

Free for All



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

NOVEMBER 2022

St. George's Dementia Support Group need some able-bodied help please



If you live in easy reach of St. George's Hall in Upper Stoke could you help us set up tables and chairs ready for the Dementia Support Group Café.

It would only be for about half an hour twice a month from 9:15am.

The photos show our recent trip and a regular meeting with a local singer.



Local volunteers get started on the Stoke Jubilee Meadow Project see page 7



Do you like singing carols?

Would you like to sing with a group of other people who do too? Last year we got together to form a Community Choir to sing for our carol services across the Venta Group of villages, and we'd like to do the same again this year. But we need you or rather we need your voice. So whether you came last year or you didn't,

we would love to see you at the Church Hall on the following Friday nights at 7:45 to 9:00pm 11th, 18th, 25th November & 2nd and 9th December

If you are coming, or you can't make all the dates, please let me know by emailing lyn@venta-group.org or pop down and have a word at our Thursday Coffee and Chat mornings.



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Over the years I have written a lot about remembering in November. It seems the season for it, with All Saints' Day on 1st November reminding us of all the followers of Jesus who have gone before us, followed by Remember the 5th of November, and then Remembrance Day after that. Some churches also use 2nd November to help people think of relatives who have died in recent years as well. Put together, that is a lot of remembering.

But I wanted to remember back a lot less far, to something I did last November. For the second time ever, I think, I went to a Thanksgiving dinner. You'll know this mainly as an American celebration, and an opportunity to get the turkey in early a full month ahead of Christmas, which I suppose they might as well call "Turkey

2: The Sequel." The one we attended last year had a whole load of the traditional accompaniments, like pumpkin pie to follow, and with the turkey the very odd side dish of sweet potato with marshmallows on top.

In our family we use food to celebrate special occasions that we are thankful for, but these tend to be the normal ones like Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries and so on. I don't know if we are so good at being thankful more widely. The bible is different: it's full of people bringing food offerings to God, and celebrating with food themselves, as a sign of all the things that they are grateful for.

One of the most famous feasts in the New Testament comes at the end of the story of the Prodigal Son, where his delighted father calls for the fatted calf to be brought and prepared as the centrepiece of a great banquet to celebrate his coming home.

It's in the spirit of these great thanksgiving feasts of the bible, and especially with the Old Testament festival of Passover in mind, that Jesus's followers began one of their own. Amongst the various words that the church has used for communion is the Greek word Eucharist, which in the end only means "thank you". So when we gather and use bread and wine to remember Jesus, we are thanking God for what he has done for us.

But I've never been convinced that a communion service is the only place to do that. Every time I sit down and eat, I want to celebrate what Jesus has done for me. On Sunday afternoons at the Church Hall there hasn't been much wine so far, but we have been eating together, partly as a reminder of what Jesus has done for us. We're doing it remembering his encouragement that all of us can come and sit and eat with him: that we're all invited.

So please take up God's invitation, and come down on a Sunday afternoon and sit and eat with us, but wherever you sit, and whenever you eat, remember to find things to thank God for.

Rob

VICAR OF THE VENTA GROUP

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

Search Facebook and Youtube for "Venta group of churches"

www.venta-group.org



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CHURCHWARDENS

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would welcome a visit. Also members of
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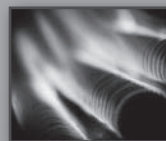
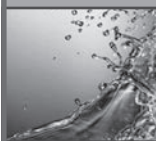
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St. George's Dementia Support Group



Help Needed please!

Is there anyone who lives near St. George's Hall in Upper Stoke that could help us set up tables and chairs prior to the Dementia cafe from 9.15am please? It would only take about half an hour twice a month.

We warmly welcome people with dementia and their carers to our regular café sessions in St. Georges Hall, Upper Stoke, Holy Cross held 10 am to 12 noon on the second and fourth Monday mornings of each month (except bank holidays). There are always fun activities and entertainment to enjoy along with good conversation, helpful support and information plus refreshments. We also run occasional subsidised outings. There are no joining fees and no referral is required, just a small charge for refreshments. We also welcome anyone interested in becoming a volunteer helper. It's very satisfying and great fun!

These are a few pictures from our recent trip to Africa Alive and from a reminiscence session we had at St George's hall with the always popular and entertaining Angela Bishop, talking about life in the 1950s and including tastes in music and fashion. We also had a very entertaining morning on 10th October when the excellent Poringland school children came and sang to us with some audience participation.

Our November dates are: 14th November & 28th November Christmas craft session.

For further information call, 01508 493661, 01508 494742 or 01508 495580 Website is www.st.georges-dementia-support-group.uk



A project for the Autumn Making Leafmould

Why compost autumn leaves?

Even though the whole process might take a year or two, the result is a dark brown, crumbly mix which can be used to support the soil structure (either as a mulch or as part of a potting mix).

Which leaves?

You can use all leaves that fall in autumn. It is easiest to run the mower over the lawn (with blades high) to collect a mix of grass trimmings and shredded leaves; these will rot down fast, especially when damp. Do not use evergreen leaves, such as holly, laurel and conifers as they can take up to three years to mulch.

Pine needles take ages to rot down but are worth collecting in a separate pile. This is because they produce acidic leafmould, which is excellent for mulching ericaceous plants (such as rhododendrons, azaleas, pieris and blueberries).

Which containers to use?

Thick plastic bin bags work really well. As they are portable, you can store them out of sight (eg behind a shed). Make sure the leaves are damp before tying the top of the bag. Then pierce the bag a few times to aerate the contents.

However, if you have a lot of leaves, it might be better to build a simple structure using posts and netting or chicken wire to contain the pile of leaves. This structure will need covering to stop the leaves from blowing away.

Compost or leafmould?

Small amounts of autumn leaves can be added to your compost heap. As autumn leaves are rotten down mainly by the slow, cool action of fungi (rather than the quicker acting bacteria that work in a compost heap) it is better to recycle larger quantities of autumn leaves separately.

It is possible to speed up the process?

To speed up the process, spread the leaves on the lawn and run over with a mower with a box. Mix in about 10% fresh grass cuttings and water well with a nitrogen rich activator. Urine is ideal!

Happy composting! (With thanks to Jan for sending this in, adapted from an article by Jill Wragg).

Can we help you?

Like you, we are aware of the cost of lots of things rising for everyone, and even as we publish in the middle of October we are hearing of changes that might mean energy bills go up sooner, and some other financial help from the government may no longer be as much as we had hoped. So here is just a reminder of a few things that we are doing locally that might be useful to you, along with other things that might be on offer more widely.

1. Warm space

The Church Hall is open through the week for a number of different activities organised by the church. There is Sparklers for pre-schoolers and their parents and carers on a Tuesday, the Post Office and fortnightly coffee drop-in on a Thursday, and All Invited on a Sunday afternoon, which includes a free hot meal at the end. All these will be warm spaces as it gets colder. We also heat all our church buildings for services through the colder months.

2. Food bank

We are in the process of making our pantry foodbank available 24/7 outside the Church Hall. Once this is up and running you can come at any time and collect anything that you need, or donate things for other people if you would like. (If you want to donate and find the foodbank is full, please keep it safe at home for the time being, or take it to Norwich foodbank.)

3. Fuel allotment trusts

The churches and communities in our villages are represented by our fuel allotment trusts, who are preparing to give grants to households in need over the winter months. You can find details of those trusts around the villages, and elsewhere in this magazine.

We hope this helps, but if there is more we can do, please get in touch – you can call Rob on 492305 or email rob@venta-group.org

From the Curate's Egg

5th November – politics or religion? Or a coming together of both?

Since 1606 there have been commemorations in this country of the anniversary of when something didn't happen. A group of men had decided to blow up the Houses of Parliament, during the state opening of Parliament in 1605. They intended to kill the king, James 1, as he had refused to give greater religious tolerance to Catholics. They had conspired against the leaders of the country and decided they had to act. They gathered explosives together under the Houses of Parliament but were stopped in their tracks because they were betrayed. So 5 November 1606 was declared a national day of thanksgiving. Remembering this poses three questions for me:

Am I thankful when something doesn't happen? Yes sometimes. But I think I get more annoyed when something doesn't happen. When things don't go my way. When my day gets sidetracked because something doesn't occur. Or when people don't do what I want them to do or don't turn up when I'm expecting them to – that's annoying? I'm trying to remind myself though that actually when these things don't happen, maybe it's because God has something better for me, for the bible says God works for the good of those who love him (Romans 8:28). Am I thankful for politics? I know you aren't supposed to talk about religion, politics or money because it can end in fights but actually we need to find a way to do that. We have seen in recent weeks how much politics does affect our daily lives and in the months ahead it will continue to affect our lives. But even if I disagree with the prevailing politics and particularly the shouting across the floor of Parliament, I am thankful for those voices who speak out, who speak out for justice, mercy and for the poor. Jesus challenged those who didn't live like that.

And finally, am I thankful for faith, religious freedom? Yes. We live in a country where we can live our beliefs out in freedom. Whether we have a faith or not. There are many places in the world where there isn't the same freedom. Charities like Open Doors and Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) remind us of those places. Each November they encourage churches to join in a World Day of Prayer for persecuted Christians – this year that is 6 November. When politics and religion come together and lead us to pray.

On Sundays you have choices: you don't have to be in a place of worship with others – whereas in other countries if you didn't attend a place of worship you would be singled out. For Christians, Sunday for 2,000 years is a day when we gather to worship Jesus, to be thankful for the one who was betrayed, died but didn't stay dead. Jesus, the one who challenged those in leadership when he didn't see justice, mercy or them working for the poor. Jesus in whom there is freedom. Freedom from sin, for Jesus said "for everyone who sins is a slave to sin... but if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:34-36). On 6 November why not pray Jesus' words, wherever you are, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Or go to Church or join CSW online for their evening of prayer.

Lyn

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For more details contact:
Gary Watson on gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk

Norwich YOUTH FOR CHRIST @stoke.embers Venta Group of Churches

ARMINGHALL FUEL ALLOTMENT TRUST

Funds may be available to help those in need in the Arminghall/Bixley community. All applications will be considered. Please apply in writing in confidence to:- The Administrator, Arminghall Fuel Allotment Trust, Bluebell Lodge, Arminghall Lane, Arminghall, Norwich NR14 8SF.

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 3rd November 2022 at 1.30pm

Bowls Wednesday 2nd and Thursday 17th November - 1.30pm - £2.00

Bingo Thursday 10th and 24th - 1.30pm (Please bring a raffle prize)

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Your support will be much appreciated.

Below are a few photos of the stalls at our very successful JUMBLE SALE that we had way back on Saturday 20th August 2022. We raised a wonderful £400 for the children of the Ukraine 'Save the Children Fund' which has now been sent off.

A big thank you to all who supported us for this excellent cause.



SHX Jubilee Wildflower Meadow

In Stoke Holy Cross we are creating a wildflower meadow although it's at a really early stage at the moment. So far we have laid green hay from local wildflower meadows donated by Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT) who have been helping us with each stage of developing the meadow. The Jubilee meadow is part of the Claylands Soil Project for which we would like to say thank you for all of the help from NWT. In particular we would like to thank Gemma Walker, Senior Community Officer, for her knowledge, skills and encouragement throughout.

We have sown yellow rattle seeds from High Ash farm, which is a grass that helps reduce vigorous agricultural grasses and opens up space for wildflowers and other grasses to blossom. High Ash farm also kindly donated some wildflower mix from their own meadows which we have sown at one corner of our meadow. Each year we will sow additional seeds to increase wildflower and grass species growing on Jubilee meadow.

Meadows and other species-rich grasslands are an intrinsic part of the UK's natural and cultural heritage. The UK's remaining such grasslands now cover a tiny fraction of the area they once covered, even relatively recently in the early 20th century. There were once natural wildflower meadows in every Parish but today only 2% of the meadows that existed in 1930s remain.

The meadows and species-rich grasslands can support a huge range of wildlife including wildflowers, fungi, bees, flies, beetles, spiders, moths, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals, bats and birds.

Thank you to Liz Dack whose relative has donated a Tawny Owl box which will be fitted on October 18th. We are also buying a little owl's box and some blue and great tit boxes which will be fitted as soon as possible. Owlets will be leaving their nests at this time of year and we are hoping they take up residence in our new boxes. In all we are hoping that blue tits, tawny and little owls are going to use these boxes. We are looking to make yet more bird boxes so if you have any spare wood you don't need, please let us know.

Liz Dack's photos show us raking and tree planting as well as seeding Yellow Rattle and wild flowers after clearing away more stones.

This year at the Jubilee meadow we have completed baseline surveys of flowers and grasses, so we can monitor increases in species as the wildflower meadow develops. Pauline and Dave Jones have completed a weekly butterfly survey on Jubilee meadow and it is now a registered site for The National Butterfly Survey.

If you would like to join us, we are the SHX Meadow Makers Group; just a group of volunteers who are helping create Jubilee meadow. You may have noticed that we have left longer verges on Long Lane and two verges around the playing field and car park. These are providing food for pollinators and habitat for small mammals and frogs. We would like to thank SHX Parish Council for their support too. If you would like to join the group, please email gill.jinkerson@gmail.com or just come along to a working party group. The dates are advertised in SHX residents' face book page and SHX Parish Council notice boards.

Although it's very much 'work in progress' and there's not much to see yet, you can visit the Jubilee Meadow at any time. It can be found between the football pitch and Harrold Place by following the tarmac footpath at the corner of the pavilion car park on Long Lane and it's immediately on your left.

Gill Jinkerson

STOKE HOLY CROSS FUEL ALLOTMENT TRUST

The Trustees of the above charity invite anyone living in the Parish of Stoke Holy Cross who is suffering from "need, hardship, or distress" to apply to the charity for a fuel grant or other assistance. Application forms are available in 'Lower Stoke' from either the Post Office,

Stoke Church Hall (opening hours Monday 0900-1300) or Mrs Margaret Nudds, 77 Norwich Road, NR14 8NX, and in 'Upper Stoke' from Julian Foster, 20, Chandler Road, Upper Stoke Holy Cross, NR14 8RG (07855-025027).

Please note: applications must be received by Wednesday 30th November 2022

CAISTOR ST EDMUND FUEL ALLOTMENT CHARITY

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The purpose of this Charitable Trust is to make grants for financial assistance to families or individuals who have been living in Caistor St Edmund or Markshall for at least a year, who are in need or distress. Grants are made annually and the Trustees welcome applications from anyone who thinks they might qualify for help.

Application forms may be obtained from the Clerk to the Trustees (call 07963 448753 or email jeanetteutting@aol.com)

These should be completed and returned to the Clerk before 8 November 2022.

AUTUMN PLANTING

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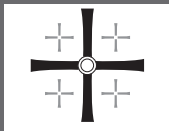
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Thursday 1st November

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Traditional communion and coffee

Sunday 6th November

9.30am

Caistor St Edmund

Praise & Worship

10.30am

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship

3.30pm

Stoke Church Hall

All Invited—come together over food, have fun, explore faith together

Sunday 13th November

10.45am

Caistor St Edmund

Group service for Remembrance Sunday

7.30pm

Zoom

Listening to God

Sunday 20th November

9.30am

Caistor St Edmund

Holy Communion

10.30am

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship

3.30pm

Stoke Church Hall

All Invited—come together over food, have fun, explore faith together

Sunday 27th November

10.30am

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning worship with communion and children's group

4pm

Arminghall

Advent Sunday service

Caistor church building is open about 10-4 most days - space to reflect, and to pray

Sparklers

Craft, fun, singing and friendship for 0-4s and their parents, grandparents and carers. Every Tuesday morning in school term from 10-11 at Stoke Church Hall

Email cathrynbaker@gmail.com or find us on Facebook

BRAND NEW!

embers youth club

Thursdays 7.30 - 9 pm
Stoke Holy Cross Church Hall

Every week in school term

Sign up for email updates here

LOOK OUT for our new permanent foodbank: the blue phone box will be appearing soon at the Church Hall. Please give to it or take away, it's there 24/7 and just the first thing we'd like to do to provide for those who might be struggling with the increased cost of living this winter.

www.venta-group.org | Facebook/YouTube "Venta Group of Churches" | admin@venta-group.org | 01508 492305

O	H	M	S	K	J	O	N	A	H	A	O	A	L
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R	N	P	N	A	Z	E	P	H	A	N	I	A	H

Some Biblical Prophets Wordsearch

HABAKKUK

JEREMIAH

MICAH

JESUS

OBADIAH

HAGGAI

NAHUM

EZEKIEL

HOSEA

ISAIAH

JOEL

ZEPHANIAH

AMOS

DANIEL

JONAH



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