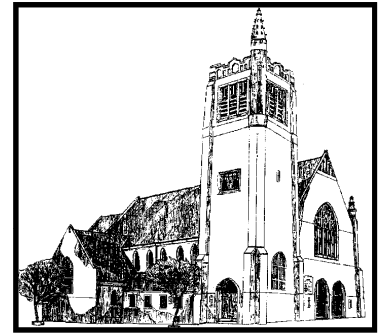




Newsletter of St. George's URC Hartlepool

Dec 2019-Jan 2020



Dear Friends

And suddenly its December -another year about to end but first we have Advent and Christmas. The shops are full of decorations, cards and delightful food and the rush begins to get everything ready. Presents need to be bought and wrapped, visits to or from family and friends arranged. There are meals out to enjoy, and we've already had a very successful Christmas Fair. Many thanks to all of you who made it so.

And yet Advent is supposed to be a time for waiting and preparing. An opportunity for us to reflect on what is about to happen, a time to wait on the Lord's coming and to be prepared to welcome a new born baby into our lives. It is a time of excitement but also of challenge as any new parents know.

Our lives have been changed so much by the arrival of Jonah earlier this year and we are looking forward to spending some time with him and the rest of the family over Christmas. The anticipation of his birth was a time of preparation and now as he begins to move around we need to make changes around the house to ensure both he, and my ornaments are safe!

As we prepare for the coming of our Lord, it is right we take time to wonder at the miracle that lies ahead, to gaze on the Incarnate God and to welcome Jesus into our homes and hearts.

We have had a very long period of waiting at St George's as we first waited for Synod to approve our project, then for the money to come in and finally for Thomas and Paul, Steve and Frank to install it all. Its not quite finished yet but we are well on the way and have had a couple of well attended concerts. I'm looking forward to hearing the Pettman Ensemble on 4th December!

I'm also looking forward to leading services across the group and to the Celebration of Christmas to be held at Stockton URC on 8th December at 4.30 pm. Please do invite come along to sing familiar carols, listen to our choir and enjoy music from the Billingham Silver Band – all followed by a bring and share afternoon tea.

We will be opening the manse to you all for a morning of coffee and mince pies and maybe a glass of Mulled Wine on Saturday 14th December from 10.00 am – 1.00 pm. Please come and join us if you can.

Alex joins me in wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for the New Year
God Bless you all
Sue



Dates for your Diaries

December

Sun 1 st	Churches Together Advent Service, 4pm at St Oswald's.
Mon 2 nd	Elders Meeting, 10am at Sandra's.
Tues 3 rd	Election Hustings (HGP&J) at St George's
Wed 4 th	Free concert by the Pettman Ensemble, 7pm.
Sat 7 th	Pie and Peas Film Night 4.30pm, film to be confirmed.
Sun 8 th	Group Carol Service 4.30pm at St Andrew's and St George's followed by Bring and Share tea.
Wed 11 th	Ceremonial Mayor's Civic Carol Service, Stranton Church, please be seated by 6pm.
Fri 13 th	Hartlepool Male Voice Choir "Stars" at Christmas concert, 7pm in the Borough Hall, tickets £10.
Sat 14 th	Coffee Morning, Grange Road Methodist Church, 10am.
Sun 15 th	Concert by Former Members of Hartlepool Youth Choir 4.30pm. Proceeds to be shared between Maggie's Cancer Services and St George's. The choir will also be donating items for the food bank.
Tues 17 th	Ceremonial Mayor's Celebrations of Christmas, Borough Hall, 5pm-8pm.

Churches Together in Hartlepool

8am Prayer Meetings:	11 December	College of Further Education
	8 January	College of Further Education
	22 January	Church of the Nazarene

Coffee Rota

DECEMBER

1 st	Gail and Ashley Hoad
8 th	service at Grange Rd
15 th	Paul and Gillian Rodgers
22 nd	Val Rigg, Aileen Whittaker
29 th	Rose Hastings, Sandra Hindmarsh

JANUARY

5 th	Margaret Fraser, Gillian Cartman
12 th	Robert and Sheila Harrison
19 th	Janet White, Wynn Parkinson

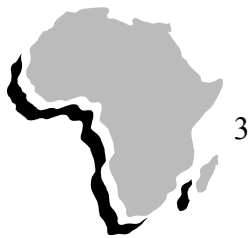
FEBRUARY

26 th	Paul and Gillian Rodgers
2 nd	Kevin Hoad, Margaret Welford



.Please make sure you are in Church early enough to set out the tea and coffee things and get everything ready before service starts. Please use Fair Trade goods. Tea, Coffee and Sugar are provided. Bring milk (2 litres) and biscuits.

If you cannot do your turn please swap with someone else on the list. There is no need to leave your seat before the end of the service to make tea and coffee. There is plenty of time for everyone to get to the hall area and the boiler is ready to use.



Project Africa

Thank you to everyone who is supporting our "Khanyisa Trust" project; the total raised now stands at £106.19

Please keep saving your coppers etc.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you all,
Wyn Parkinson

Group Carol Service

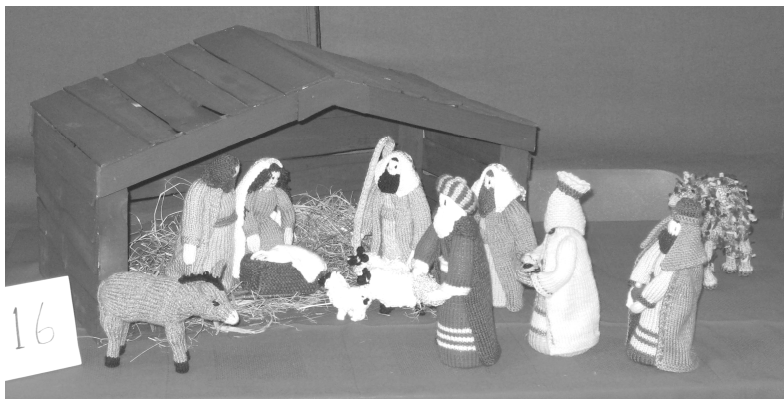
A group Carol service has been arranged for Sunday 8 December starting at 4.30pm at St Andrew's and St George's church in Stockton. Billingham Silver Band will be playing at the service. If you want to attend and need a lift please see Margaret H.

The Posada

The figures of Mary and Joseph will leave the church on Advent Sunday to begin their journey around people's homes and will return on Christmas Eve at the Carol service. Thank you to all those who are taking part in this.

Knitted Bible

The Knitted Bible will be back home from Tuesday 24 March 2020 until Tuesday 14 April 2020. We intend to have the exhibition open from 10am until 3pm during this time and plan to invite the schools to visit. Obviously we will need people in the church to help during the times the exhibition is open. I would be grateful if you could add these dates to your diary and be prepared offer your help with this once the details are finalised. Thank you, Kathryn H.



Thank you

I had a lovely birthday surrounded with beautiful cards conveying much love and best wishes. This is the result of belonging to a loving, caring Church family.

Thank you and many blessings.
Janet

Visit of Eldon Grove Academy.

A big thank you to all who helped in any way, what so ever, at the recent visit of the Eldon Grove Academy reception class to St. George's. Thanks a lot.

Brian.

Shoe Boxes

85 filled shoeboxes are now on the way to Eastern Europe to be distributed to needy families thanks to the generosity of members and friends of our church through the Link to Hope organisation.

The amount of knitting completed during the year has been amazing, all the hats, scarves, pencil cases and most of the mitts and gloves.

Please continue this work and save medium size shoeboxes ready for next year.

Thank you Aileen



Christmas Giving

Our monetary Christmas gifts are scheduled to be donated to the Butterwick Hospice Children's Section, however, as it was recently reported on the local news that this has closed until 2020 due to staff shortage this may change. We will keep you informed.

Calendars

Paul H will be producing replacement monthly calendar sheets for 2020. If you would like one please let him know – this is your last chance. Cost £1.25.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HARTLEPOOL WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY JANUARY 2020

Sunday 19 United service at 4.00pm at St Hilda's Church
Join in a shared service at 12 noon each day followed by a soup lunch
Monday 20 Oxford Road Baptist Church
Tuesday 21 St Joseph's RC Church
Wednesday 22 St Matthew's Hall, Elwick Road, hosted by Stranton Parish Church
Thursday 23 St George's URC
Friday 24 Church of the Nazarene
These are open services and all are welcome to attend.

A Reverse Advent Calendar for the Foodbank

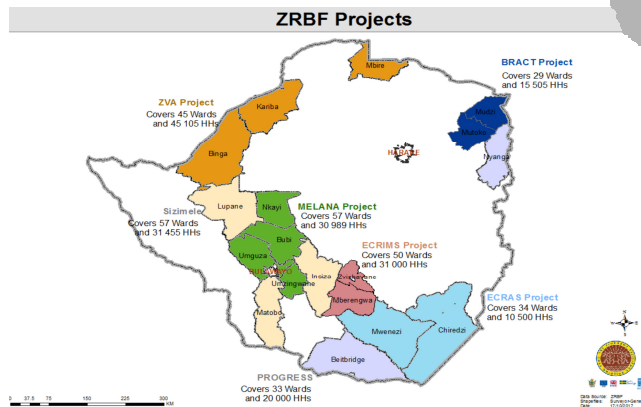
A lovely tradition at this time of year is an Advent Calendar, but this year, instead of opening a window and eating the chocolate, or whatever is behind the door, why not do it in reverse. The idea is that you put items for every day into a box, and give it to the food bank for those who will have difficulty in providing food at Christmas.

Here are some suggestions



1 st Rice	2 nd Tinned spaghetti	3 rd Pasta
4 th Shower gel	5 th Tinned tuna	6 th Juice
7 th Sugar	8 th Jam	9 th UHT milk
10 th Tinned Custard	11 th Chopped tomatoes	12 th Coffee
13 th Tinned Soup	14 th Biscuits	15 th Tinned sweetcorn
16 th Shampoo	17 th Noodles	18 th Cereal
19 th Tinned fruit	20 th Tinned hot dogs	21 st Tea Bags
22 nd Tinned peas	23 rd Rice pudding	24 th Chocolate bar





BRACT in Zimbabwe

Christian Aid (CA) has had a long presence in Zimbabwe, and it is always interesting to learn how CA operates 'on the ground' and what mechanisms they use to do the work.

One such programme is BRACT. This initiative forms part of the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund (ZBRF). It has been developed with the aim of helping communities prepare and adapt to a changing climate and economic shocks, and stand up for their rights.

The programme's full title is: Building Resilience through improving the Absorptive and Adaptive Capacity for Transformation (BRACT) of at risk communities in Mutoko and Mudzi districts of Zimbabwe.

The areas supported are Mudzi and Mutoko Districts of Mashonaland East Province.

Through BRACT, Christian Aid supports vulnerable households that are affected by recurring shocks, mostly related to climate change. We are building the capacity of 15,505 households, so they can absorb and adapt to unexpected shocks. Implementing partners - with Christian Aid taking the lead - are: Community Technology Development Organisation (CTDO), Bio-Innovation Zimbabwe (BIZ), Silveira House (SH), Nyahunure Community Trust (NCT) and the Government of Zimbabwe.

Commitment for Life's support for these kinds of projects is vital, precisely because Christian Aid relies on our prayers, activism and support.

Commitment for Life January Prayer

Prayer for peace

we dare not merely pray that You end all war;
for You made us in your own image,

O God of Peace, we dare not merely pray that You end starvation;
for You have blessed us with plenty,

O God of Abundance; we do not merely pray that You end all prejudice, disease, poverty and hatred.

We pray instead that You give us the strength, determination and wisdom to live as Jesus lived, as living reminders of the coming Kingdom.

Amen

You will have noticed that the café and, therefore, the shop are closed. But we are a Fairtrade Church and have just applied for the status to be renewed. We have a stock of Fairtrade goods and I propose to keep running the shop as a stall in church, every Sunday, if I can get help.

Fair trade is not a charity— it is the right for all producers to earn a living wage in a dignified manner. I have reproduced what was sent in the Traidcraft shareholder report. Traidcraft have been facing trading problems, mostly because they insist on being fair to their suppliers and partly because of the state of sterling in light of the political situation.

Articulating our Mission in Today's Market:

Traidcraft was founded as a Christian response to poverty. We take this responsibility seriously and sincerely. Our responsibility today is to hear the voice of future generations and be the kind of business that they need. Millions of young people are waiting for a response. Most decision makers are not hearing. Many are not even listening. Few are acting. We are.

Committed to telling the truth about climate change.

For some farming communities the effects of climate change are already catastrophic, and their livelihoods have been destroyed, or soon will be.

Representing thousands of independent scientists, the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which reports to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), has spoken. They have said that it is possible to limit average global temperatures to no more than 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels (circa 1850) if we act now and with conviction. If we breach the 1.5C limit we begin to trigger 'tipping points' that will multiply the warming process beyond our ability to act.

We can still act. We need to stop denying the science. We need to stop pretending that this isn't our problem.

Part of the solution is that we need to consume less.

Each citizen in the UK "consumes" around 6.5 tonnes of carbon each year. A sustainable future would limit us to around 1 tonne each. A flight to the Mallorca and back "costs" about 0.5 tonnes of carbon. Eating meat "costs" about 200kg of carbon per person per year. Buying new clothes each year, on average, "costs" each one of us about 700kg of carbon. 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from farming. If we are serious about hearing future generations, we need to "spend" less and think about what we are eating.

As a business it is counter-intuitive to preach the need to consume less. But it is the right thing to do. We want to offer solutions; buying better, less carbon intensive food is important. So, buy recycled, local, organic, and fairly traded goods in that order.

We work with small farmer organisations who have pioneered circular farming techniques: putting carbon back in the ground through re-forestation and composting. It is possible to grow carbon neutral food, but it isn't easy, and while you will need to pay more, it is far cheaper than the real "cost" of cheap, subsidised industrial food.

We see stewardship of the earth and its resources as a clear expression of our Christian faith.

Part of the solution is how we manage ourselves.

We cannot expect to be a part of the solution if we use the same, tired systems that are largely responsible for the mess we find ourselves in. Gone are the days when privileged, white males should be allowed to decide a company's (or even the country's) future.

We are committed to self-organisation. Power is democratised to those who need to make decisions and we operate no hierarchy. We have reduced the range of salaries from 1:6 to 1: 2.4.

We decide together how we wish to behave and what is important to us. There is no boss, there is no veto, there are only opportunities to grow and expand on our mission. "We" are part of the solution.

Part of the solution is in breaking rules.

Traidcraft began by challenging the orthodoxy that you couldn't be competitive if you paid a proper wage to farmers and artisans. We broke that rule.

The rules we need to break today are different; today's rule says that we can consume voraciously and stupidly.

We reject and object to the mindless feeding frenzy that is Black Friday. That day we will be closing our warehouse and addressing our carbon footprint by gardening at our HQ and addressing social injustice by running a refreshment station at Newcastle Cathedral.

Part of the solution... is being part of the solution.

It always takes a few people to start the process rolling. We may fail, but Traidcraft is serious about being a 1.5c company.

Ladies Choir and Flossie Malavialle

This concert was held on the evening of Saturday 9 November and was well attended. As well as music from the Ladies Choir we were joined by Flossie Malavialle who accompanied herself on the guitar for several songs. Towards the end of the concert Flossie sang with the Ladies Choir which proved to be a great success and was thoroughly enjoyed by the ladies of the choir as well as the audience. In fact, this was so well received and Flossie was so entertaining between songs that

we could probably have been there until midnight although we did manage to finish by 10pm.



Visit of The Voskresenije Choir

The concert on the evening of Tuesday 12 November was a great success. The singing was something special to hear and the fact that we didn't understand a word of most of it did not detract from its beauty at all. Those of our members who gave over night hospitality to choir members found them very friendly and easy to get along with. We are hoping, as they are indeed, for a return visit in 2020. Hartlepool Music Society have already said that they wish to be involved.



Don't forget

A Free concert by the Pettman Ensemble, 7pm Wednesday 5th December

There will be a Concert by Former Members of Hartlepool Youth Choir on 4.30pm on 15th December. Proceeds to be shared between Maggie's Cancer Services and St George's. The choir will also be donating items for the food bank.





Looking for the perfect Christmas present? Look no further!
Available for the price of £3.50
(a bargain!)
Contact Chris Eddowes or Paul Rodgers or any church member

Nominations for Elders

We are seeking nominations for Elders as three of our serving Elders have come to the end of their terms of office. These Elders are eligible for re-election if they choose to allow their names to be put forward. As 2020 is an even numbered year the Church Secretary and Treasurer have also completed their current term of office and are therefore eligible for re election if they wish to stand again.

Annual Reports

I know we haven't had Christmas yet but as December approaches the Church Secretary's mind turns to the need for Annual Reports. Because the AGM is on Sunday 16 February rather than in March in 2020, I require these earlier than usual. So please let me have your written reports by Sunday 19 January 2020 at the latest. I am more than happy to receive them by email. Thank you. Margaret.

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS



News of People

We send best wishes to those members of our church family who have been or are currently unwell, we think about them and miss them.

Pam Branfoot will be 70 on 7 December. Many Happy Returns!



Data Protection

To keep church records up to date and in line with GDPR requirements, if you change your address/telephone numbers/email address please let Margaret Humberston know. Thank You.

Flower Donors

December 1	Mrs M Mudd
December 8	Service at Grange Road Church
December 15	
December 22	Mr and Mrs A Woodhall
December 29	Mrs S Turnbull
January 5	
January 12	Mr and Mrs P Humberston
January 19	
January 26	Mrs S Harrison
February 2	Mrs W Parkinson



The Flower Ladies are arranging deliveries on each Sunday morning. If you would like to help on any particular day—just offer.

Stewards Rota			
Date		Stewards	Keys
DECEMBER	1 st	Aileen Whittaker, Paul Humberston	Frank Whittaker
	8th	service at Grange Rd	
	15th	Sandra Hindmarsh, Pam Branfoot	Brian Carter
	22nd	Gail and Ashley Hoad	Frank Whittaker
	24th	Kevin Hoad	Alan Woodhall
	25th	Paul Humberston, Sandra Hindmarsh	Bill White
JANUARY	29th	Frank and Aileen Whittaker	Frank Whittaker
	5th	Sandra Hindmarsh, Pam Branfoot	Alan Woodhall
	12th	Kevin Hoad, Aileen Whittaker	Bill White
	19th	Liz Moss, Maxine Craig	Brian Carter
FEBRUARY	26th	Gail and Ashley Hoad	Alan Woodhall
	2nd	Sandra Hindmarsh, Paul Humberston	Bill White

If you are unable to do your turn, please arrange your own substitute

Worship in St George's**December**

1 st	10.30am	Rev Sue Fender – Communion
8 th	10.30am	United Service at Grange Road
15 th	10.30am	Nativity Service
22 nd	10.30am	Rev Ruth Crofton
24 th	6.00pm	Rev Sue Fender - Carols by Candlelight
25 th	9.30am	Mrs Christine Eddowes – Christmas Morning Worship
29 th	10.30am	The Worship Team

January

5 th	10.30am	Mrs Christine Eddowes - Communion
12 th	10.30am	The Worship Team – United Service with Grange Road
19 th	10.30am	Mrs Maranny Jones
26 th	10.30am	Rev Sue Fender - Parade

February

2 nd	10.30am	Mrs Christine Eddowes – Communion
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We are now recording our services whenever possible, and thanks go to Paul Rodgers for doing this for us. If any of our housebound members and friends, or those who are unable to be present on a particular Sunday, would like to listen to the service, please let me know and I will arrange for the CD to be loaned to you. Margaret

From the editor

Copy for the next issue to be with me by lunchtime **26th Jan** please (or earlier)

Reach me by e-mail on:

chris.richard.eddowes @ntlworld.com

Church Officers

MINISTER– Rev Sue Fender Tel.01642 657642
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CHURCH SECRETARY

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Mrs Sandra Twist, 17, Granville Ave
tel 273447

FREEWILL OFFERING TREASURER

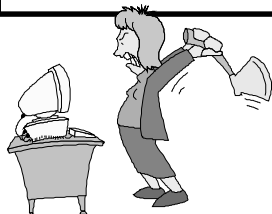
Mr W White 43 Grosmont Road Seaton Carew
Hartlepool TS25 1EP tel. 280986

HALL BOOKINGS STEWARD

Mrs J White 43 Grosmont Road Seaton Carew
Hartlepool TS25 1EP tel.: 280986

St George's Regular Activities

Sun	10.30am	Family Worship
Mon	2.00pm	Monday Meeting at Grange Road
	6.00pm	Beavers
	6.30pm	Cub Scouts
	7.0pm	Scouts
3rd Tuesday	in month Prayer meeting 11.00am	
Thur	10am	Hobbies Club

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**Church office**

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(425847)

Creche Rota

Dec	1	Mrs T Kirkpatrick	Mrs ES Welsh
	8	Mrs G Cartman	Mrs ES Welsh
	15	Mrs S Harrison	Mrs E S Welsh
	22	Mrs T Kirkpatrick	Mrs E S Welsh
	29	Mrs M Ord	Mrs G Cartman
Jan	5	Mrs S Harrison	Mrs E S Welsh
	12	Mrs T Kirkpatrick	Mrs E S Welsh
	19	Mrs G Cartman	Mrs E S Welsh
	26	Mrs M Ord	Mrs S Harrison
Feb	2	Mrs T Kirkpatrick	Mrs E S Welsh
	9	Mrs G Cartman	Mrs E S Welsh

PLEASE ARRANGE OWN SUBSTITUTE IF UNABLE TO ATTEND.

Communion Rota**Jan**

Mr A Woodhall Mrs B Woodhall

Feb

Mr P Rodgers Mrs G Rodgers

All elders to help with clearing up.