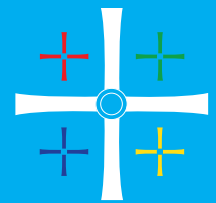


# Free for All



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

FEBRUARY 2022

## Folks enjoying our Dementia Cafe Christmas Celebration



## Sparklers continues to flourish on Tuesdays



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## Have you been playing Wordle?

Like lots of the best games, it is very simple. Every day, they post a new five letter word puzzle on the website. Every time you put a guess in, it tells you letters which are absolutely right in green; letters which are right but in the wrong place in yellow; letters which are wrong in black. And so, by a process of elimination, you should get there in six goes. Normally it is ok, but sometimes the words are really hard. Or you might get lucky: I guessed the right word second time this morning. Probably never

to be repeated! It is clever because you just have one go every day – it gets you back the next time because you can't play enough to get bored.

Of course there are different ways of playing. One obvious way is to start with the most frequent letters – ETAIONSHR. I often pick a word from these letters for my first go, and then try and use the rest of them in my second one. Because I am friends with too many vicars on Facebook, I know that one of the words that some of them like using is ATONE.

This is a word we don't use very often, but which you will probably recognise as meaning that you are sorry for something and you want to make amends. It's a 'putting-things-right' kind of word.

Lots of us will have an understanding that when we get things wrong, we have a responsibility to put it right, and of course we do have to be sorry for stuff like that. But when I hear the word atone, I think of something different. God sees that something has gone wrong – that I have got so much wrong – but he doesn't leave me on my own to sort it out.

The other day it was a really difficult word – PROXY. And that is exactly what Jesus is. In order to put things right he died on the cross in my place, and restored my relationship with God forever. People sometimes say that atonement means that where God and I were apart, now we are "at one" through Jesus. I'm not sure if that's very good English, but you get the point.

POINT, incidentally, was the word I got in two guesses today. Like I say, it was just chance. I tried STARE and I got the T right, but in the wrong place, so I used some of my other common letters and made POINT. Of course, having good fortune in a word game doesn't honestly matter. What is really important is the extraordinary blessing of having Jesus – of knowing that I am "at one" with God because of him

Rob

### 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  
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For all administrative enquiries please contact admin@venta-group.org

Search Facebook and Youtube for "Venta group of churches"

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### CHURCHWARDENS

Stoke Holy Cross & Dunston  
Viv (493438) & Andy (07485 151051)

Arminghall  
Annie (495580)

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

### ST GEORGE'S HALL BOOKINGS:

Joyce Williams 492143

### STOKE CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS:

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### IN A FUTURE MAGAZINE

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### FROM THE REGISTERS

### FUNERAL

### BERNARD WELLS

13<sup>th</sup> January

Arminghall

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.

### FOR ALL COPY PLEASE

send by email to  
Henry and Eostre Caswell to  
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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.

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# Sparklers weekly sessions for the under 5s

We're really excited to have got back to Sparklers again since Christmas, giving parents and carers of young children a place to come and play, chat and have fun on a Tuesday morning. Each week we set up a craft table with simple things to make and do, plus a whole range of toys and activities to get stuck into, from ride-ons to bricks, train sets, play dough and lots more. There's a cosy corner for babies, with a little ball pool to sit in and plenty of toys to explore, and we have story and singing time at the end of each session, with hot drinks for the grown ups.

So far this year we've thought about the chilly winter weather, decorating colourful mittens and playing with toys covered in pretend snow in our big play tray... we've made calendars for 2022 with our handprints on, so we can see how much everyone has grown by the end of the year... and we've joined in with stories about exploring in the snow, and sharing with our friends. We've made lots of noise with our instruments at singing time too!

If you have a child under 5 you are very welcome to come and see us between 10 and 11am every Tuesday in term time, at Stoke church hall. There's no charge for the group, but you can give a donation towards our running costs if you're able to. While we are still coping with covid, we're asking adults to wear a mask during our session, and we're being careful to clean toys and ventilate the hall to keep everyone safe.

You can keep up-to-date with Sparklers by joining our Facebook group, "Sparklers Stoke Holy Cross", or contact Cathryn on [cathrynbaker@gmail.com](mailto:cathrynbaker@gmail.com) for some more information.



## St George's Dementia Support Cafe

Our Christmas lunch at the Old Feathers was very successful, as can be seen from more photos on the front page. Many thanks to Viv for organising this lunch.

The staff were excellent as usual, always helpful and understanding. The meal was greatly enjoyed by all.

The Christmas party was equally a great success with Stuart Hull providing excellent entertainment. Sadly we had to say goodbye to Chrissie Martin, Tesco's Community Champion, who has consistently helped us with providing and serving refreshments. We all thank her for all she has done and we wish her All the Best for her future and her new job.

At the time of writing, the January Cafes have not yet taken place but we elected to keep open following government guidelines. We have not organised any specific events at the moment but hope that we shall be able to soon.

The February Cafe dates are 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February.

The Cafe is open from 10 am until 12 noon on the 2nd and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month, excluding bank holidays.

We welcome people living with dementia and their carers, providing a happy, friendly atmosphere.

For more information, please phone 01508 493661 or 01508 495580. Or visit our website: [www.st.George's-dementia-support-group.org](http://www.st.George's-dementia-support-group.org)



unanswered  
prayer  
the prayer course II

Lots of us often ask questions about what happens when we pray, and why it doesn't it always work out the way we hope. It's the sort of thing you might have found yourself wondering over the last year especially.

This Spring we will be spending time on Saturday mornings thinking together about this, and we'd love you to join us if you've got questions of any kind. It's running for 5 weeks from 5th March, and we'll put more details on our Facebook page (Venta group of churches) and in next month's magazine so you can find out more.

## Discipleship

Transform us, O Christ,  
to be more prayerful - listening, open  
and responsive, yearning for God's  
kingdom come as you taught us;  
to be more pastoral - reaching out to  
those in need, shepherds like you, of the  
lost and lonely;  
to be more prophetic - heeding the  
signs of the times, challenging injustice,  
mirroring your amazing welcome

Amen

## Advance notice for your diaries



### Stoke Holy Cross Open Gardens 2022

June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> from 12 - 5

This year we will be raising money for  
the Church buildings fund and  
another local charity.

It would be good to have some new  
gardens for visitors to enjoy so however  
big or small your garden.

Yours, like ours, may not be up to the  
RHS Wisley one included here but we  
all love to see what others have done or  
indeed are in the process of doing  
be it a flower garden, a veg patch  
or perhaps largely landscaping.

So please, please do consider whether  
you would like to share your garden for  
a few hours to help raise money to  
maintain our beautiful church buildings.

If anyone would like to help either by  
opening your garden, making cakes or  
helping on the day please get in touch  
either with me [anna@lipp.org.uk](mailto:anna@lipp.org.uk)  
or Viv Carrington 01508 493438

More details nearer the time but put  
the date in your diaries now

# Caistor resident, Mark Little is awarded MBE



Congratulations to Mark Little who has been awarded a well-deserved MBE in the New Year's Honours List for 'Services to victims of Modern Day Slavery'.

Mark has done sterling work with the Rotary Club for many years but his focus on supporting victims of modern day slavery started in 2001 when he watched a television documentary on the subject. Shortly after he made visits to two Child Slave Rehabilitation Centres in India, featured in the film. Since then, he has been active in supporting many anti-slavery organizations, visiting other rehabilitation centres and safe houses in India and other countries and initiating numerous anti-slavery projects abroad. In 2009, he formed an Action Group of Rotarians against Slavery which eventually received approval from the Board of Rotary International as a Rotarian Action Group in 2013. He was Chairman of the Action Group for 10 years until he stepped down from the role in June 2019.

During the last 2 decades, he has spoken on the issue of Modern Slavery to many Rotary Clubs, Rotary Districts and other organizations both at home and abroad as well as at several breakout sessions at Rotary International Conventions.

Apart from slavery issues, Mark has also been involved in setting up other international humanitarian service projects in developing countries, physically labouring on several Indian building sites (as part of Rotary teams) and participating in four National Polio Immunisation Days in India.

The photo above shows Mark with survivors of slavery taken at a Training Centre run by an anti-slavery organisation called YouCanFreeUs – they have a website if you want to find out more about the work they do. Mark continues to work tirelessly to raise awareness of modern slavery.

## Proceeds from Caistor Cream Teas go to the Vidiyal Trust



Thank you everyone for supporting Caistor Cream Teas last summer – the PCC decided that half the proceeds, £940, would be donated to the Vidiyal Trust. This vital charity was started by Rev Pat Atkinson, (who lives in Brundall) back in the 1990's to work with street children in India and when Pat first started to visit she was not welcome as a Christian but Pat did not give up and over time by giving unconditionally and showing God's love she has been fully accepted and the Trust is carrying out vital work to support those in abject poverty. They now support Dalit children and adults who have cancer, and run 2 palliative care ambulances. They also have their own shelter home for street elders, run a slum lunch centre, support a leprosy colony and also have a slum tuition centre for 100+ children. Pat says that latest news from India is good - the virus in Tamil Nadu is reducing and all the charity's projects are back to normal function. There is a lot of catching up to do but at least they have full freedom of movement after lockdowns. Our donation from Cream Teas proceeds is much appreciated.



# Curate's Egg Piece from Lyn - Short

February seems to go past quickly, is it because it's short? 28 days most years. Whereas most other months are 31 days. Does 3 days make that much difference? But being short can make a difference. Being short in height, like I am, means you often get restricted views if the person in front of you is taller. Being short in height, can mean other restrictions – some jobs are not open to you. Being short in qualifications, can also mean someone is restricted as to what employment they can obtain. Being short of money, restricts what you can do, how you can live? Being short can be restrictive and can make a difference, a difference between life and death.

I have experienced in my life not just being short in height, but at times being short of the right qualifications. Not having enough money to get me through the month and not having normal health – whatever normal is. When I've been short of anything it has resulted in me comparing myself to others. If only I was taller I would be able to see over him, I wish I was his height; if only I had that job, I would be like them and have a comfortable life.

3 days changed the world 2,000 years ago. 3 days, a short time that made a difference and lifted restrictions, in fact brought freedom. But they are 3 days I cannot compare myself to. Jesus died and rose again on the 3rd day. He did it for me because I come up short. I treat people wrong. I say the wrong things. I don't do things and say things I should. I come up short to how God wants us to live. He's called us to live a life of love, love of him and love of our neighbours. I do not do this. Jesus did. He lived a life of love. He died a death of love. He rose to life again, so I might live for ever, a life of love. I may run short, he doesn't. In this shortest month, rather than comparing myself to others, may I turn to Jesus and acknowledge where I am short compared to him and be set free from sin. Saying:

*Almighty and most merciful Father, I have wandered and strayed from your ways like a lost sheep. I have followed too much the devices and desires of my own heart. I have offended against your holy laws. I have left undone those things that I ought to have done; and I have done those things that I ought not to have done. O Lord have mercy upon me. Save me as I confess my faults. Restore me as I am penitent and according to your promises declared to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that I may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life, to the glory of your holy name. Amen*

If you would like to talk over what running short looks like in your life, come and join me at our monthly Thursday morning coffee and chat in the Church Hall.

Lyn



## Arminghall Funeral of Bernard Wells

Lots of us at Arminghall, and especially friends from Ipswich Road church in Norwich, will have fond memories of Bernard Wells, who died on 16<sup>th</sup> December last year.

Bernard's funeral was held at Arminghall on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January for his immediate family only, and we were glad to welcome John Potter from Ipswich Road to be part of leading the service. At the end, Bernard was buried alongside many other family members, including his wife Barbara; we first got to know Bernard after she died a number of years ago. The picture shows the floral tributes to both Bernard (in the foreground) and Barbara. We're grateful to have known someone who was so aware of the constant presence and love of God, and who radiated this wherever he went. A service of thanksgiving to celebrate Bernard's life will follow at Ipswich Rd on Saturday 2nd April; do get in touch if you'd like more details nearer the time

### Grateful Thanks!



We wish to express our grateful thanks to all those who have, so generously, contributed towards the cost of the essential repairs to Stoke Holy Cross Church.

It helps us so much with our vision to create community in all sorts of ways in the villages here.

We have applied to 22 grant making charities for help and have so far received £2,000 from the R.C Snelling Charitable Trust and £2,000 from the Paul Bassham Trust. We have further promises of £2,000 each, from The Norfolk Churches Trust and Geoffrey Watling Trust. Thank you especially to individuals who have generously donated nearly £9,000.

In addition to the church repairs, we need to budget nearly £4,000 to address dead, and dangerous trees in Stoke and Dunston churchyards.

You'll have seen on p6 that we hope to raise more funds with an Open Gardens event in the summer over the weekend of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June.

If you would like to hear any more about this important work in the church building and churchyards, please do call Viv on 01508 493438.

Our very grateful thanks once more.

# What a friend we have in Jesus Wordsearch



SORROWS

SHARE

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## What a friend we have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus  
All our sins and griefs to bear  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer.

Oh, what peace we often forfeit  
Oh, what needless pain we bear  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

We chose this old hymn as the basis for our wordsearch this month because we have been thinking a lot about prayer in church recently. This hymn helps to sum up lots of the reasons for prayers. And, of course, it is always good to give thanks in prayer too.



# Cresta Lodge, Poringland



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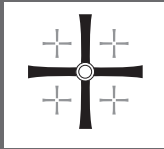
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# February 2022

WORSHIP, PRAYER AND COMMUNITY IN OUR VILLAGE CHURCHES

With the virus numbers improving, we're nonetheless aware of the possibility of regulations changing in the weeks to come, so please do double check things on our website/Facebook to be sure of plans nearer the time

## Tuesday-Saturday mornings

9am Tues-Fri  
10am Sat

zoom.us/j/385426921  
Zoom Meeting ID: 385-426-921

Prayer meeting  
with Bible reading

## Caistor St Edmund services

9.30am 6<sup>th</sup> February  
9.30am 20<sup>th</sup> February

Praise & Worship  
Holy Communion

And don't forget the church building is open about 10-4 most days - space to reflect, or to pray

## Sunday mornings at Stoke Holy Cross

10.30am

Morning Worship with children's group  
(with Holy Communion on 2nd and 4th Sundays)

## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February (and every Sunday from 6<sup>th</sup> March—3<sup>rd</sup> April)

7.30pm Zoom meeting ID: 820 0665 9178  
Passcode: 724825

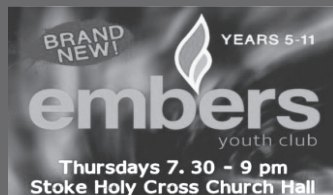
Listening to God  
Time to worship, listen and pray

## Sparklers group for 0-4s and their families from 11<sup>th</sup> January

Every Tuesday in school term, 10-11.30 in the Church Hall. Space for 20 families so we can normally fit everyone in!  
Check Facebook "Sparklers Stoke Holy Cross" or email [cathrynaker@gmail.com](mailto:cathrynaker@gmail.com)

## Family gatherings

We'd love to stay connected with families as we find good ways of meeting together in these slightly uncertain times.  
Email [cathrynaker@gmail.com](mailto:cathrynaker@gmail.com) and we'll keep you in the loop!



Every week in school term



Saturday mornings from 5<sup>th</sup> March



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# Maybe we could pray for you?



We firmly believe in the power of prayer and regularly seem to have prayers answered.

Do you have things troubling you or your family and would love to know that people are praying for you?

Please feel free to pop a note into one of our churches or send a short email to [Lyn@venta-group.org](mailto:Lyn@venta-group.org).

Whatever you tell us will remain safe with us. A small number of church members will be asked to simply pray for our Lord Jesus to provide a solution, without your name being given out. Or you might just give your concerns direct to Jesus – just talk to him and ask for what you need. And don't forget you prayed about it when perhaps things do improve!

**Jesus tells us. 'Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest'.**



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