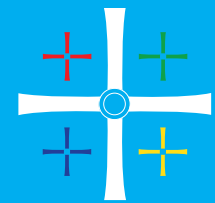


Free for All



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

OCTOBER 2022

The children at Stoke Primary school created these wonderful boards of colourful flower shapes as tributes to the memory of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

And we were able to show these set around the book of condolence at Stoke church for the joint service of remembrance for our local Parish Councils and Venta Group churches on the Sunday before Her Majesty's funeral



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We all knew the day would come when the Queen wouldn't be there, but somehow we didn't quite expect it, did we? Part of that was that it seemed to come quickly, with her meeting prime ministers old and new on Tuesday, and dying on Thursday. But more of it must be that most of us can't remember a time when she wasn't there.

There were so many striking images and moments in the period from the Queen's death, up to and including her funeral. The crowds lining the streets through Scotland as the coffin drove from Balmoral to Edinburgh; a host of state occasions as King Charles visited all four nations in about as many days; and of course the queue.

At the same time, like with all bereavements, it was the little things that struck you. I saw a photo on Facebook of an order of service

for someone who was made a vicar, somewhere, the same evening the Queen died. They found out 10 minutes before they were supposed to start, and after a few phone calls they went ahead. The photo showed the text where the vicar promises allegiance to the monarch. "Queen Elizabeth II" had hurriedly been crossed out, and "King Charles" written in blue biro. Then someone must have realised that wasn't enough, and had added "III", this time in red.

It doesn't surprise me at all that I have had a lot more conversations about life and death in the last couple of weeks than I normally do. Times like this confront us with our own mortality, and they're meant to, I think. They're meant to make us look at our lives and ask ourselves what we want to be remembered for. There's no point wishing we could all be the Queen, and hope to do great things, but we can all do small things with great love. Actually, the best stories about the Queen haven't at all been grand gestures; people have been remembering her little interactions with them, and how much her care and attention meant.

But more than what it means to live this life as well as we can, the Queen has pointed us beyond it. Christmas after Christmas she reminded us that God had come into the world; that Jesus was in our midst, and that eternal hope was within reach for all of us. In her wonderful Easter message in the early pandemic, she reminded us all that "As dark as death can be — particularly for those suffering with grief — light and life are greater. May the living flame of the Easter hope be a steady guide as we face the future."

The Queen's extraordinary funeral service, which may have reached over 4 billion people across the world, spoke beautifully of the eternal hope that we have because of Jesus. The Archbishop of Canterbury drew on that same Easter message as he followed the Queen in quoting Vera Lynn, reminding us that when we believe in Jesus we can be sure that we'll meet again. It means that there is a time when we will be with the Queen again, but more than that, a time when we will be with Jesus; and like the Queen, will cast our crowns before the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings.

Rob

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IN A FUTURE MAGAZINE

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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.

FUNERALS

JONATHAN MILLS

Tuesday 20th September
at Caistor St Edmund

BRUCE APPLEBY

Tuesday 20th September
at Waveney Crematorium

ELSIE RAMM

Thursday 29th September
at Stoke Holy Cross

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.

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send by email to
Henry and Eostre Caswell to
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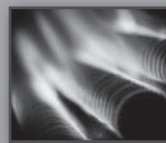
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Dates

1 October 1988 is a date I can't easily forget. We all have them, memorable dates. Birthdays, wedding days, moving dates or in my case, the day I started working at UEA. I was moving jobs from the Norwich Union (now known as Aviva) in Surrey Street in the centre of our beautiful city to a 1960s building on a beautiful campus. From the business sector to the education sector. I was naïve. I hadn't attended university and didn't know the significance of the day until I got there. It was the first day of term. My job was in the general office in the School of Development Studies; lots of people were coming in asking me questions I didn't know the answers to. They weren't to know it was my first day and that I wasn't the person to ask where a building was or a lecturer's office was. Yet 34 years on, I'm still there. Many things have changed – at UEA, in my life and in the world.

One of the first things I did was try and make new friends. I noticed the Chaplaincy had a Thursday lunchtime bible study group, open to all Christians and so I went along and met some friendly people, who kept me going when life was tough, particularly when work was tough. I miss that group of staff who came from different parts of the university, different churches but were trying to follow Jesus in their lives. Where do I now meet with others trying to serve and follow Jesus in their lives in a rapidly changing and chaotic world?

Sundays in a church building or hall is one place but I particularly like it when we meet in a small group. There's more opportunity to talk, to get to know what is really going on in someone's life and come alongside people. Often churches call these small groups, home or house groups. Well there's a group of us that's moving from meeting in our homes into the Church Hall. If you want to go deeper into faith, ask questions in a safe environment and receive support in your life, you'd be most welcome to join us on Thursday 13 October at 10.30 in the Church Hall. It may be a life changing date you remember for the rest of your life.

Cream Teas this summer at Caistor St Edmund

We were very happy to host cream teas again this summer. We had four sessions in total during July and August 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 home-bakes cakes and biscuits.

It was a really happy community event, where we welcomed people from Caistor and surrounding villages and walkers around the Roman Town. Despite the heat on some of the Sundays, the event was well supported. We had lots of good conversations with people and there was a lively and friendly atmosphere.

Thank you to everyone who came and supported us. A special thank you goes to all the helpers from our own community at Caistor who tirelessly served cream teas, washed up, sold produce or helped with setting up and clearing away.

We raised £1455 in total, an amazing achievement. This will be divided between the church and the Vidiyal Trust, a charity providing help for children with cancer and elderly people in India.



Stoke Outdoor Service

On Sunday 28th August Stoke Church was able to hold an outdoor service making the most of the long hot summer. Lots of people came and brought their picnic lunch with them so we were able to sit and chat under the shade of the big old Beech tree. Some even enjoyed a wee bit of climbing.



ST. GEORGE'S DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

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. Would 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 midday 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, just a small charge for refreshments no referral is required.

We also welcome anyone interested in becoming a volunteer helper. It's very satisfying and great fun!

Our October dates are:
10th October and 24th October chair exercises with Mavin

For further information call,
01508 493661, 01508 494742
or 01508 495580

www.st.georges-dementia-support-group.uk

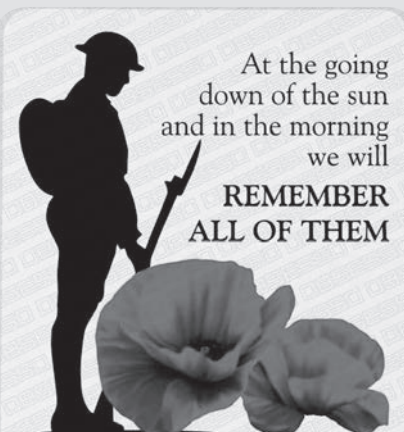
COLLECTORS NEEDED FOR THE POPPY APPEAL IN CAISTOR ST EDMUND

Can you help please with the House to House collecting this year. If you can only do a few houses around where you live that would be appreciated.

Collecting starts on 29th October and can go on until 12th November.

Any offers would be welcome, please contact Graham Ford 01508 493430

Thank you.



Paving the way to hope

Tanzania Report for Stoke Holy Cross April 2021 to March 2022.

The members of Stoke Holy Cross church have been supporting villages within the diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro in northern Tanzania enabling them to take part in a scheme to encourage and train local people to make the very best use of what resources they do have to provide more food and better income for their families. We have been able to provide £3,000 a year for the past three years primarily from member's generous donations made through Tearfund.

Below is a report from Tearfund on the scheme, a thank you message and some wonderful stories of the success it has brought to many local families.

Thanks to your support, families are stepping into hope.

Here, Suzan stands in a plot of land. She saw the potential it had and made it into a flourishing garden. It provides all her family needs, despite shifting economies locally and globally.



Results

In the Baba District of Tanzania, the Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro have been equipping churches with tools to help their local communities overcome poverty. To empower people and see them step into their God-given potential. To do this they are using an approach known as the Church and Community Mobilisation Process - or CCMP. This year, local and global issues have had vast impacts on people across the region. But thanks to your support, and inspired by the process, families like Suzan and Malaki's and Wilbert Yohana's are stepping forward with their family.

Malaki and Suzan are two amazing people. They are raising their four children while Malaki pursues Theological Studies at Munguishi Bible College. When the holidays come around, Malaki then joins his wife, Suzan, who is taking part in the Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP) at their local church. It is a process which they have found highly motivating. Susan said it is 'awakening' her to all the opportunities around them - and helping them to meet the needs of their family.

Together, with others at the church, Suzan and Malaki have taken part in Bible studies. These studies explore subjects like God's vision for humanity. Through practical application, participants are encouraged to look into ways of mobilising resources and put ideas brought up by the training into practice. It is unlocking even more of the couple's potential.

Having considered the breadth of resources available to them, in their skills, talents and locale, Suzan and Malaki decided to focus on repurposing an unused area of their land. Taking what they learnt through CCMP sessions on subjects like agricultural methods, including training on intercropping and irrigation, they planted fruit trees across their land. This includes paw-paw, banana, avocado, orange and mango trees, alongside sugar cane, ginger, pigeon peas, sweet potatoes, cassava, beans and maize.

They have turned their three-acre plot into a thriving garden. The range of plants will serve their family in hugely valuable ways. The nutritional variety will bring gains on their own. But, these and other activities have seen Suzan and Malaki's family not just have a better diet. It is seeing them become a food secure. They have enough to take them through the whole year. Thank you for being a part of

their story. For opening up opportunities. For opening up paths of hope. For paving the way to security.

Stepping toward change

This year has been another tough year for families in Tanzania. Climate change continues to be a pressing issue, with people across the nation experiencing low rainfall, leading to drought. Crops have dried out, livestock have been lost, and in the coming months huge numbers of people are expected to struggle to access enough food. In the background, the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine are set to exacerbate this situation further, with economies worldwide seeing living costs increase and vital imports like cereal crops decrease.

Your support at this time makes the world of difference.

In such an environment, support from people like their Self-Help Group are likely to mean a huge amount to Suzan and Malaki. The team of 15-30 people from their community meet regularly, and, together, they save small amounts of money. As a group, they seek to empower each other and propel one another further towards the future they hope to see.

A sense of 'togetherness' is at the core of the group's work, which offers friendship, support - and through the savings fund they are creating - more opportunities. Each member can request a loan from their shared savings fund. With very low interest rates, it is a great solution for those on low incomes, who, due to a lack of collateral, can find it hard to access a loan any other way. This can mean the difference between accessing day to day essentials, buying things for their business, or even starting a business.

Suzan and Malaki hope to use anything they borrow to keep improving their plot of land, so they can sell their produce and generate more income. And already they are finding their activities are enabling them to meet their family's needs and easily pay for important things, like school expenses.

As a result of support like yours, it is estimated that 3,802 people, like Suzan and Malaki have been directly impacted by this project, while another 15,208 people have benefitted indirectly.

An alternate path

In a turbulent year, where crises seem to have come from every angle for families like Suzan and Malaki's, your support has set a new path. A path which local churches are at the heart of creating, so that their communities can step into a hope-filled future. A journey which is revealing how much God-given potential is in each one of us. And which is ensuring people know they are loved, valued and cared for. Because poverty is not God's plan. We are. Thank you for being part of this mission to see lives transformed and people lifted out of poverty.

Please pray

- Praise God for the wonderful skills and talents of Suzan and Malaki. Pray they will be blessed as they continue their journey, exploring how they can use these for their family and community. Pray that the land they are so carefully tending continues to flourish, and for a bright, secure future for their family.
- Give thanks for the skilled, committed facilitators and resource persons across Baba District. Thank God as they continue to journey alongside communities, implementing new ideas to increase food security and increase incomes. Pray they will be blessed and encouraged in their work.
- Pray for the Diocese of Kilimanjaro as they continue to pave a way which helps the communities they serve to overcome poverty. And pray that this year, though the pressures from crises like climate change, seem to keep growing, they will see a huge, positive shift in the experiences of those they walk alongside.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 1926-2022

"As dark as death can be — particularly for those suffering with grief — light and life are greater. May the living flame of the Easter hope be a steady guide as we face the future."
The Queen's Easter Message 2020



Coffee and chat

1030-1130

Church Hall, Stoke Holy Cross

On the following Thursdays

6 October 20 October

2 November 17 November

1 December 15 December



Are you wanting to meet others?
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On the first Thursday of the month there is a short traditional communion service at 10



We're praying for your street!

Every week in our churches we give time to praying for specific areas in the villages here. We also often walk around them so you might see us about near you on those weeks. Please say hello and let us know if you have anything you want us to pray for - or you could email admin@venta-group.org

This month we are praying for:

Week 1 Caistor Lane from High Ash Farm / Valley Farm Lane towards Poringland, including Southwood Drive and St Edmund's Close.

Week 2 Upper Stoke: Poringland Rd, Brickle Rd as far as Abbots Farm, Brickle Loke.

Week 3 Upper Stoke: Chandler Rd / Boudicca Way, Carol Close, Birbeck Close & Pine Loke.

Week 4 All the residents of Arminghall

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 6th October 2022 at 1.30pm

Bingo Thursday 13th and 27th October eyes down at 1.30pm
(Please bring a raffle prize)

Bowls Wednesday 5th and Thursday 20th October - 1.30pm - £2.00

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Friday
21st
October
2022
9.15am-
9.45am

Tuesday
8th
November
2022
9.15am-
9.45am

Thursday
1st
December
2022
9.15am-
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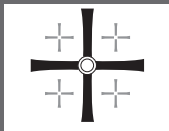
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October 2022

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10am Sat Zoom Meeting ID: 385-426-921

(except Saturday 22nd)

Prayer meeting
with Bible reading

Sunday 2nd October

9.30am Caistor St Edmund
10.30am Stoke Holy Cross
3.30pm Stoke Church Hall

Praise & Worship
Morning Worship
All Invited— come together over food, have fun, explore faith together

Thursday 6th October

10am Stoke Church Hall

Traditional communion and coffee

Sunday 9th October

10.30am Stoke Holy Cross
7.30pm Zoom

Morning Worship with communion and children's group
Listening to God

Sunday 16th October

9.30am Caistor St Edmund
10.30am Stoke Holy Cross
3.30pm Stoke Church Hall

Holy Communion
Morning Worship
All Invited—come together over food, have fun, explore faith together

Saturday 22nd October

10am Arminghall

Morning Prayer

Sunday 23rd October

10.30am Stoke Holy Cross

Morning worship for all ages with communion

Sunday 30th October

10.30am Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship with children's group

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

LOOK OUT for more information about great things happening at the Church Hall on Thursday mornings—Coffee and Chat, short communion services, Post Office now open weekly again...

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



Thursdays 7.30 - 9 pm
Stoke Holy Cross Church Hall

Every week in school term



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