGIES AND THANKS RE THE NEED FOR FLOWER POTS

We regret we managed to put the WRONG number in Norwich Road to deliver your unwanted pots. The Pots should have gone to No. 51 not 50 as appeared in last month's notice. So our sincere apologies go to the owner of No. 50 and to anyone who took pots to the wrong place. Please note no more are needed at present. Viv and David who sell lots of wonderful plants to raise money for repairs to Stoke church are very thankful to everyone for buying so many. Thanks also for the donated pots BUT they now have ample thank you.

Calling All Our Cyclists (plus walkers and drivers too). Come and join in the Norfolk Churches Trust Annual Sponsored Bike Ride

e are very happy to confirm that the annual sponsored bike ride will be taking place on Saturday 12th September. And it is open for walkers and drivers to take part as well.

This is a wonderful opportunity to visit our beautiful and historic churches which were closed for so long during the lockdown.

Sign up and find your own sponsors. All the money raised is divided equally between the Norfolk church of your choice and The Norfolk Churches Trust, which gives grants to hundreds of churches for repairs, renovation and the conservation of their buildings. More than 600 churches will be open throughout the day for everyone to explore.

The Bike Ride has raised around £2,800,000 over the past 32 years.

In 2019 it raised a wonderful total of £95,037. Maybe we can do even better this year!

How to register this year. There is online registration this year via the website https://norfolkchurchestrust.org.uk/bike-ride/ If you would prefer, you can still register with the paperwork available through your parish church or from the website. You can also collect a leaflet from Stoke Holy Cross church.

Due to these unprecedented times there may be Covid-19 restrictions to the bike ride. We will update the website with any new information we get. In the meantime we suggest that you take your own pen so you can sign your own sponsor forms if no one is available at a particular church. You could also take a photo to show where you have visited and please send us any good pictures. You might even win a prize!



The Curates Egg. By Lyn

Work – good or bad?

So for over half my week I work at UEA in the Postgraduate Research Service. My work in administration is for/with postgraduate research applicants, students and the academics in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and is varied. Other members of the Service connect with other Faculties of the University. Up until January, 24 of us shared an open plan office. Some people liked it, some didn't. We then moved to new offices, in a building, where we were in several smaller offices, then when lockdown came, we were moved out once again, to work at home. Hence, I now find myself with a desk in a room at home which is smaller than a UK prison cell but it sometimes feel like a prison, almost solitary confinement except it isn't.

I am fortunate, for the most part I Thank God for Monday, I enjoy my work, it's good, it has it's challenges (particularly over the last few months), but it's good. It's good largely due to my work colleagues. We help each other. We support one another. We share our gifts, our knowledge, our wisdom with one another. We have fun. The news we got in August though, that we're going to be working at home until Christmas, was greeted with some sadness. No Christmas craft making lunch times. No competitive decorating our new offices for the first time. No Elf Day. No meal out. The good had turned sour. Until I looked at my computer screen. Then I realised, we were together, we were still doing some of the usual things – joking with one another, speaking to one another, having virtual coffee breaks, singing (yes we do like serious jockin (no g)* on Friday afternoons.



Paul in the New Testament wrote this towards the end of his letter to the Philippians: brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Paul wrote this while in prison, so maybe that's the challenge for me (and perhaps you too if you're struggling with working from home). Think again about whether work is bad. Think instead about what is praiseworthy in your colleagues or clients. *Steve Wright in the afternoon on Radio 2



News From The Work We Are Suppoting in Tanzania

Any of our readers will be aware we are supporting a project in the Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania which involves Christian teachers seeking to help the people to make better use of what resources, skills and land they have to enable them to become self-supporting. We do know the process is being effective and we are pleased to be able to continue our support. Tearfund like so many charities have found they are having to cut costs to continue their work so we may not hear as often how things are going out in Tanzania but their work will certainly continue.

We are pleased to be able to show you the latest news we have from CCMP Co-ordinator Reverend Eliah Kololi.

GREETINGS

To our Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings from the Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro. Even in the midst of a global pandemic and the difficulty it has brought, we know that God is always in control. Our biggest encouragement this season is the hope of the church. The church plays a vital role in communicating hope and love in a time of great fear.

Reverend Eliah Kololi CCMP Co-ordinator

CORONAVIRUS IN TANZANIA

The first case of coronavirus in Tanzania was reported on the 16th March. Since the 17th March, the government introduced a range of measures to control the spread of the virus including the closure of schools. There have been reports of over 509 cases, however the number of cases is likely to be much higher, due to the lack of testing taking place. It is not clear how many cases there are overall. On the 1st June, the Tanzanian government lifted the ban on international flights and universities were reopened. Travel restrictions have eased slightly with protective measures still in place, such as the mandatory 14 days of quarantine for all international passengers. Please pray for our government leaders and their wisdom to respond to this pandemic.

HOW THE DIOCESE OF KILIMANJARO ARE RESPONDING

Since the mid March, Church Community Moblisation workshops and training have not been taking place, due to the lockdown. However, a few church facilitators have started to run short sessions in the church after the Sunday services. The aim of these sessions is to help church members to continue practicing what they have been learning. For churches that have formed self help groups, members still meet once a week where possible. Members are practicing protective measures including; social distancing, frequently washing their hands thoroughly and wearing face masks.

During this time, it is an encouragement to know that the church community mobilisation work can continue because the facilitators are from the church already. This means that members do not need to travel far. There have been some challenges over the past few months; church attendance due to the lockdown and fears about transmission. Implementing programmes and projects has also been postponed. During the lockdown, there were many families who may become more vulnerable, due to the loss in income and closure of businesses. There are clear signs that the church is a beacon of light in the communities amidst challenging times. With the lockdown slowly easing and things going back to normal, the attendance of the church members is starting to increase again.

WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE DIOCESE OF KILIMANJARO

Thank you for your prayers and generosity during this challenging time. We are praying for God's protection over your church too. Here are some ways you can pray for us this season:

• Please pray for the Bishop as he oversees the Diocese and manages all the programmes. Please pray for wisdom and the leadership team who support him.

- Please pray for the CCMP work taking place across the Diocese of Kilimanjaro. Many plans are disrupted as a result of COVID-19.
- Please pray for the continued transformation of church members and also those in the communities of Babati, as the CCMP work continues.

• Please pray for God's protection over the facilitators and their families as they volunteer to carry on training church members. Pray God gives them strength and good health.

WAYS TO PRAY FOR TANZANIA

• Please pray for the Government and its leaders. Please pray for their wisdom to handle the COVID-19 situation.

• Please pray for the general elections in Tanzania due to take place in October 2020. Please pray for a peaceful, free and fair election. Pray that the candidates and those in positions of power would seek to serve the most vulnerable people in the country.





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Some rather poor Biblical Jokes

Where was Solomon's temple located? On the side of his head.

At what time of day was Adam created? A little before Eve.

Moses had the first tablet that could connect to the cloud.

What sort of lights were on Noah's Ark? Floodlights.

Why did Moses cross the Red Sea? To get to the other side.

Where is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible? When Joseph served in Pharoah's court.

Why did Samson try to avoid arguing with Delilah? He didn't want to split hairs.

Why was Noah cross with the chickens on the Ark? They were using fowl language.

Make Me a Channel of Your peace

At the morning prayer meetings recently, this song was brought to our minds on more than one occasion. It is such a good reminder of how we can change our own lives and others by our own actions.

> Make me a channel of your peace Where there is hatred, let me bring your love Where there is injury, your pardon Lord And where there's doubt, true faith in You.

Make me a channel of your peace Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope Where there is darkness, only light And where there's sadness ever joy.

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek So much to be consoled as to console To be understood as to understand Or to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace It is in pardoning that we are pardoned It is in giving to all men that we receive And in dying that we are born to eternal life.

The words of Make Me a Channel of Your Peace have spoken to all of those who were present at our meetings and we hope that they are of some help to you too. If you would like to speak further about this, contact numbers for Rob and Lyn are given on page 3 of this Free for All.

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Can you find these words from the song?

L V С OIEV Ν J Υ D Н D R Ρ Е Т Е RNAL L T F EAC Т Δ Е Т Х А Ρ S V Ο Κ А R ΝQ А R S Μ F Н GΟΜ Е А Κ Μ Υ Ο Ρ D GGU Е S А L Ν Ν А Н С S \bigcirc \bigcirc R DN Ε Κ Ο Е S L L V F N U F L Т \bigcirc L S D Х D Ρ С Υ D Т F D U Е S Υ А Е V G L Т ΟW Ν R F В А ERR F Υ R Т Х J Κ G U Т Ν Т R Е D S В Μ F T Н Α L ΡWΗ Т А F Х R D L G Т D В Е ΟΑG EYWH R D Ν F F V А Κ S S G AAO \bigcirc А J L Т Υ Ν Κ СР В ΗМ ΜN Μ Ζ Κ G Υ Υ D Т F F D J ΗQΖ D V С F Т Δ

CHANNEL	LIFE
CONSOLE	LIGHT
DARKNESS	LOVE
DESPAIR	MAKE
DOUBT	MASTER
DYING	PARDONING
ETERNALLIFE	PEACE
FAITH	SADNESS
GIVE	SEEK
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HOPE	UNDERSTAND
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