

# Free for All



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

OCTOBER 2021



## Nature Loving Volunteers Needed

Your local churchyards are not just wonderful tranquil places to wander or simply rest in peace and they are open to all. When so many other habitats are being lost they have increasingly become havens for wildlife.

These photos have all been taken in them,  
by our amazing local photographer Liz Dack.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust are advising us on how to best  
to care for these special places.

But we urgently need help from our whole communities to keep some areas cut and tidy so they can best be enjoyed by everyone. Could you offer some time and energy, no matter how little, to join our group of volunteers who need to mow, strim and tidy these parkland areas.

If you can help at all please contact Andy Driver

Tel: 01508 494641 Email: [andy.driver@virgin.net](mailto:andy.driver@virgin.net)

Thank you



**TRACKS**

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23rd September  
7th October 21st October  
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SEE MORE  
DETAILS INSIDE  
PAGE 6



CAISTER TEAS  
ANOTHER  
GREAT SUCCESS  
PAGE 5

ARMINGHALL, CAISTOR ST EDMUND, STOKE HOLY CROSS with DUNSTON

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## Healed or not?

I am writing this article on the day in which the headlines say the number of people waiting for hospital treatment in England has reached a new high and that the government has been warned there will be 13 million on the NHS waiting list unless action is taken. This is not encouraging news for those with health problems but it is equally not good news for those staff working in the NHS. I have received lots of benefits from the NHS over my lifetime. 4 eye operations during childhood.

Maternity and post-natal care. Injections. In and out-patient hospital treatment for cellulitis. Antibiotics. Compression stockings and appointments with the Lymphoedema clinic. To name just a few of the occasions for which I am thankful but am I really thankful.

18 October is a day in many churches when they remember Saint Luke. Luke wrote one of the four gospels in the New Testament and he's referred to as an evangelist – one who tells good news, the good news that Jesus saves, Jesus heals. In his gospel he records many of the stories about Jesus healing people. That maybe due to the fact that in Colossians Paul says Luke was a doctor. Or maybe because there was no NHS in Jesus lifetime on earth, Luke was intrigued by who people turned to, rather than him for healing! Luke tells us people came to Jesus with all kinds of illness and he healed them (Luke 4:40). Jesus also sent his disciples out to villages to proclaim the good news and also to heal those who were ill (Luke 9:2).

There are people around us who have been healed, miraculously. I remember one occasion, when I believe it happened to me, August 2016.

I was due to go on a Summer school visit and I came down with cellulitis in my leg, 5 days beforehand. I was devastated. I was worried I would fail my course. I was in pain. What could I do: seek medical help, forewarn the leaders of the Summer school I would almost certainly not be attending and pray and ask for prayer from church members. I have had several bouts of cellulitis and know from experience that it takes at least 2 weeks to recover enough to walk. On this occasion, I believe God mercifully granted a miracle. The infection receded far faster than I've known before, or since, enough to allow me to attend Summer school and travel to Leicester. I believe God did this. He healed me. I am however left with a mystery – why on that occasion and why haven't I been completely healed? Why despite prayer, do I regularly still suffer from cellulitis and my leg suffers from lymphoedema? Why am I not totally healed? I don't have the answers to these questions but I do know if I pray, things happen, God works. He works in me. He might not answer my prayers as I want, or would like, but he changes me. Anxiety is replaced by his peace. He gives me hope. He assures me of his love for me.

God knitted me together in my mother's womb and knows my body better than I know, for that I am thankful. Whether it's your own or your loved ones seemingly impossible health challenges or the NHS impossible challenges, you/we can choose to pray. Maybe this month of October we can all pray for the NHS and for healing of those known to us who are unwell.

If you're not sure how to pray, you could use the prayers in this Free for All. If you would like the church to pray for you, please get in touch, because God is still a great physician, he still heals.

God of healing and compassion, we thank you for the establishment of the National Health Service, and for the dedication of all who work in it: give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who care for the sick, and your wisdom to those engaged in medical research.

Strengthen all in their vocation through your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, I bring before you all who suffer, Especially those whose ailments are concealed. Pour out upon them your healing love; Surround the frightened with your tenderness; Give strength to those in pain; Hold the weak in your arms of love; And give hope and patience to those who are recovering. Amen

(A prayer from the Rochester Diocese and

Christine McMullen, adapted and found on <https://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/departments/chaplaincy/prayers/>)

Almighty God,  
you called Luke the physician,  
whose praise is in the gospel,  
to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:  
by the grace of the Spirit  
and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,  
give your Church the same love and power to heal;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

Loving God, at this time of crisis when so many are suffering, we pray for our nation and our world. Give our leaders wisdom, our Health Service strength, our people hope. Lead us through these parched and difficult days to the fresh springs of joy and comfort that we find in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lyn

We would love to feature  
your village organisation

### IN A FUTURE MAGAZINE

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

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### CHURCHWARDENS

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### STOKE HOLY CROSS PAVILION BOOKINGS:

Anita Rose (Parish clerk) 491709

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Search Facebook and Youtube for "Venta group of churches"

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### NOTE:

FOR THE NOVEMBER ISSUE  
THE DEADLINE IS  
6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

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# Raise your voice, raise your spirits!



As the autumn nights close in, we invite you to join us for several evenings of singing and socialising as we prepare to perform both classic and contemporary carols at Christmas celebrations in and around the local villages. Enthusiasm is more important than singing prowess – as long as you can sing in tune we would love to have you with us! Both male and female voices are welcome.....why not come as a couple even.

Practices will be held in the Stoke Holy Cross Church Hall in the centre of the village on Friday evenings from 12th November, starting at 7.30PM with vocal exercises, before rehearsing the songs and ending with tea/coffee and cake, finishing around 9PM.

We are still finalising the performance details, but currently plan a morning Carol Service for families at Stoke church on Sunday 12th December (morning) and Carols by Candlelight at Caistor Church on Sunday 19th December (early evening) - this will be live streamed on YouTube so that local villagers can join in on their doorstep.

If you have any questions or would be interested in joining the live band that will accompany us, please contact Andy Harding on [andy@thehardings.uk](mailto:andy@thehardings.uk). If you want to sing, just turn up on Friday evenings from 12th November. You'll be most welcome.

*Please note - in the interests of everyone's safety, we continue to take precautions against Covid-19. These will be advised nearer the time depending on the latest applicable government guidance and medical advice.*

## Cream Teas at Caistor St Edmund Church

We were very pleased to be able to serve cream teas again this summer, after last year was cancelled because of Covid. We had four sessions in total during August and September, serving scones with jam and cream, and tea, coffee or juice. Many people also provided fresh produce from their gardens to sell, as well as plants and very yummy cakes and biscuits.

One of the sessions was tied in with an event at the Roman Town. Most afternoons had a constant flow of customers and at some points we even had a queue - luckily some people were happy to sit on the grass to eat their scones.



It was a really happy community event, where we welcomed people from Caistor and surrounding villages and walkers around the Roman Town. We welcomed many old friends and made new ones. We had lots of good conversations with people and there was a lovely convivial atmosphere. Some of the children (and some adults....) even got to ring the church bell!

Thank you to everyone who came and supported us. A special thank you goes to all the helpers who tirelessly baked scones, served teas, washed up, sold produce or helped with setting up and clearing away. It was particularly nice to welcome some new helpers.

The funds we raised, nearly £1600, will be divided between the church and the Vidiyal Trust, a charity providing help for children with cancer and elderly people in India.



## ST. GEORGE'S DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

We had a wonderful outing to Gorleston on the 13<sup>th</sup> September.

We were greatly blessed by the beautiful weather and everyone enjoyed the lunch at the Pier Hotel followed by ice cream on the prom.

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who did a great job in keeping everyone safe and supported.

Thanks also to kind neighbours who loaned space in their drives for parking to be near the coach.

Dates for October:  
11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> October  
when we have a  
Reminiscence Session.



For more information on our group  
phone, 01508492938, 01508493661, or  
01508495580

[www.st.georges-dementia-support-group.uk](http://www.st.georges-dementia-support-group.uk)

## STOKE HOLY CROSS THURSDAY CLUB

Stoke Holy Cross Thursday Club for the over 55's meets at St. Georges Hall Upper Stoke Holy Cross the first Thursday each month

**THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2021**  
at 1.30pm

Bingo for OCTOBER will be on  
**THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>** -  
1.30pm eyes down

Carpet Bowls for OCTOBER will be on  
**THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup> - 1.30pm (£2.00)**

Why not come along and  
meet new friends.

Join the Thursday Club.

Give Carol a call 01508 492132.

# The new "TRACKS" Youth Club Stoke Holy Cross

Hi Everyone!

Let me introduce myself...

I'm Gary Watson. I have been asked to come alongside the amazing people of Stoke Church to assist with their Youthwork in the area. Something I am very much looking forward to.

I live in the little hamlet of Dunston with my wife, my daughters and my dog, so you may have seen me out and about. I love this little corner of Norfolk! As someone who enjoys getting out in nature and capturing landscape scenes with my phone camera, I feel very fortunate to call this place home. I'm also into theatre, art and music and have a nerdy side that likes all things Sci-fi and fantasy.



I have been working with young people for pretty much all of my adult life. I've been a Youth Worker, Care Assistant and Teaching Assistant. Young people inspire me! They are jam-packed full of potential. Too many have been negatively affected by this crazy, mixed-up world. My aim is to inspire them to see how incredibly unique and valuable they are and how much this world needs what they can offer. I believe God created us with a purpose and that He loves every individual with a love greater than we could ever comprehend. I am part of the international organisation, Youth for Christ. We're about seeing young people's lives changed by Jesus. I'm not ashamed of that. In a world with very little hope to offer, I totally believe that the message of Jesus holds the answers our children are looking for.

Over the last few months I have had the honour of working alongside Rob, making video assemblies for Stoke Primary. I've been into the school with Lyn to run a transition lesson for Year 6 and also helped out with the superb holiday club run by the Church at the beginning of the holidays. I've also been running Levi's Lunch Club at Framingham High School and Levi's Youth Cafe after school on Mondays. These are continuing to run this new term if your older children wish to attend.

By the time you read this, we would have started a club centred around recording and mixing music at the Village Hall. We aim to run this bi-weekly on Thursday evenings. Youth for Christ's own mobile recording studio, 'Tracks', will be parked up outside the hall for anyone interested in popping along. The hall will also be open for drinks and snacks and maybe a game of table football. You don't have to be musical to come, young people can just turn up to hang and chat if they like. Where we take things from here depends on who turns up and what people need. Wherever things go, it's sure to be exciting! See the separate little advert for details.

As a parent/guardian, if you want to contact me for a chat, I am more than willing. You can reach me through my email: [gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk](mailto:gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk) You may be concerned about how we can help the young people in the villages or may have some fantastic ideas about what we can do for them. Either way, I'd love to hear from you.

Speak soon.

Every Blessing... Gary

# Our ancient church building at Stoke Holy Cross needs serious repair Can you help at all?

Stoke Holy Cross church is very much a building for everyone, sometimes at the highest or lowest points in their lives. It is used for weddings, christenings, thanksgiving services, funerals and so much more. It is open to all to join in with services at any time (of course some Covid restrictions still apply to protect people and keep everybody safe).

As many of you will remember from a previous article in the Free for All, heavy continuous rain flooded the boiler house at the end of last year, seriously damaging the boiler. In the course of rectifying this, further problems were revealed as drainage pipes were full of tree roots. Our small, generous group of church members managed to cover the cost of these repairs, which amounted to over £4,000.

We are, however, faced with much more extensive, costly work to our lovely ancient church. Water is coming into the building in several areas, causing the plaster to degrade, as well as causing other internal problems. In due course the whole interior will need re-decorating.

In addition, and by far the most expensive issue, will be the re-rendering of the south side of the church. This is coming loose in areas and beginning to fall away. This obviously needs rectifying as soon as finances become available.

Contrary to popular belief, there is little or no central funding available from the Church of England to maintain and repair church buildings. All funding has to be organised and sourced by the church itself and we clearly need a lot of financial help to avoid further decay of the building.

We therefore desperately need your assistance to help cover the cost of the work which we must tackle in the months ahead. We are also in the process of applying for grants, but these will only provide a small part of the total required, which is in the region of £30,000.

On top of this we have now found some of the trees at Stoke and Dunston church yards need removal or serious cutting back by professionals.

If you feel able to help financially, or in any other way, please contact either one of the wardens or the curate whose details are shown on page 3 or you can make a donation simply by bank transfer to the church account at Barclays – STOKE HOLY CROSS PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL Account Number 4928 2302 3113 6023 Sort Code 20-62-53. Please put SHX APPEAL as a reference. Or you can pop a cheque to Lyn at 8 Mill Green.

As a church we really don't like asking for money but the church is here for the benefit of the whole village and it sadly needs a lot of help at this time.

All gifts, whether big or small, will help to make a difference. And, if you are a tax payer, could you please consider gift-aiding your donation so that the church could claim 25p in the £1 back from the tax man.

Many thanks

*Viv Carrington* - Churchwarden



## STOKE HOLY CROSS TUESDAY GROUP

The occasional notes relating to Stoke Tuesday Group during the year 2021 have made harrowing reading. It is distressing to report the recent passing of June Mann, another long-standing and greatly-loved member. June was the kind of person who was always willing to lend a hand, in whatever task was necessary. She had served on the Group's Committee for many years, and offered her delightful garden as a venue for such festivities as the Group's Strawberry teas. June was ever there to provide help, and always with a smile. Her particular strength was the catering within the Group for innumerable suppers and lunches. It was unnecessary to plead with her to help – she was simply there. On one occasion I complimented her on the delicious flavour of a casserole which she had made. Speaking very confidentially, she said, 'Of course, you know, I use a Colmans. I mean, it's all in there, isn't it?' (I dimly remembered, at that point, the time when Mary Berry was heard to confess that she used puff pastry purchased at the local supermarket). But this was different, because June was a Stoke lady, and this is the place where a great empire was begun. Surely my chuckle was echoed by the great Jeremiah himself, as he agreed that it was, indeed, perfectly in order for this 21st century cook to 'use a Colmans' to spice up the meals of people now living in the place where his huge and benevolent firm started to mill mustard. So thank you, June, for all your participation in the Tuesday Group over the years. Our meetings will lack a little bit of flavour without you....

## Poringland W.I.

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**Saturday 23rd October 2021**

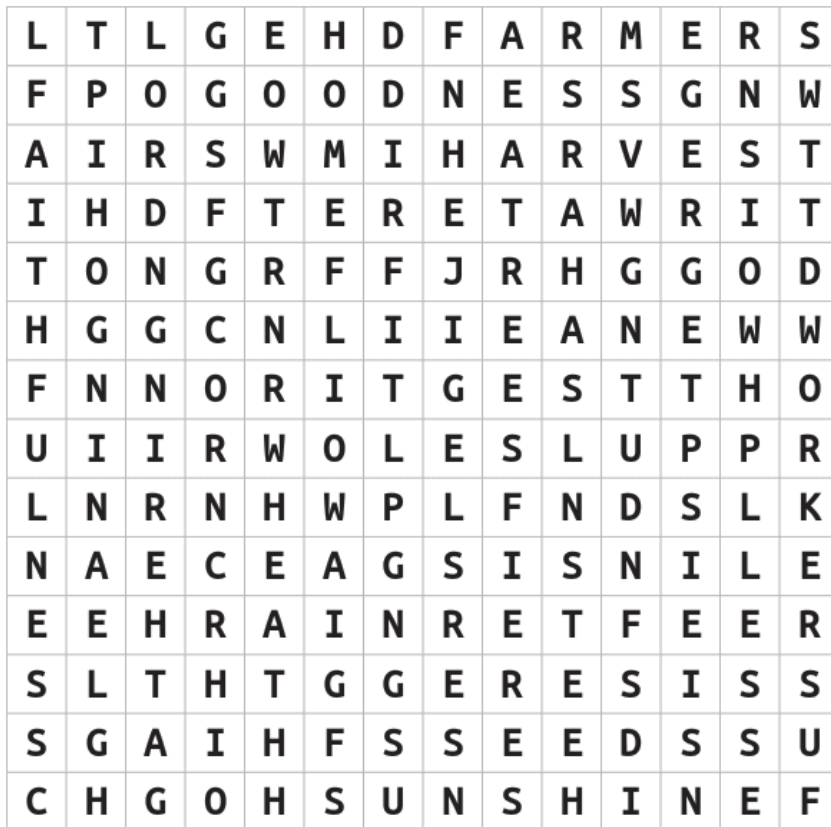
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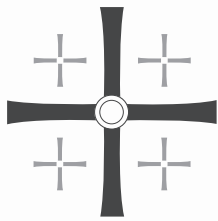
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# OCTOBER

WORSHIP, PRAYER AND COMMUNITY  
IN OUR VILLAGE CHURCHES

## Stoke Holy Cross Services

3<sup>rd</sup> October | 10.30am | Informal service

10<sup>th</sup> October | 10.30am | Informal Communion Service

17<sup>th</sup> October | 10.30am | Informal Service

24<sup>th</sup> October | 10.30am | Informal Communion Service

31<sup>st</sup> October | 10.30am | Informal Service

## Caistor Services

3<sup>rd</sup> October | 9.30am | Praise and Worship Service

17<sup>th</sup> October | 9.00am | Traditional Holy Communion Service

## Dunston Services

3<sup>rd</sup> October | 4.00pm | Evening Prayer

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regular  
updates!*



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