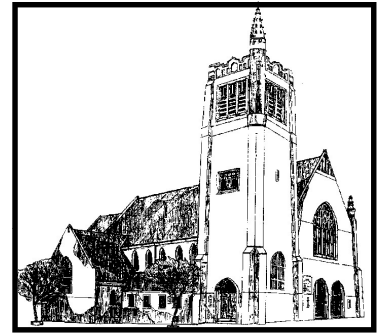




Newsletter of St. George's URC Hartlepool

Part of the Cleveland Joint Pastorate, comprising the Hartlepool and Teesside, and East Cleveland Group of churches

Aug-Sept 2022



Dear Friends,

As I write this, I am getting ready to go to Arran for four weeks, it is not strictly a holiday as Bob says we are going to our second home. I shall be with another Church Fellowship I feel I belong to. I am well blessed having so many fellowships I am welcomed to and feel I belong to.

It is hard to believe that we are already in August, the months are flying past. Sadly the Ukrainian crisis continues to haunt us and shows no sign of being resolved. On a brighter note our women's football team may have won the final match in the series by the time you read this. Whatever the outcome, they have played well and shown total commitment to the game.

The Commonwealth Games have begun in Birmingham and what a spectacle the Opening Ceremony was. Britain has already claimed some medals with Alex Yee winning the first gold of the Games. Will you be glued to your television screen for the next eleven days? The only sport I watch is the semi-finals and finals of Wimbledon, and the occasional Football match (England versus Scotland!) I do admire and respect though, the total commitment of the sportsmen and women and will be cheering for our team in the football finals.

It makes me think, do we show the same commitment to our Christian faith? Sport motivates our sportspeople, what motivates us? What do we give our all for? Do we consciously face each day with the prayer, Lord today I am going to be the best I can be for you, or is it sometimes lukewarm?

As the vacancy meanders on can we feel less than motivated and weary of waiting? If so, then what better prompt do we need than the motivation of our Commonwealth Games to make us sit up and decide again, Lord, today I am going to be the very best I can be, for you

Maranny



Dates for your Diaries - St George's

August

13th St Columba's Church, Billingham are having a garden party from 2pm until 4pm, including strawberry cream tea. See Margaret H for more information.

September

Thursday 8th Elders' Meeting at 2.30pm

Sunday 11th Church Meeting following morning worship

Sunday 25th Harvest Lunch will follow morning worship

Advanced Dates for your Diaries

Saturday 12th November Remembrance Concert, time and ticket details to follow

Saturday 19th November Christmas Fayre

Saturday 17th December Carols for Hartlepool, time and ticket details to follow

Look out for more events later in the year.

Advanced Dates for your Diaries

Churches Together in Hartlepool

8.30am Prayer Meetings

August no meeting

14 September Oxford Road Baptist Church

Coffee Rota

August	7	Sheila & Robert Harrison
	14	Kevin Hoad, Margaret Fraser
	21	Rose Hastings, Brian Carter
	28	Paul & Gillian Rodgers
September	4	Gillian Cartman, Liz Moss
	11	Enid Bushnell, Val Rigg
	18	Margaret Fraser, Kevin Hoad
	25	Rose Hastings, Brian Carter
October	2	Sheila & Robert Harrison

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 H know. Thank You.



Project Africa



You may remember that in the last Newsletter I said we had enough for 6 trees. We have sent one each of cashew, mango, apple, baobab, papaya and frankincense which will be planted and

cared for by farmers who will gain a living from them. They are sent to various parts of Africa and are helping to reforest some areas.

If you would like to know more, their website is treeaid.org

At the last count the total to date is £28.26. Keep saving!
Chris



Dare I say it?- Christmas!

In the Traidcraft summer sale, I managed to get hold of some packs of last year's design of Christmas cards. I can sell these at £2 a pack. I'll let you get the school holidays out of the way and then I'll bring them in in September when you can take your pick. First come, first served!
Chris

Hobbies

The Thursday morning Hobbies Group have decided to continue meeting throughout August and not break for summer.



Thank You

Mary Daniel would like to thank St. George's church family for their congratulations and best wishes for her 90th birthday and also for the flowers that were brought by Betty and Alan on behalf of the church family all of which are much appreciated.

Harvest Thanksgiving

Our Harvest celebrations will be held on Sunday 25th September. As always we will be supporting Commitment for Life and donation envelopes will be available in the church in the weeks before. Donations of packets and tins will be given to the Foodbank.

The church will open to receive items to decorate the church and volunteer helpers will be very welcome to do the decoration and to help prepare the harvest meal for Sunday. There will be a list for those wishing to stay to lunch.



Food Bank

The box for items for the Food Bank is in the meeting room when the service is held in there and in the hall area when the service is being held in the church.

At present with the cost of living and food rising so quickly it is more important than ever that we support this. We would appreciate any items that you would be able to provide.
Thank you.



To: All members and adherents of United Reformed Churches and our Local Ecumenical Partnerships

Dear Friends,

Is anyone back to normal?

After two years of pandemic and lockdown, and Covid still with us (thankfully, for most, in a much weaker form), we can now worship together in person and find fellowship again. But for most of us it is not simply a return to how it used to be; some people have not returned to church, some have died or become too frail, some churches have closed and others considering it.

Now we have significant European turmoil and its likely effect on fuel and food prices for us in the UK. Thank God that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13 v.8). Whatever else changes, He is our rock, our cornerstone.

Financially, things were extremely tough for churches in 2021. Plate offerings had collapsed; some regular givers had to reduce or entirely stop giving to support God's work; and those churches which hire out their premises had seen income from that source disappear. Even those churches where the majority of the giving was by standing order or bank transfer (*if you have not considered regularising your giving in this way, please do – it helps your treasurer significantly*) may have seen a 20%+ drop in income.

If this had been replicated in giving to the M&M Fund in 2021, we might have been faced with a serious financial crisis last year.

But no, through the generosity of individuals, churches and Synods, we can report that income only fell by 4.4%. With a similar reduction in expenditure the M&M Fund result was a deficit of only £80,000 (less than one-half of one percent of income), a deficit that can be comfortably covered by reserves.

So, thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2021 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.

With churches and individuals under financial pressure, 2022 is not going to be an easy year either. The M&M Fund budgeted income (based on Synods' projections) will not be sufficient to cover expected costs and we are reconciled to dipping into our reserves more seriously as a result.

However, if we “ordinary Christians” are to fulfil the call of Jesus to be His witnesses in the world around us we need ministers and other workers “on the ground” and we need shared resources which are often best created centrally. That all comes from the M&M Fund.

Again, thank you all! If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,

Ian Hardie (Treasurer) Vaughan Griffiths (Deputy Treasurer)



MOVING STORIES

Committed to supporting | our global partners | **ZIMBABWE**

Reflections on refugees

Amnesty International reports that in 2019, more than two-thirds of all refugees came from just five countries: Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar.

Syria has been the main country of origin for refugees since 2014 and at the end of 2019, there were 6.6 million Syrian refugees hosted by 126 countries worldwide.

In 2019, only half a per cent of the world's refugees were resettled. Over the past decade, just over 1 million refugees were resettled, compared to 3.9 million refugees who returned to their country.

Wealthier countries aren't doing nearly enough to share the cost of protecting people who have left everything behind. Appeals for humanitarian assistance for refugees are consistently – and often severely – underfunded.

In short, the world urgently needs a new, global plan based on genuine international cooperation and a meaningful and fair sharing of responsibilities.

Prayer for Refugees

Lord of the journey, we ask for your protection on all who have fled their homes.

Give them strength on their journeys and grant that they may find places of compassion at which to rest.

Ease their fear as they throw in their lot with strangers and keep alive their vision of finding a secure and welcoming home.
Amen

THE ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEE CRISIS

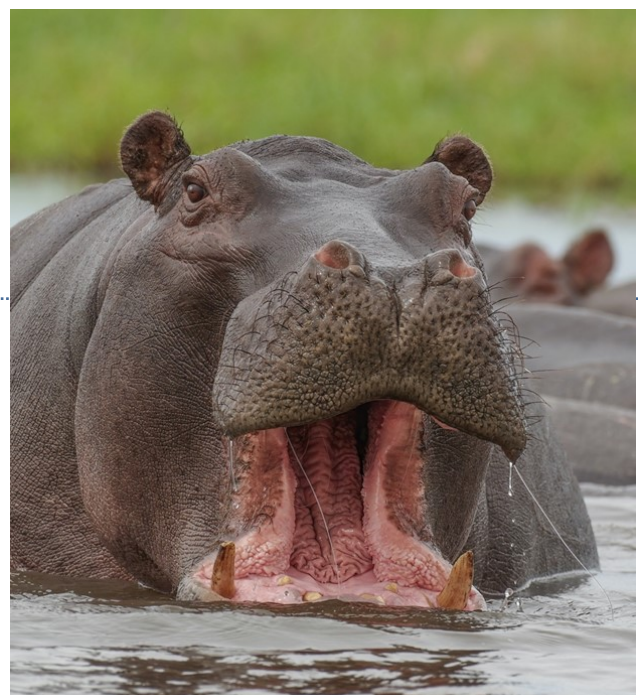
There are almost 3.4 Zimbabwean refugees, roughly a quarter of the population. Most have gone to South Africa and Australia, with over 400 000 now living in the UK. Zimbabweans leave their homes because of poverty, climate change, and repressive government policies.

South Africa deports many of those who cross the border – over 14 000 every week. Most Zimbabweans crossing at Beit Bridge are turned back. Some attempt to swim across the Limpopo and are attacked or killed by crocodiles and hippos.

Many Zimbabweans seeking refuge in South Africa are children. They are vulnerable to abuse and sex trafficking. The large number of refugees has contributed to xenophobic attacks and harassment from locals.

Much of Zimbabwe is financed by money being sent back by refugees to family members, who use the money to pay for groceries and school fees.

Commitment for Life works with Christian Aid in Zimbabwe to improve conditions in Zimbabwe so that having to leave home becomes less likely. But the task is enormous, and we are grateful for your ongoing support and prayers.



Dave Bainbridge and Sally Minnear June 18th St George's

Those of you who came along to our much awaited concert on June 18th by Dave Bainbridge and Sally Minnear may well feel, like me, that it was worth the wait. As someone who cut her musical teeth on folk music, I enjoyed singing (quietly) along to some half forgotten tunes but I was also surprised how much I enjoyed some of the more "progressive" stuff.

I enjoyed the enjoyment of the audience, many of whom had never been in the building before. I have "pinched" bits from a review of the concert from TPA for your delectation on delight. I hope Bob doesn't mind. The whole review is very full and very complimentary to the performers- and the venue. A taste here.....

Bob Mulvey TPA The Progressive Aspect

"As much of the country baked in the uncharacteristically hot June weather, I was delighted to be going to church, which I have to say was refreshingly cool.

"As gigs struggle to return to capacity, following the two year hiatus caused by the global pandemic, it was extremely heartening to see such a good turn out for the evening, and for those who attended were treated to a wonderful evening of music. Adding to the enjoyment, and throughout the evening, both Sally and Dave's interactions with the audience were refreshing and endearing, delivered with sincerity, invariably with infectious smiles, and it has to said a fair modicum of humour - Dave in particular with his "also available at the Merch desk" quips.

"The setting for the concert at St. George's was an excellent choice, with its lovely architecture, stained glass windows and the impressive pipe organ forming the perfect backdrop for the stage. In contrast, the stage was offset with TV screens offering close-ups of both performers, and to my mind complemented the mix of both traditional and modern instrumentation employed by Dave and Sally.

"(It was) A truly memorable concert and one that left a warm glow. Such was the varied programme of material it defied the fact that there were only two musicians on stage. I would urge that should you get the opportunity to catch one of the Dave Bainbridge and Sally Minnear shows - you grab it with both hands."



Well done, Paul. It was worth the sleepless nights!



Sally (above) and Dave (right)

Didn't We Celebrate ?!!



After what seemed like ages since we had a chance to celebrate, we've had several all at once. It was obvious that we couldn't ignore the Queen's Jubilee, so, the week after the Bank Holiday, we held a good old-fashioned party.

It was wonderful to welcome friends old and new and to see a few people who find it difficult to join us on a Sunday morning.

We started with a quiz with questions ranging back over the 60 years of the Queen's reign, followed by the most enormous buffet tea, including cake.

After this we were entertained by the Ukelele Group and joined in the singing of songs old and new, including *Sweet Caroline* which seems to be the anthem of the year.

Home afterwards with "doggy bags", the equivalent of the 12 baskets left after the Feeding of the Five Thousand.

Speaking of doggy bags, we were joined by Emily Rodger's dog, Ruby, who joined in the fun and stood in for President Obama in a photograph with the queen.

A couple of weeks later, it was time to celebrate the 50th Birthday of the URC, formed in 1972 by the joining of the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and the Churches of Christ. It wasn't supposed to last this long as it was supposed to have been the first phase of Unity between all the eventual joining together of all the churches but...

Northern Synod invited us all to Beamish for fun, fellowship, a picnic lunch, a service and, of course tea and cake! We were all provided with a party bag to take home, complete with squeaker and balloon.

It was great to look around Beamish, have a go at crafts, picnic together, worship together and, possibly most of all, meet up with other friends in the URC who we hadn't seen for ages.

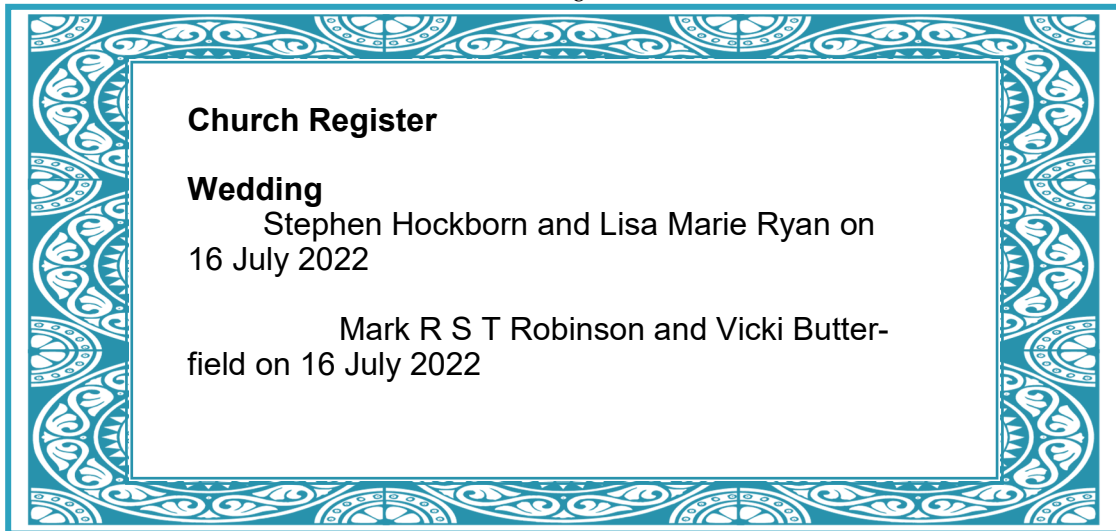
Thank you to all the people who organised and ran the day and Northern Synod for their generosity in providing it all.



Worship, fun and cake

Keep your eyes open for news of another party for the 50th birthday at St. George's





The Christmas fayre will have the



**St George's
Venue**




**An Evening
Concert for
Remembrance**

With the



**CRAGHEAD
Colliery Band**

and the poetry of Wilfred Owen

Saturday, 12th November 2022
 Doors open at 7.00pm. Concert starts at 7.30pm

Park Road, Hartlepool TS26 9HP
 Tickets £6.00 online/advance £7.50 at the door



Ukulele band again – date Saturday 19th November . They are called NUTS! The Nursery Ukulele Team Strummers!



News of People

We are thinking about Mary D and Kathy T who are unwell, and Gail H and Rose H who have been bereaved recently. Please remember them, and anyone you know who may need them, in your prayers.

Peter Watson will celebrate his 60th birthday on 21st September Congratulations from us all.

Sandra H has won her Ladies Senior Pairs to go and play bowls in Skegness in August. Well done, Sandra.



Flower Donors

August 7	Mrs M Daniel
August 14	Mrs C Eddowes
August 21	
August 28	Mr & Mrs A Ord
September 4	Mrs G Cartman
September 11	
September 18	Mrs S Twist
September 25	Mr and Mrs A Woodhall
October 2	Mrs E Welsh



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	
August	7 Paul Humberston, Pam Branfoot	Alan Woodhall	
	14 Liz Moss, Alan Woodhall	Paul Humberston	
	21 Sandra Hindmarch, Kevin Hoad	Brian Carter	
	28 Paul Humberston, Pam Branfoot	Alan Woodhall	
September	4 Sandra Hindmarch, Kevin Hoad	Paul Humberston	
	11 Liz Moss, Alan Woodhall	Brian Carter	
	18 Paul Humberston, Pam Branfoot	Alan Woodhall	
	25 Sandra Hindmarch, Liz Moss	Paul Humberston	
October	2 Alan Woodhall, Kevin Hoad	Brian Carter	

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

Worship in St George's

August

7th 10.30am Mrs Chris Eddowes - Communion
 14th 10.30am Mrs Chris Eddowes
 21st 10.30am The Worship Team
 28th 10.30am Mr Brian Johnson – Not Parade

September

4th 10.30am Mrs Maranny Jones - Communion
 11th 10.30am Mrs Chris Eddowes
 18th 10.30am Mr John Drew
 25th 10.30am Mrs Chris Eddowes – Harvest and Parade

October

2nd 10.30am Mrs Maranny Jones, Group service at Stockton followed by the AGM. **THERE WILL NOT BE A SERVICE IN ST GEORGE'S THIS SUNDAY.**



From the editor

Copy for the next issue to be with me by lunchtime **25th September** please (or earlier) **Reach me by e-mail on:**
 chris.richard.eddowes @ntlworld.com

Church Officers

CHURCH SECRETARY

Mrs M Humberston 25 Belmont Gdns
 TS26 9LS tel 425847

CHURCH TREASURER

Mrs Sandra Twist, 17, Granville Ave
 tel 273447

HALL BOOKINGS STEWARD

Liz Moss
 lizmoss1916@gmail.com

Correspondence to:
 20 Hart Lane, TS26 8NN
 tel.07714044568

St George's Regular Activities

Sun 10.30am Family Worship
 Mon 6.00pm Beavers
 6.30pm Cub Scouts
 7.0pm Scouts
 Thur 10am Hobbies Club



Church office

Mr P Humberston
 25 Belmont Gardens
 TS26 9LS
 (425847)

Communion Rota

September

Alan Woodhall Betty Woodhall

October

Service at Stockton

All elders to help with clearing up.

Newsletter Editor

Mrs C Eddowes
 65 Hutton Ave
 TS26 9PP
 (269412)

