

Free for All



THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

OCTOBER 2023



See Our Outdoor Service article inside - Page 6



DEMENTIA GROUP
ENJOY OUTING
TO BRESSINGHAM



See more details inside



See inside more details
of Stoke Produce Show
Page 6



embers
youth club

Thursdays
7.30 - 9 pm
Stoke Holy Cross
Church Hall

OCTOBER
5th
Indoor Sports
12th
Club Night and Art
13th
Cathedral at Night Event
19th
Wild Hunt @ Jubilee Meadow
26th
Half Term

For more details contact:
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gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk

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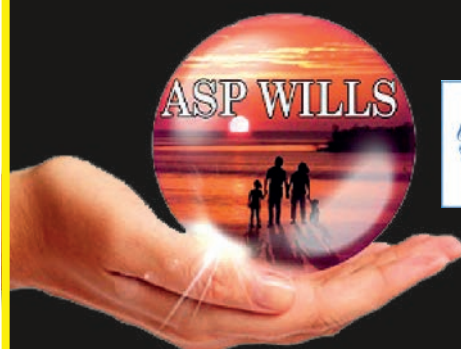
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Scrolling down my Facebook feed this morning, I see I am invited to buy train tickets; cook sea bass with cashew, coconut and kale salad; and go to some classical concerts in Montreal. And that's just the first three adverts!

Sometimes, but less often than before, something I see on there really grabs me. Recently it was a little video of a preacher talking about the criminal on the cross. You might remember that two of them were crucified on either side of Jesus. One continued to mock him, but the other stopped him, saying that unlike them, who were being justly punished, Jesus had done no wrong and did not deserve it. He turned to Jesus and asked, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom", and Jesus responded, "Today you will be with me in paradise."

The preacher imagined the scene (not described in the bible) as the criminal arrived at the gates of heaven and met the angel. The angel asks him repeatedly what he is doing there, and he replies each time that he doesn't know. Frustrated, the angel goes to get his supervisor who questions the new arrival further. What does he think of the doctrine of salvation? He's never heard of it. Or of the bible? No idea. Finally, exasperated, the supervisor-angel asks him on what basis he is standing there trying to get into heaven at all, and the criminal replies, "The man on the middle cross told me I could come."

The bigger point that's being made here is that if we wonder what it is that wins us eternal life with God, some of us might hope that it is through doing good – but what is good depends so much on one person's definition, doesn't it? I've always worried what will become of me if God's definition of good enough is someone just ever so slightly better than me. Of course, those of us who call ourselves Christians might say something different, like, "Because I have faith", or "Because I follow Jesus." Now of course faith matters, and so this kind of answer isn't untrue in a way, but there is a better place to start: not with "Because I", but "Because he". Because Jesus. Because the man on the middle cross told me I could come.

Rob

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Stoke Holy Cross with Dunston, Arminghall and Caistor St Edmund.

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Search Facebook and Youtube for "Venta group of churches"

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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.

INTERMENT OF ASHES

GEOFFREY & AUDREY POSFORD

11th September

at Caistor St Edmund

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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Henry and Eostre Caswell to
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From the Curate's Egg by Kirsty

I was recently interviewed by Hannah Worsley, the project manager for Norwich Foodbank, about a placement that I completed with them during my final year of ordination training for their Annual Volunteers Celebration meal. It is an evening which reflects on the work of the Norwich Foodbank over the previous year and gives thanks to all its dedicated volunteers. This interview reminded of my time with them over a period of three months and just how much of an impact the Foodbank has in the local communities in which they serve.

During my time with Norwich Foodbank, I got involved with many of the different tasks which are required to enable it to operate successfully including stacking shelves in the warehouse, making food boxes up and helping in some of the distribution centres. I enjoyed each of these tasks but without a doubt the most rewarding and humbling of all of these was helping in the different distribution centres in and around Norwich. Most of which operated from churches or other church buildings and were run by volunteers many of which belonged to the church they were distributing from.

Many of the people who walked through the doors were employed but could no longer afford to feed themselves because of the rise in the cost of living or a change in their circumstances. They didn't want to be there, but they really did not have any other option. We saw families of all sizes as well as couples and those living on their own each with their own story to tell.

Each of the centres were very welcoming and offered those coming through their doors unlimited hot drinks and snacks with one church even providing a free cooked breakfast for all Food parcel recipients. There was also at least one professional there offering advice on budgets and benefits for those who needed it. Each person who left the distribution centres with their food parcel expressed their gratitude to the volunteers with many overwhelmed by the generosity of individuals who contributed to them. They looked as though they had a huge weight lifted off their shoulders and many big smiles were seen as they left.

One morning I sat talking to a heavily pregnant woman as she enjoyed breakfast after collecting her food parcel for her large family. She shared with me the difficulties she and her family were facing before breaking down in tears and saying:

'This is the first place in a very long time that I have felt really loved for who I am and not judged. You are just like family.'

Her words will stay with me forever and will hopefully constantly remind me of the importance of loving your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:39).

Each volunteer and donation giver are demonstrating love to the most vulnerable in society which can have a major positive impact on their lives. Are their ways over the coming weeks that we can demonstrate God's love through giving of our time, or money or resources?

St George's Hall Dementia Support Group



On 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.

The photos are from our trip to Bressingham Gardens. We had a lovely afternoon there seeing the amazing flower borders and we liked the old train too.

- 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.

- October events: 9th October Angela will be Reminiscing about food and cooking always very entertaining sessions.
- 23rd October Chair exercises with Mavin always good to keep us moving.

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



The Stoke Allotment and Leisure Gardener's Produce Show is Back



What with Covid and the Queen's death last year, this was the first Show for 4 years. It had obviously been greatly missed judging by the enthusiasm with which people made their entries.

It was very encouraging to see a good number of new contributors from both Stoke Holy Cross and other villages, some much further

field. Classes ranged from the heaviest pumpkin, the winner weighing in at 22.1 kg only 1.1 kg ahead of its rival, through Dahlias the size of tea plates to delicious bread, jams and cakes. The village hall although a bit smaller than our previous venue looked magnificent and was filled to capacity.

In total there were about 190 entries, which helped to fill the village hall. The vegetables on display included a very large onion and a large potato. If you grow a grand specimen next year, keep hold of it to enter the competition. The tomatoes were ripe and well represented as were the courgettes. The class of 'Any Other Vegetable' was popular and won by a magnificent aubergine, in competition with squash and a tromboncino! The beetroot class had 5 entries, each with large clean specimens. The trio of magnificently displayed leeks won the Best In Show trophy.

The flower entries were a picture of colour and variety. The range of Dahlia types is extraordinary and the colours vibrant.

There were some glorious gladioli and some lovely table decorations (even if they were considered too tall). Again any house plants you may have nurtured for more than 3 months may be a consideration to enter next year.

Even if you do not have green fingers, there are cake, scone, quiche and bread classes as well as chutneys and jams, and not to forget the homemade drink section. Sloe gin is a popular entry.

We would like to thank all those who helped set up the show in anyway, from setting up the hall, to providing refreshments and the ever popular tombola. We would also like to thank the three judges for their services and advice for improvement.

Next year we would love to be in the new Pavilion with more room and great facilities!

Len Finch and Fenella Bhaskar



Our Outdoor Service on September 2nd

We were so fortunate to have such a bright sunny Sunday for our Outdoor Service held in the Stoke Churchyard. It also allowed our contractor to leave his scaffolding up inside the church to continue painting the internal walls. Do come a see our church is now so lovely and clean and bright.

Our music group was able to play outside and new Curate Kirsty Long gave the sermon.

A few of the photos show Kirsty setting up her drama sketch based on the story of a Shunammite woman who offers hospitality to the Prophet Elisha with no expectation of any reward even going so far as to set a room aside for him to use any time he is passing that way. Grace played the part of the woman and Sam played Elisha. Elisha talked to the woman and promised her, to her amazement, she would have a son within a year and so she did. You can read the story in 2 Kings chapter 4 verse 8.



Green Hay Day at Stoke Wildflower Meadow

The star of the show was the arrival of the "green hay". NWT (Norfolk Wildlife Trust) have pioneered the use of Green Hay to develop and enhance wildflower meadows by using "green hay" - an existing local wildflower rich area is cut and the hay produced is gathered and delivered to the receiving site where it is spread and left to set its seed and hopefully establish a variety of new species. Our "green hay" was sourced from roadside verges from Bedingham near Topcroft along with some seeds that had been hand collected from a range of other South Norfolk sites. Ben arrived with perfect timing before midday with four large builders bags full of fresh hay which we then spread on a prepared section of the meadow. After leaving the hay down for a couple of weeks, we'll need to rake it off and then all we need to do is wait patiently until next year to see what emerges.

If you've visited the meadow recently you'll have seen a section has been covered with a weed suppressant membrane which we are using to create bare soil ready for the next phase of extending the wildflower area. We will be leaving this down until next summer but we've removed one roll to create a new section. With helpers of all ages on the day we've sown this section with a wildflower seed mix formulated to produce a colourful display of wildflowers that are particularly attractive to pollinators such as bees

It was lovely to see so many people turn out not just to help spread the hay and seeds but to have fun. There were lots of wonderful cakes and drinks as well as activities to join in. The children coloured in flowers and made origami tulips, which they pushed into the ground to mark where they had spread some seeds. Dave and Pauline had put their moth trap out the night before and were showing and telling us all about the various moths which were trapped on the meadow. It was very interesting to see and hear about so many different species.

Whilst showing off a Wasp Spider on the meadow a few more were found once people knew what they were looking for. A very successful event and fun for all with the hope of seeing many wild flowers blooming next year for all to enjoy,

Dave Jones and Liz Dack.



Stoke Holy Cross Primary School



Open Mornings

September 2024 Admissions

Friday 22nd September 2023—9.15am
 Tuesday 3rd October 2023—9.15am
 Wednesday 1st November 2023—9.15am
 Thursday 16th November 2023—9.15am
 Friday 1st December 2023—9.15am

Our open mornings will be led by a member of our senior leadership team and include a tour of the school and an opportunity to meet our pupil school council. Tours should last no more than 1 hour.

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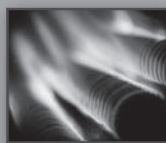
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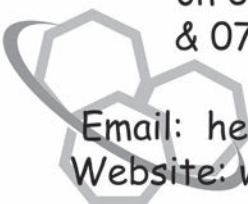


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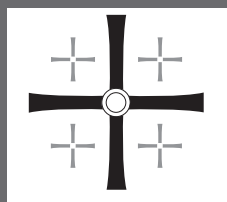
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10am Sat

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**Prayer meeting
with Bible reading**

Thursday morning

5th October

10am at Stoke Church Hall

Holy Communion

Sunday mornings at 9.30am

1st October

Caistor St Edmund

Praise & Worship

15th October

Caistor St Edmund

Holy Communion

Sunday mornings at 10.30am

1st October

Stoke Holy Cross

**Morning Worship
(with children's group every week)**

8th October

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship with Holy Communion

15th October

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship

22nd October

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship with Holy Communion

29th October

Stoke Holy Cross

Morning Worship with Baptism

Sunday afternoons and evenings in October

1st October

St Remigius's Day service at Dunston, 4pm

8th October

All Invited— Drop in to the Vicarage from 3.30pm-5pm
for tea and cake and time together

15th October

***NEW!* Prayer and Praise 6pm at Stoke Church**

29th October

All Invited to the Light Party 5-6.30pm at the Church Hall

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

Coffee and Chat

10.30 - 11.30
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5th Oct, 19th Oct
2nd Nov, 16th Nov

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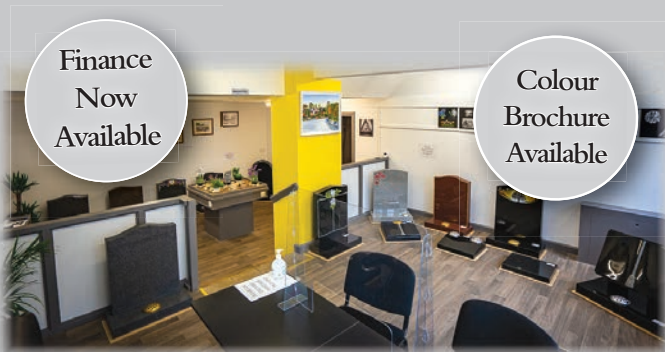
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