# Free for A





THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

#### **NOVEMBER 2023**



We gathered to celebrate Harvest at Arminghall on Sunday 24th September, and we had a brilliant time. There was great company, food and drink, and lots to think about focused on the Parable of the Sower, and how God wants his promises, love and truth to take root in our lives. We're really grateful to everyone from the Arminghall community and beyond who gave their time to make the church and churchyard look so wonderful and welcoming, as you can see from these fantastic photos.

Join us on Sunday 17th December at 6.30pm for our Arminghall Carol Service!

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me."



Look inside for more news about this very special service at Dunston last month, and everything we have planned for Remembrance weekend from 11th-12th November



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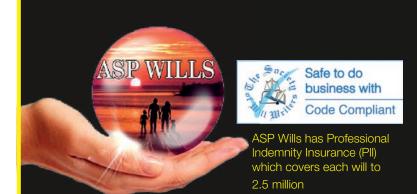
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#### Free for All



eople say that a week is a long time in politics, and it feels especially like that as I write now. We're just days after the horrific Hamas attacks on Israeli civilians: men, women and children killed in the most horrendous ways, or abducted and held hostage in Gaza. The understandable Israeli reaction has seen as many as 2700 Palestinians killed, with over a million more ordered to head south and leave their homes. As I write, there are reports of Hamas deliberately delaying evacuations; of Israeli attacks on civilian cars on roads that were supposed to be safe; of hospitals with patients on ventilators wondering when the fuel for their generators might run out.

The horror of the situation raises so many questions - most immediately about how far you can go in defending yourself, how

much responsibility you have to protect civilians, but in the end you wonder how the conflict might ever end. I hope and pray that things might be better by the time you read this, but it feels like it risks getting a lot worse.

All this is happening, of course, at the same time as we are preparing for Remembrance weekend in November, as you might notice elsewhere in this month's magazine. As we gather for that important moment in the life of our nation, we'll be very aware of another period in some of our lifetimes when the Jewish people were the victims of appalling atrocities, and when civilians on both sides of a terrible conflict paid an awful price. It's another reminder of how desperately we all need to live in peace.

So many people have thought harder than me and prayed better than me for such a long time for what Christians often call the Holy Land. It's devastating, really, that in the place where Jesus, our Prince of Peace, came and dwelt amongst us, there's been less consistent peace since the Second World War than almost anywhere else on Earth. My thinking and praying, in case it helps you, tends to come back not so much to the words of Jesus as those of Paul. In Ephesians 2 he writes of how one of the purposes of Jesus's coming was to "make the two groups (Jews and Gentiles) one, destroying the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace .... "

It seems to me that two thousand years on, these words haven't lost any of their power. What a vision that is: these two peoples not united but divided, not two groups but one. But there's a challenge, Paul says: that sort of hostility is only destroyed by the cross. That sort of reconciliation is only possible when we are reconciled to God, through the cross. That's why I always pray this way for everyone in the Holy Land: that a Holy God would meet them at the cross, and that they would be reconciled to him, and to one another. If you have other ways to pray, please let me know: at the moment we need all the prayer, and all the wisdom that we can find.

#### VICAR OF THE VENTA GROUP

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#### **CHURCHWARDENS**

**Stoke Holy Cross & Dunston** Viv (493438) & Andy (07777 675193)

> Arminghall Rob (492305) or Lyn (493422)

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

#### **ST GEORGE'S HALL BOOKINGS:**

Joyce Williams (492143)

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

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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

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

#### **FUNERAL**

#### MARGARET FISCHER

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October

at Earlham Crematorium

#### **BAPTISM**

#### **CLARA WILTSHIRE**

Sunday 29th October at Stoke Holy Cross

#### FOR ALL COPY PLEASE

send by email to Henry and Eostre Caswell to ventafree4all@outlook.com By 10<sup>th</sup> of this month please.





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# Lyn Muses...

A utumn Days was a popular song when my children were at school. They would come home singing the first verse and the chorus and then the words became a bit mumbled. Many of the words of the Autumn Days song would make little sense to the young in our world today – "the song the milkman sings"! The world has moved on – or has it? The chorus says: So I mustn't forget, no I mustn't forget, to say a great big thank you, I mustn't forget. And that's an important message in November. For the world hasn't moved on. Two world wars last century are not forgotten, although there are fewer and fewer of those who lived through them alive. There are still conflicts. Nation against nation. People giving their lives for a cause they believe in. We mustn't forget.

Jesus gave his life for his friends and asks them not to forget. On 11 November at 11am we will pause and remember those who have sacrificed their life that we may live. You may do that. You may remember not just those who served in the armed forces but those who were on the home front, serving in auxiliary services or other employment in the countries where they came from but you may not have met or known any of them. Can I also ask you to remember Jesus. A man you may not have met, or known but who sacrificed his life so we may have life eternal. We will sing and read of how he is the Prince of Peace in a few weeks time, at Christmas. It may be good to pray sooner than that, in November, using the words from Coventry Cathedral's prayer of reconciliation, that were drawn up following the destruction of the cathedral in 1940. These words were inspired by Jesus' prayer on the cross – Father forgive:

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, **Father forgive**.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own, *Father, forgive.* 

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth, Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

Father, forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee, Father, forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children, Father, forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God, Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

# St George's Hall Dementia Support Group

n the second and fourth Monday of each month except bank holidays this is a great place to relax for the dementia and for their carers. Come and join us for fun activities and refreshments. There is always room for people living with dementia and their partners or carers whether on our subsidised outings or at our regular Café sessions from 10 am to 12 noon in St George's Hall at Upper Stoke Holy Cross. Referral not necessary.

Volunteers always welcome and will find a very friendly and happy atmosphere and a very rewarding thing to do. For more information phone one of the numbers listed below. We had a very happy and fun session with Angela reminiscing on 9th October.

November events 13<sup>th</sup> November Café session 27<sup>th</sup> November Poringland Primary school singing to us and also some Christmas crafts. December events 4<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Lunch at Old Feathers 11<sup>th</sup> December Christmas party

For more information ring 01508 494742, 01508 493661 or 01508 495580. Our website is st.george's-dementia-support-group.org

#### 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 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 1.30pm

SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER FAYRE 1.00PM - 3.00PM

(Grand Draw/Tombola/New Christmas Stall/Cakes/Pickles/ Puzzles/Books/Bric-a-brac/ Guess the weight of Cake/ Sweets in the Jar and Name the Toy) Your support would be much appreciated

Bowls Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> and 30th November 1.30opm - £2.00

Bingo Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November at 1.30pm (Raffle prize please)

#### 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 09.00-13.00) 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 Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

# A Remembrance Weekend To Remember

This year we will be marking Remembrance Day with our usual service at Caistor St Edmund at 10.45am. It begins in the church, but includes a time round the war memorial at 11am. Everyone is very welcome. It's an important day for all of us, but particularly for some of you in our community whose relatives are mentioned on our war memorials, or who served in the armed forces in recent years yourselves. You'd be very welcome to join us at the service, and if you'd like to do something particular, like lay a wreath in memory of a loved one, or take some other part in what happens, please do let Rob know.

This weekend Arminghall church will be open as usual on Saturday from 10-4, and Caistor on Saturday and Sunday at about the same time (including the Sunday service, of course). We're also pleased that Stoke church will be open, again from 10-4 on Saturday, and 12-4 on Sunday, once the Caistor service has finished. We'd be very pleased to show you in person what you can see from the pictures here: not only the lovely new coat of paint the building has had recently, but also the Stoke war memorials, which have been rehung in the church following the decorating work. There will be a short morning prayer meeting in the church at 10am on Saturday, and the two minutes' silence at 11am, as part of this special weekend, and someone will be there to welcome you and serve refreshments while the building is open.



#### **REMEMBRANCE SERVICES**

#### Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November

Morning Prayer at 10am and two minutes' silence at 11am at Stoke Holy Cross

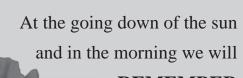
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#### Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November

Group Remembrance Service at 10.45am at Caistor St Edmund Church buildings open all weekend: Arminghall: Saturday 10am - 4pm Stoke and Caistor: Saturday 10am - 4pm, Sunday 12 - 4pm

#### CAISTOR ST EDMUND POPPY APPEAL

I am hoping to organise the usual House to House collection in Caistor and if you are able to spare some time please to perhaps do a few houses in your Drive/Close or near you, your help will be appreciated. Contact please Graham Ford - Tel 01508 493430 (66 Caistor Lane) Thank You.



REMEMBER ALL OF THEM

# Dunston Service

fter many years of frustration with bats at Dunston, some hard work on our part, and some great help from the Church of England's Bats in Churches team, it was a great pleasure to meet inside the building again on 1<sup>st</sup> October. We used the occasion to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the wonderful and famous hymn Amazing Grace, and it was great to see everyone who came along, especially some Dunston residents. Thanks to all of you who worked hard to get the church and churchyard ready for the day.



#### Prayer

Christ as a light, illumine and guide me. Christ as a shield, overshadow me. Christ under me; Christ over me; Christ beside me on my left and my right.

This day be within and without me, Lowly and meek, yet all-powerful. Be in the heart of each to whom I speak. In the mouth of each who speaks unto me.

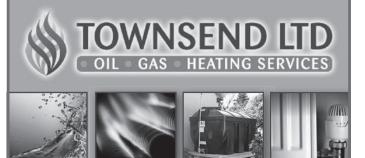
This day be within and without me, Lowly and meek, yet all-powerful. Christ as a light; Christ as a shield, Christ beside me on my left and my right.



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#### Praying together: Tuesday to Saturday mornings

9am Mon-Fri 10am Sat	Zoom—contact us to join	Prayer meeting with Bible reading
(Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> November in-person at Stoke church, not on Zoom)		, e

#### Thursday morning

2 <sup>nd</sup> November		10am at Stoke Church Hall	Holy Communion
<b>^</b>	,		

#### Group remembrance service

12<sup>th</sup> November

10.45am at Caistor St Edmund—only service in the group this morning

#### Regular Sunday mornings at 930am

5 <sup>th</sup> November	Caistor St Edmund	Draica & Warshin
		Praise & Worship
19 <sup>th</sup> November	Caistor St Edmund	Holy Communion

#### Regular Sunday mornings at 10.30am

5 <sup>th</sup> November	Stoke Holy Cross	Morning Worship
		(with children's group every week)
19 <sup>th</sup> November	Stoke Holy Cross	Morning Worship
26 <sup>th</sup> November	Stoke Holy Cross	Morning Worship with
		Holy Communion

#### Sunday afternoons and evenings in November

12 <sup>th</sup> November	All Invited — Drop in to the Vicarage
	from 3.30pm-5pm for tea and cake and time together
19 <sup>th</sup> November	*NEW!* Prayer and Praise 6pm at Stoke Church
26 <sup>th</sup> November	All Invited 3.30-5pm at the Church Hall

Caistor church building is open about 10-4 daily, and Arminghall most Saturdays space to reflect, and to pray.

Stoke church is open with refreshments available from 10am-4pm on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November (including Morning Prayer at 10am and 2 minutes' silence at 11am), and 12-4pm on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>. Come and admire the new paintwork and see the rehung war memorials.





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