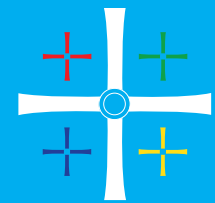


# Free for All



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

JULY 2026

We had a great time at the Church Hall on Sunday 14th June gathering together to eat and talk and worship together. We're in the process of looking at our services and thinking about what we'll do from September especially, and hope that something like this might be part of it.



## Sparklers

Toys, crafts, songs and new friends for 0-4s and their parents, grandparents and carers.

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## And finally from me...

The months since the end of January, when I was appointed to a new post, have gone so quickly that I can hardly believe I am writing to you for the last time. In fact, if you don't get round to reading your magazine by 5th July, I will have finished already. So many of you around the community have been part of our lives for so long that it is hard to know what to say except an enormous thank you for all the ways that you have been a blessing to me and Cathryn and our children and the churches over the last 14 years.

Apart from thank you and goodbye, it is hard to know exactly what to write this month, or at least hard to know what one thing to write. But something did occur to me as I started the process of tidying through our house and came

across the removal van you can see in place of my picture at the top here. I bought it to use at one of the first services when we arrived, and then it got tucked away in a drawer, ready to be found at exactly the right moment.

That day fourteen years ago, Cathryn and I, and the two children we had at that point, arrived with everything we owned packed into one of those trucks. In the years that have followed, two children have become three, and grown, and I suspect the van that comes in July will be fuller than the one that arrived in 2012. But the question I asked that day is still a good one for me, and a good one for you. Is our life the contents of a removals van? Is it the contents of our diary? Our bank account? You get the picture.

My life is none of those things. Of course I have stuff, and a diary, and a bank account, but none of those defines me anymore than you might say it defines you. You might express it differently, and lots of you in conversations we've had over the years, but my life is defined entirely by Jesus Christ. Cathryn and I are starting new jobs; two of our children are going to new schools; one is heading off on a gap year; but amidst all that change, each of us is confident that Jesus is taking us to the place where he wants us to go, and he will be with us where we go.

The amazing thing about Jesus is that he can go with us, as well as stay here with all of you, and continue to prompt you with that question about what your life consists of. There are so many people in the churches here who would love to continue to talk about the life which

Jesus offers, which is so much more than possessions or money or the things we have to do, and which in the end is the only thing that is forever.

Maybe we'll bump into each other around Norfolk sometime soon. Maybe, following Jesus together, we'll bump into each other again in eternity. But until then, again, thank you, and goodbye.


*Rob*



### VICAR OF THE VENTA GROUP

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*(Until 5th July)* 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*

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Jade 07471709568  
admin@venta-group.org

**Caistor St Edmund**  
Jani (07557 774520)

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Barbara Cutts 07739 663350  
stgeorghall@venta-group.org

### STOKE CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS:

Karen (07761 076954)  
email: karenp1963@hotmail.co.uk

### STOKE HOLY CROSS COMMUNITY HALL BOOKINGS:

email: shc.communityhall@gmail.com  
https://www.shc-communityhall.com

## FROM THE REGISTERS

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

### BAPTISMS

#### JORAH CAROCA

21<sup>st</sup> May at Stoke Holy Cross

&

#### DARIUS CAROCA

21<sup>st</sup> May at Stoke Holy Cross

### FUNERAL

#### MARY KELLAM

25<sup>th</sup> June at Earlham Crematorium

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 Rob to  
admin@venta-group.org

By 10<sup>th</sup> of this month please.



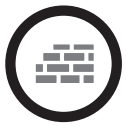
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# Arminghall Village Hall – Open for Public Hire



At the heart of rural Norfolk's community life since 1952, Arminghall Village Hall is now available for public hire following extensive refurbishment works.

Serving the parishes of Caistor St Edmund and Bixley, and conveniently located just outside Norwich, the hall has long played an important role in local history and village life. While not a listed building, it is recognised as a valued non-designated local heritage asset.

Thanks to support from Section 106 funding, the Community Infrastructure Levy, and grant funding, the hall underwent significant refurbishment and re-roofing works during 2025/26. These improvements have helped preserve the building for future generations and reopened this cherished community space for wider public use.

The hall offers:

- An entrance porch
- A main hall
- Rear storage room
- Tables and seating available for use

Whether you are planning a community meeting, exercise class, hobby group, children's activity, celebration, or regular club session, Arminghall Village Hall provides an affordable and welcoming venue.

The standard hire charge is just £8.00 per hour, with discounted rates available for block bookings of six sessions or more.

The Parish Council hopes to continue improving the hall in future phases, including the addition of kitchen and toilet facilities, subject to securing further grant funding.

By hiring the hall, you are helping to support and preserve an important local community asset.

For all booking enquiries, please contact Diane Bainbridge;  
arminghall.villagehall@gmail.com



## STOKE HOLY CROSS THURSDAY CLUB

It's amazing a few weeks ago we were all complaining about the cold weather and wishing for summer now it's in reverse and we are all complaining about the hot weather. But that is as it should be after all what would the English talk about if not the weather.

Joining us on the first Thursday of every month you will definitely be chatting about other things, as well as the weather.

You will receive a very warm reception the moment you walk through the door. The reception will not bring you out in a hot sweat but it will feel like a cosy cuddle in a warm cocoon. Follow that with a lovely cuppa and the obligatory biscuits and you will wonder why you haven't been to see us before.

If you are over 55 and worried about coming to a place with lots of strangers, please don't, we won't be strangers for long. If you are still concerned give me a call and I'll try to answer all your questions and put your mind at ease - Carol 01508 494544.

**DATES FOR JULY  
(DOORS OPEN 1.00PM)**

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July - Club Day**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> July - Bingo**

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> July -  
Games afternoon**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August - Club day**

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> August -  
Bingo**

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August - Games.**

*We really look forward  
to seeing you.*

## Caistor Cream Teas 2026



We will be serving Cream Teas at Caistor St Edmund Church again this summer on

**Sundays**  
**August 16th, 23rd & 30th 2026**

&

**Sept 6th 2026**  
**2pm – 5pm**

(cash and card accepted)

With plants, garden produce and cake 'bring & buy' stall

There will be 'Songs and Praise' on Sept 6<sup>th</sup> at 5pm – do stay and join in after enjoying a Cream Tea!



### Saying Farewell

The Bakers are moving on and we would like you to join us to say goodbye. There are a couple of things happening to which everyone is really, really, welcome and they would love to see you.

Rob, Cathryn, Jonathan, Grace and Sam invite you to join them at the Vicarage on Sunday 28th June. There will be drinks and cakes and an All Invited gathering for all ages from 3.30-5pm, followed by a BBQ in the garden. If you would like to come to the BBQ, please book a place at [tinyurl.com/ventabbq](http://tinyurl.com/ventabbq) or scan the QR code below, so we can cater for everyone.

Their last Sunday service will be at Stoke Holy Cross church will be on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July at 10-30am, where we will thank them for their service here in our group of churches. This service will be followed by a "Bring and Share" lunch. Please email Viv (address below) to let her know what you will be bringing, or sign up at a service.

We are currently collecting for a leaving gift and, if you would like to join in with this, please could you

- send any donations to Viv, in an envelope marked for Rob, to 51 Norwich Rd, Stoke Holy Cross, NR14 8AB
- hand in a marked envelope at any service
- email Viv ([carringtonvj@gmail.com](mailto:carringtonvj@gmail.com)) if you need any further help with this

With thanks

Viv Carrington & Jani Wymer,  
Churchwardens



## **BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB**

At Poringland Community Centre

**Dates for your Diary**

**Film Night September 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Film Night October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Film Night November 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Film December 4<sup>th</sup>**

For more information phone

**John on 01508 494358**

**Or Carol on 01508 492630**



## **PORINGLAND COMMUNITY CINEMA**

**AT PORINGLAND COMMUNITY  
CENTRE**

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**FRIDAY 11<sup>th</sup> September**

**FRIDAY 9<sup>th</sup> October**


**FRIDAY 13<sup>th</sup> November**

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December**



# Coffee and chat

Coffee, chat and company on Thursdays  
10.30-11.30am at Stoke Church Hall  
2nd & 16th April | 7th & 21st May  
(at the Vicarage on 7th May)  
4th & 18th June | 2nd & 16th July  
6th & 20th August



Short communion service at 10am  
right before Coffee & Chat  
on the first Thursday of the month  
(dates in white above)

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## Summer Sundays in the Venta group of churches

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August - 10.30am  
Communion service for everyone  
at Caistor St Edmund

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August - 10.30am  
Communion service for everyone  
at Stoke Holy Cross

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August - 10.30am  
Communion service for everyone  
at Caistor St Edmund

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August - 10.30am  
More traditional communion service at  
Stoke Holy Cross

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August - 10.30am  
Joint communion service with the  
Poringland churches at Stoke Holy Cross

[www.venta-group.org](http://www.venta-group.org) [admin@venta-group.org](mailto:admin@venta-group.org) 01508 492305




## ✦ 150 Years of Stoke Holy Cross Primary School ✦

 Join Our Celebration! 

In 2026, we proudly celebrate **150 years at the heart of our community**, and we'd love you to be part of it.

 **Friday 2nd October 2026**

 Stoke Holy Cross Primary School

 **Get Involved:**

- Share your memories and stories
- Send in photos from years gone by
- Lend school artefacts or memorabilia
- Suggest ideas for the celebration

Whether you're a former pupil, current family, or community member, you are part of our story.

 **Save the date and celebrate with us!**

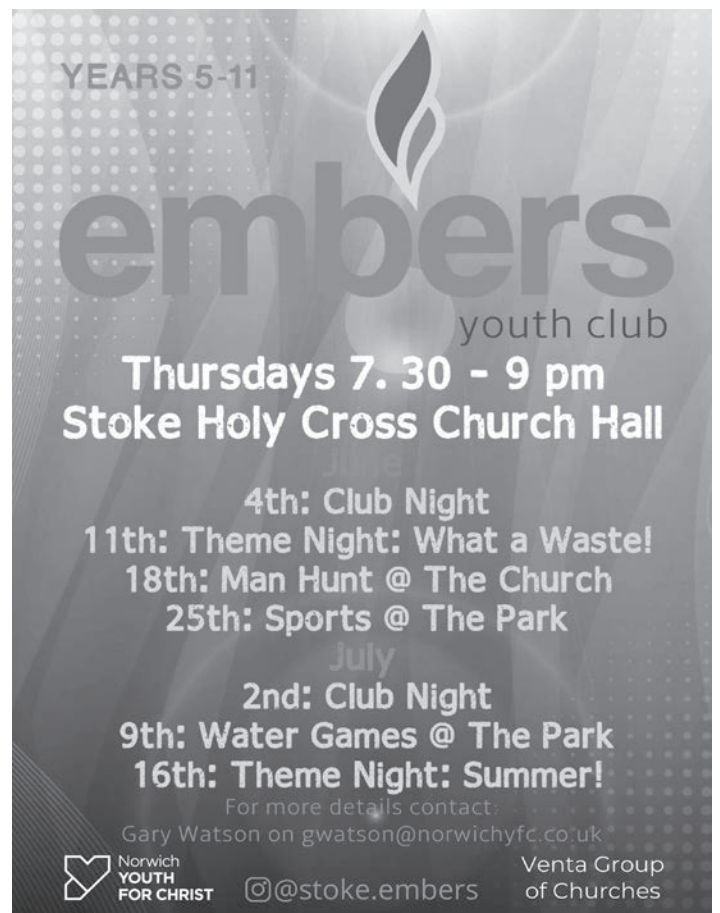
If you would like to get involved with lending items or have ideas to share, please get in touch.

[office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk)

01508 493132

Miss J. Chaney  
Headteacher

And the Stoke Holy Cross Staff Team



YEARS 5-11

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youth club




**Thursdays 7.30 - 9 pm**  
**Stoke Holy Cross Church Hall**

4th: Club Night  
11th: Theme Night: What a Waste!  
18th: Man Hunt @ The Church  
25th: Sports @ The Park

July

2nd: Club Night  
9th: Water Games @ The Park  
16th: Theme Night: Summer!

For more details contact:  
Gary Watson on [gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk](mailto:gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk)

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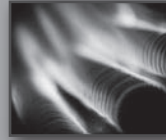
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