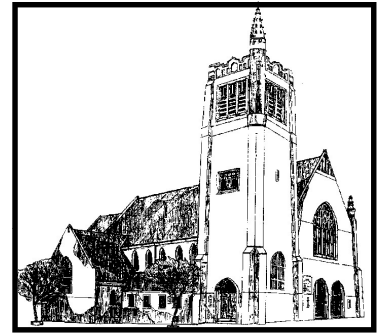




Newsletter of St. George's URC Hartlepool

Part of the Cleveland Group of Churches

June– July 2023



Dear Friends,

In April we went on a wonderful three week cruise in the Mediterranean. We sailed from Portsmouth to Antalya in Turkey and back again via various places like Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, Malta and Sicily among others. The thing we realised as we sailed was that St Paul had been there centuries before us. In fact, he went to many more places, but at least it took him 4 journeys!

I've always thought that Paul must have been very difficult to get on with; there's certainly no evidence of anything approaching humour. But he was the perfect man for the job he was chosen for. First of all, he was not afraid to realise he was wrong- see the road to Damascus. He was brave- stand where he did in Ephesus and preach what he did to an audience whose livings depended on a pagan god and you'll see what I mean. The weather was rough when we were in the Med and you could feel it on a ship carrying 1,000 people so imagine what it was like in a much smaller one- and he was shipwrecked!

He was resourceful. He used an altar to an unknown god to talk about the one they didn't know. He used his Roman citizenship when it was convenient and his Jewish knowledge of the scriptures to address new groups in new places.

He was commanding, taking charge when the ship was foundering so that everyone was saved. He wasn't afraid of hard work, supporting himself by his trade of tent-making when he stayed for any length of time. He was persuasive- he must have been to have founded so many churches, and then he kept in touch with them all, helping solve problems that arose. He must have been tireless. The distances were huge even though not as breakneck as they seem when you read about them; he did stay for quite a while in several places. He knew when it was time to leave and was pretty good at escaping from tricky situations.

The followers of Jesus in Damascus thought God must have got the wrong person. You couldn't blame them. It just proves the point that He knows best!

I lost count of the times we were told about Paul's exploits by guides and the number of St Paul's Bays where he landed or was shipwrecked. It seemed strange to be following in so many of his footsteps. I'm still not sure I would have found him easy to know, but then, that's not the point. I do know that my admiration grew as we went along and I found myself re-reading Acts. Perhaps I'll go on more journeys in his footsteps. Who knows?

Chris



Dates for your Diaries - St George's

June

Saturday 17th Performance of the Messiah by the Guisborough Choral Society, starting at 2pm. Tickets are £10.

Thursday 22nd Elders' Meeting

Saturday 24th Garden Party at Alan and Betty Woodhall's starting at 2pm

July

Sunday 23rd Church meeting following morning worship

Sunday 30th Leaving service for the Moderator, Rev David Herbert, 3pm at St James' in Newcastle

Advanced Dates for your Diaries

September

Saturday 23rd Induction of the new Moderator, Rev Kim Plumpton, 3pm at St Columba's, North Shields

October

Wednesday 11th Children from the Eldon Grove Academy will be visiting the church from 9.30am.

If you would like to help with this please see Margaret H.

Sunday 15th Cleveland Group of Churches Group Service, 11am at Nunthorpe and Marton church.

Churches Together in Hartlepool

Morning Prayer Meetings –

14 June Grange Road Methodist at 8.30 am

12 July Church of the Nazarene, Lowthian Road at 8.30 am

These are open meetings and all are welcome to attend. Prayers last for about 30 minutes followed by light refreshments.



Coffee Rota

| | | |
|------|----|----------------------------------|
| June | 4 | Val Rigg, Enid Bushnell |
| | 11 | Sheila Harrison, Robert Harrison |
| | 18 | Gillian Cartman, Liz Moss |
| | 25 | Margaret Fraser, Rose Hastings |
| July | 2 | Gillian Rodgers, Paul Rodgers |
| | 9 | Enid Bushnell, Val Rigg |
| | 16 | Margaret Fraser, Kevin Hoad |
| | 23 | Gillian Cartman, Liz Moss |
| | 30 | Gillian Rodgers, Pal Rodgers |
| Aug | 6 | Rose Hastings, Margaret Fraser |

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



The penny mound now stands at £58.16.
 Thank you all those people who are now not
 just saving copper coins but shinier ones too!
 Did you know a £1 of pennies or teopences
 weighs 12 and 5/8 ounces!
 Chris

Appeal for more Stewards

St George's is short of door stewards at the
 moment. If you would like to join the team
 please speak to Margaret H or Paul H.
 Stewarding is important as it allows us to
 greet both our own folk, and visitors as they
 arrive for worship

Food Bank

Please continue to support the Food Bank as
 you are able in these difficult times. The box
 is currently in the hall area, but will be moved
 into the meeting room when worship moves
 there for the winter. Thank you.



Tall Ships

As you are probably aware, Hartlepool is
 hosting the Tall Ships from Thursday 6th –
 Sunday 9th July 2023. The local churches
 have arranged to have a stall for the duration
 of the event. There will be crafts, christian
 bookmarks etc. If you would like to help on
 the stall, please see Margaret H or May O in
 the first instance. Thank you.



*You are invited to
 A Garden Party
 At the home of Alan and Betty
 24th June
 From 2pm*



MovingStories

Commitment
for **Life**

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

Committed to supporting our global partners **ZIMBABWE**

Bad Samaritan

Campaigners worry that the government's new Illegal Migrations Bill threatens to tear up the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, to which the UK was a signatory. "The UK's draconian asylum system divides families and ravages the mental and physical health of some of the world's most vulnerable people," says Global Justice Now. "There is no 'illegal' way to claim asylum."

Asylum is different to economic migration. Asylum seekers are protected under international law, and the UK has strict guidelines for the latter. The Joint Public Issues Team organised a response to the introduction of the Illegal Migration Bill, that reflected the parable of the Good Samaritan. It summarised the awfulness of the Bill by stating,

"If ever there was a contemporary example of ignoring our neighbour and walking by on the other side, this is it." <https://jpit.uk/response-to-illegal-migration-bill>

Prayer

God of love, protect all asylum seekers around the world. Soften the hearts of hardened politicians. Pour compassion onto cynical lawmakers. Open our arms in welcome of strangers. Fill us with the unstinting generosity that we have found in the heart of Jesus. Amen.

Christian Aid Week



Commitment for Life supports Christian Aid week, 14 to 23 May, which will focus on Malawi to help farmers plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for crops, and build happier futures for their children. For more information click here: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>



This coming July, Kevin Snyman – Commitment for Life's Programme Officer – will be travelling to Zimbabwe to meet up with the Christian Aid country team. Kevin hopes to visit several Christian Aid/Commitment for Life partners across the country. The partners are on the ground, carrying out sterling work in support of the goals of climate mitigation, economic empowerment of the poorest, and gender equality rights for women.

Kevin will be travelling with the Revd Wilbert Sayimani, collecting photo, video and written stories that can then be shared with Commitment for Life congregations. If you'd like access to these resources, do let Suzanne know at commitmentforlife@urc.org.uk.

Thank you to all of you who support the work of Commitment for Life in Zimbabwe.

Changing Futures Fostering



About Us:

We are a leading local fostering agency based in Hartlepool. We are proud to serve as a not-for-profit fostering agency for Teesside and the surrounding areas. Our agency is driven by a passionate team committed to providing safe and nurturing homes for children and young people in need. With a focus on building brighter futures, we work tirelessly to make a lasting impact on local children's and families' lives.

Local and Community-Focused:

At Changing Futures Fostering, we believe in the power of community. Being based in Hartlepool allows us to play an active role in our foster families' lives. We are committed to providing ongoing support to foster families, making sure that every child has the opportunity to thrive. Our close ties to the community allow us to offer personalised support that meet the needs of our foster parents.

Non-Profit Commitment:

We don't make profit at our agency. Our focus is on the well-being and success of the children and young people in our care. We are driven by a passion for making a positive difference, not by financial gain. Our not-for profit status allows us to reinvest all of our resources back into our families. As a result, we can provide the highest quality of support, training, and resources to our foster families.

Comprehensive Support and Training:

At Changing Futures Fostering, we understand that fostering is a rewarding journey, but support is necessary. We make sure our dedicated team is there every step of the way, offering guidance, advice, and 24/7 support. We provide regular training opportunities to equip our foster carers with the knowledge and skills they need to provide the best possible care. Our goal is to create a nurturing and stable environment where children can thrive and reach their full potential.

Join Our Community:

If you have ever considered making a difference in a child's life, we invite you to join our foster care community. We welcome individuals and families from diverse backgrounds and experiences. We believe that everyone has the potential to provide a loving and supportive home. You can play a crucial role in shaping the future of a child or young person in need. We provide regular training, financial support, and a dedicated social worker to guide you through your fostering journey.

Contact Us:

If you would like to learn more about becoming a foster carer with Changing Futures Fostering, please reach out to our friendly team. We are here to support you and help you make a positive impact on a child's life.

Together, we can empower our local community, transform lives, and build a brighter future for the children and young people.

Phone: 01429 363127

Email: admin@changingfuturesfostering.co.uk

Website: <https://www.changingfuturesfostering.co.uk>

Events

St. George's is pleased to be welcoming The Guisborough Choral Society on **Saturday the 17th June** to perform excerpts (the best bits) from Handel's Messiah. This concert will be conducted by Rebecca Johnson and will feature Chris Haresnape playing the church organ. This will be a matinée concert on Saturday the 17th beginning at 2:00 pm everyone is welcome. Tickets are £10 and are available from Enid, Paul or Gillian and of course from the CAB next door to the church. You can also pay at the door when you arrive; doors open at 1:30 pm. Under 16 years of age tickets are free.



In the last newsletter we talked about the grand piano that we were hoping to obtain for use during concerts in the church. Initially the thoughts were that we would move the grand piano from the Hartlepool Town Hall into the church but as many of you will know during the COVID pandemic there was water ingress into the town hall, and this has significantly damaged the body and soundboard of the piano. Estimates for repair of this instrument are somewhere in the region of £30,000. Although this repair should be or should have been covered by insurance within the town hall or by the Borough Council, we decided that it was more sensible to look elsewhere for a piano that would be suitable for St. George's. Thanks to Paul Humberston and a chance conversation with Ray Elliston from Grange Road Methodist Church we discovered that the piano formerly belonging to Betty Thompson was potentially going to be homeless later in the autumn. At the moment St. George's and the Hartlepool Music Society have expressed a wish to relocate this piano to St. George's and as I write this, we are confident that that will happen. This piano is slightly smaller than the grand from the Town Hall but we are confident that it will fit in well in St George's.

It would be good to have a series of concerts during the summer months but it becomes rather impractical based on the fact that holidays tend to get in the way for many people organising and attending so with this in mind it is likely that after the concert of Handel's Messiah we will have a break until our next concert which is scheduled for the **11th October** featuring Hayley McKay who is a country and western singer who has appeared in the Grand Old Opry in Nashville, at Glastonbury and also in music festivals up and down the country. Hayley is an exceptional talent and we are pleased to welcome her to St. George's. The concert is a Wednesday evening and will be part of a country-wide tour that Hayley will be undertaking. Tickets will be available closer to the event in St George's and also online from our usual ethical ticket supplier www.brownpapertickets.com. Buying tickets online is useful from the church's point of view as it helps us to know how many tickets have been sold for a particular event rather than having to anxiously await people walking through the doors at the time of the concert. It is also helpful for those who have to travel to concerts and are travelling in from out of the area.

After this concert in October we will be having our remembrance concert on **Saturday 11th November**. This is in the early stages of organising, more details will follow on this event. On **Saturday 9th December** of course we will have our annual Carols for Hartlepool concert featuring the Hartlepool Brass Band and this year we're hoping to welcome singer-songwriter Wendy Arrowsmith to perform at the concert as well. All the information regarding the concerts will be available on flyers, leaflets and posters. Information will also be available online on the Hartlepool St. George's Venue Facebook page and on the Hartlepool St. George's United Reformed Church website where we now have a new tab which includes the St. George's Venue.

St. George's website

Whilst browsing the other day I noticed that there were a few items on the St George's website that needed to be updated. With permission from the Elders I obtained the access information and have made a few changes to the St George's website. I hope that many of you will now dip in and have a look and please come back to the Elders with feedback of whether you think the new website is more representative of St George's than you remember of the old.



www.stgeorgesurc.co.uk All of the information regarding services will still be posted on the website. This is where you can also obtain your digital copy of the church newsletter but there is now a tab available for the St George's Venue and this will be available for information regarding concerts in the church.

Sometimes we have concerts which are being organised under the umbrella of St. George's United Reformed Church and others which are being organised alongside St. George's Venue. I know this can be a little confusing and I understand that there are differences of opinions with regards to why we do this. St. George's must be proactive and there are certain areas where we have to be realistic and see that many people will be reluctant to come to a church but will be pleased to come to a concert even if it is in a church. It is with this in mind that we advertise some concerts as St George's United Reformed Church presents and other times as St. George's Venue presents ... I hope this is clear.

Property Matters

The ripples of the quinquennial report are still being felt around St George's and we are currently in correspondence with a representative from Synod in relation to several items that have been cited as important and that we must rectify. Please speak to a member of the property committee for more information. We are looking at levelling the floor in the church where we created an access hole to repair the burst central heating pipes a few years ago. We need to do this so that we can move the piano (when it arrives) from its storage place in the transept to a more central place for concerts.

Discussions are still being undertaken in relation to the removal of the choir pews in front of the organ. If we are to attract large bands and orchestras to St George's, we need this to be more practical. In June 2024 we have booked the Teesside Symphony Orchestra and with these pews in place, we will have to cancel this concert. Whilst we appreciate the vista will change, the benefits will be significant and will help when we are looking at bookings for the church and venue. Placing the Thompson chairs in this area will help to alleviate the empty space feeling without the pews. No decision has yet been made on this proposal.

We are also looking to upgrade the church lighting with modern LED lights. This could be undertaken during August if agreed and be available for the darker nights. These will save electricity and improve the church lighting. We are also looking at inadequacies in the theatrical lighting that have been identified during concerts and as funds are available, we will make changes to improve the visitor experience.



Paul Rodgers

Events Co-Ordinator

Property Committee Convenor

Church Register

Baptism Ann Olusegun and Emmanuella Olusegun, 19 February 2023,
daughters of Wumi and Adebuseyi

Baptism Ollie Lewis Barker-Platt, 16 April 2023, son of Lewis and Stephanie

St. George's United Reformed Church Summer Fayre 13th May 2023

| 2022 | Stall | 2023 |
|----------|------------------------|----------|
| 96.45 | Cake Stall | 96.50 |
| 62.10 | Hobbies Tombola | 61.00 |
| 1.70 | Junior Church | 0.00 |
| 35.20 | Scouts Tombola | 61.70 |
| 43.20 | Raffle | 49.00 |
| 36.00 | Bags | 42.00 |
| 104.90 | White Elephant | 61.60 |
| 316.50 | Plants | 310.00 |
| 12.00 | Quiz | 15.00 |
| 192.00 | Hamper Raffle | 250.00 |
| 57.00 | Door | 45.48 |
| 51.70 | Craft | 45.55 |
| 52.50 | Donation | 0.00 |
| | Tables | 25.00 |
| 466.50 | Additional plant sales | 419.00 |
| 1,557.75 | | 1,481.83 |

Thanks to everyone who helped in any way and particularly Gill for organising it all.



News of People

Quite a number of our members and friends are unwell at the moment. Please pray for those you know about and also remember all the members and friends in your prayers.



Flower Donors

| | |
|---------|-------------------------|
| June 4 | |
| June 11 | |
| June 18 | Mrs S Twist |
| June 25 | Mrs M Mudd |
| July 2 | Mr P Watson |
| July 9 | Mrs P Branfoot |
| July 16 | Mrs W Parkinson |
| July 23 | Mr and Mrs P Humberston |
| July 30 | Mr F Whittaker |



The Flower Ladies are arranging deliveries on each Sunday morning. If you would like to help

Stewards Rota

| Date | Stewards | Keys |
|------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| June | 4 Allan Woodhall, Liz Moss | Brian Carter |
| | 11 Sandra Hindmarch, Kevin Hoad | Paul Humberston |
| | 18 Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston | Alan Woodhall |
| | 25 Liz Moss, Alan Woodhall | Brian Carter |
| July | 2 Pam Branfoot, Kevin Hoad | Liz Moss |
| | 9 Sandra Hindmarch, Liz Moss | Paul Humberston |
| | 16 Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston | Alan Woodhall |
| | 23 Alan Woodhall, Sandra Hindmarch | Brian Carter |
| | 30 Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston | Liz Moss |

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

Worship in St George's

June

| | | |
|------------------|---------|------------------------------|
| 4 th | 10.30am | Mrs Maranny Jones, Communion |
| 11 th | 10.30am | Mrs Maranny Jones |
| 18 th | 10.30am | Mrs Chris Eddowes |
| 25 th | 10.30am | Mr Brian Johnson |

July

| | | |
|------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 2 nd | 10.30am | Rev David Whiting, Communion |
| 9 th | 10.30am | Mr Charles & Mrs Alison Jolly |
| 16 th | 10.30am | Mrs Chris Eddowes |
| 23 rd | 10.30am | The Worship Team |
| 30 th | 10.30am | Mr Ian Smith |

August

| | | |
|-----------------|---------|----------------------------|
| 6 th | 10.30am | Rev John Durell, Communion |
|-----------------|---------|----------------------------|



From the editor

Copy for the next issue to be with me by lunchtime **July 30th** 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

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

July

Liz Moss

Paul Humberston

Aug

Alan Woodhall Betty Woodhall

All elders to help with clearing up.

Newsletter Editor

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

