Free for All









THE MAGAZINE OF THE VENTA GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2022



Stoke Holy Cross Allotment and Leisure Gardeners' Annual Show

The 2022 show is on Sunday 11th
September in the Stoke Holy Cross
Church Hall. It is open to all and the
Show Schedule is available from Len
Finch on 01508 492253.

The hall is open from 8am to 10.45am for entries at 25p each. It's not just fruit and vegetables. You can enter cakes, bread, homemade drink as well as flowers and pot plants. There are children's classes too. The doors reopen for the show at 2pm (free entry). Come

and see what is grown locally and view the prize winners! Afternoon tea and cake available.

DO COME!

All Invited!

Sundays from 3.30-5pm at Stoke Church Hall

4th, 18th Sept

2nd, 16th Oct

6th, 20th Nov

4th Dec

Come for drinks and cake, stay for a meal together

Space to reflect and time to chat - Crafts and activities for all

Drop in if you'd like us to pray for you

Food bank: help yourself or contribute - Wellbeing resources







Venta Group of Churches: Stoke Holy Cross, Dunston, Caistor and Arminghall Venta Group of Churches www.venta-group.org rob@venta-group.org



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Hello everyone

he demands of printing mean that I am writing this in August, and so I am looking out at my back garden, which is now less like (an excuse for) a lawn, and more the aftermath of a wheat field at harvest time. The ground is just so thirsty.

At the same time, the news is full of the increasing cost of living. I am getting worried emails from my energy supplier, checking I am keeping an eye on my Direct Debit. I am wondering what will happen if my bills are twice as high in January as they are now. It is so expensive.

And I'm listening to two people aiming to be our next Prime Minister both trying to establish that we can rely on them to lead us through a

time of enormous uncertainty. What kind of commitments might they make which will help us to be convinced of this?

For the last week or two I have found myself coming back again and again to a very wellworn chapter in my bible. Isaiah 55 says something, I think, to each of these 3 questions.

First of all, it invites the thirsty. "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters." At the moment we don't need to imagine what physical drought feels like, but these words address spiritual thirst. Deep down, are you thirsty? Do you long not just for the normal kind of drink, which we need to top up again and again, but what Jesus describes as "rivers of living water"? Isaiah says, "Come."

Second, he invites those who can't afford it. "You who have no money, come and eat! Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without cost." The price of milk went up about 20% in a lot of shops through June and July, having been pretty steady for the first half of the year. Like us, you will have started to work out what you might not be able to afford soon. Isaiah promises us something which is without cost. So come.

Incidentally, if you and your family are struggling with food costs, please get in touch. We can provide some help through our little foodbank, or point you elsewhere. At our All Invited sessions on Sunday afternoons in the autumn we are expanding the food we offer to be more of a proper meal than just drinks and cake, because we know it might help some of you. Please come.

Finally, as we worry and wonder about how politicians might help us, Isaiah offers us help that lasts much longer than any one Prime Minister can: "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David."

The invitations and promises that God makes through Isaiah, over 2500 years ago, end up being fulfilled through Jesus. Some other time maybe we can go into the rest of this amazing chapter, but the thing that strikes me most today is how it doesn't depend on what someone might do if they become Prime Minister, but what Jesus has done – in living, and dying, and rising again for us. That's what this everlasting covenant is built on.

I need to stop now, because I've written too much already, so I'll just remind you of the invitation again. To the thirsty; to those who can't afford it; an invitation depending not on what we or anyone else might do, but what Jesus has done: "Come."

CHURCHWARDENS

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

> Arminghall Annie (495580)

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

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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

MICHAEL ROBERT WATTS 23rd August 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.

VICAR OF THE VENTA GROUP

Stoke Holy Cross with Dunston, Arminghall and Caistor St Edmund Rob Baker, The Vicarage, Mill Road, Stoke Holy Cross, NR14 8PA rob@venta-group.org 01508 492305

CURATE

Lyn Marsh, 8 Mill Green, Stoke Holy Cross, NR14 8PB Lyn@venta-group.org 01508 493422

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

Search Facebook and Youtube for "Venta group of churches" @venta_group www.venta-group.org



FOR ALL COPY PLEASE

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

The 10th of the month will be the deadline for all copy for the next magazine for the time being.



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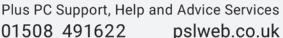
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To reminisce?

was recently talking to someone who said, "Lyn you'll find as you get older you reminisce a lot. You look back at what has happened." It was said in a tone that made me feel they didn't yet consider me to be at that stage in life. Yet I was thinking, I already do that and I'm sure I'm not alone. September for many in the UK will be the start of a new season in their lives. A new school. Going to university. A new job. But it's also a time when people will look back at what they've left behind. Something we do from a very early age, I think.

At primary school we remember nursery playmates. At high school we might remember teachers from primary school who were an encouragement to us in our learning. In our first job, we fondly look back to the long summer holidays we had at school or university. I don't think there is anything wrong with reminiscing – it can be good for us and encourage us how we've come through tough times or how far we've come or how much we've learnt. However, there is a danger in reminiscing. We don't always remember the whole story. We forget certain aspects of the past. And there's a big danger we could stay reminiscing rather than face the present.

I am sure I will be reminiscing as I join in the Norfolk Churches Trust Bike ride this month. How many churches I've done in the past. How fast I could get round them. How I'm not as fit as I used to be. But the danger is I will miss the present. The fact that I can bike, when at the beginning of the year I couldn't. How fortunate I, we are, to have these buildings to remind us of those who have gone before us and which are still places of celebration and worship. Built to point people to God.

God who is the beginning and the end. The Alpha and the Omega. The God of the past when the buildings were first built and God of the future but who is also God in the present. Whatever we are facing, God is with us, I believe. I may not like what I'm facing, I may look wistfully back to better times but God is the one who I know will help me get through. One of the ways I get through is through praying, on my mine but also with others.

I leave you with this prayer we often pray when we gather on Saturday for Morning Prayer on Zoom:

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.

lyn

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: Stoke Holy Cross: Norwich Rd including everything south of the church, Fiskes Court, Mill Rd and Mill Green.

Week 2: Stoke Holy Cross: Long Lane, Chapel Loke, Pettingales, Colman Avenue, Caudwell Close, Harrold Place.

Week 3: Stoke Holy Cross: Gravel Hill & closes, Bancroft Close, Five Acres, Broomfield Rd and closes.

Week 4: All residents of Markshall; Stoke/Norwich Rd, Caistor St Edmund; and all those around Caistor Hall, including Old Church Close.

odd number months

St. George's Dementia Support Group

St. George's Dementia Support Group We warmly welcome people with dementia and their carers to our regular café sessions in Saint Georges Hall, Upper Stoke, Holy Cross held 10 am to 12 mid-day 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 September dates are: 12th September, this is our subsidised outing to Africa Alive (a change from the proposed Broads trip) so no Café on this day. 26th September a reminiscence session with Angela always great fun.

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

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

Trailblazers Holiday Club

ow - the three days of Trailblazers Holiday Club at Stoke Primary School seemed to go by in a flash! Just three days to find out more about the Diary of a Disciple (many thanks to the great team who acted so brilliantly and entertained us all so well) and so much more. How was it possible to pack the key events of Jesus' life into just three days? And, at the same time, have a great deal of fun, do loads of crafts and generally enjoy the company of others. There were testimonies from some of the leaders, great jokes from the children and altogether an absolutely brilliant atmosphere throughout.

A huge thank you to all the behind-the-scenes work carried out by Cathryn and her team of helpers, to Gary and all his thespian buddies, to Rob for generally holding the whole thing together and for being such a good sport (and of course to his two helpers who were amazing sidekicks to Rob). Thanks too for being able to use the school hall and grounds. Finally, thanks also go to those who provided all the drinks and snacks, those who worked in the kitchen and the team of helpers who worked with the children.



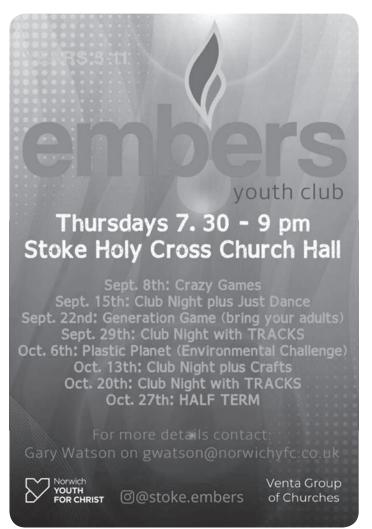
















St Mary's Churchyard Clearing the Ragwort

rminghall churchyard may have looked colourful recently but sadly it was due to a mass of the not very nice plant, Ragwort, and needed clearing.

We want to extend a big thank you to Ann, Sandra, Roger and Andy who helped

The photos show the before and after the work was done in July.

Annie

remove the invasive weeds.

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 1st September at 1.30pm

Bingo Thursdays 8th and 22nd September eyes down at 1.30pm (*Please bring a raffle prize*)

Bowls Thursdays 15th and 29th September - 1.30pm

Our final outing this year is to Southwold with Fish and Chips at Dunwich on **Wednesday 14**th **September** If you would like to join us on this trip you would be very welcome. Coach £10 with eats £20

Ring Liz on 01508 493245

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More Free for All articles please!

any thanks to all those who regularly contribute to Free for All; we all appreciate the time and effort which you put into your articles. We would also love to hear from others of you who receive this magazine regularly. Have you lived in one of the villages for a long time? Do you have memories of things that happened in the past? Or perhaps you can contribute in some other way. If you are able to send in an article we would also appreciate a few photos with it, if at all possible. To make our lives easier (especially Henry's, as he does all the technical stuff), can you make sure that you don't accidentally send any video clips in with your photos. Please can you also edit your photos to include the ones which you think would work well for a wider audience. For obvious reasons, especially if we don't know the people involved, it is often very difficult for us to make choices which we think would appeal to all the readers. Finally, please send a maximum of 6 photos which you think are the most appropriate for the magazine. We are really looking forward to hearing more from you!

Henry and Eostre



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EPTEMBER 20

WORSHIP, PRAYER AND COMMUNITY IN OUR VILLAGE CHURCHES

Tuesday-Saturday mornings

9am Tues-Fri zoom.us/j/385426921 **Prayer meeting** 10am Sat Zoom Meeting ID: with Bible reading

385-426-921

Sunday 4th September

9.30am Caistor St Edmund **Praise & Worship**

10.30am **Stoke Holy Cross Morning Worship for all ages** 3.30pm Stoke Church Hall All Invited—share food, have fun, explore faith together

Sunday 11th September

10.30am Stoke Holy Cross Autumn church family meeting

(celebrating together what God is doing amongst us; bring some lunch to share afterwards, children's group available)

Sunday 18th September

9.30am Caistor St Edmund **Holy Communion** 10.30am Stoke Holy Cross **Morning Worship** Stoke Church Hall All Invited—share food, 3.30pm

have fun, explore faith together

Sunday 25th September

10.30am Morning worship with communion Stoke Holy Cross

and children's group

4pm Arminghall **Group Harvest Service**

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

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

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Words of encouragement in the Bible

- TRUST
- JOY
- FAITH

- BELIEVE
- ALLELULIA
- HOPE

- PRAISE
- HALLELUJAH
 COMPASSION
- GRACE
- PEACE
- SAVIOUR

- BLESSED
- LOVE
- THANKSGIVING
- STRENGTH REFUGE

** We need to apologise for printing the impossible search last month **







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