

NEWSLETTER OF ST GEORGE'S URC HARTLEPOOL

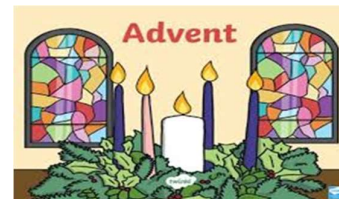


Dec 2025-Jan2026

What does Advent conjure up in your mind? For those who like me grew up in the 1960s perhaps memories of the Blue Peter advent crown made out of 2 metal coat hangers and covered in tinsel. For others an excuse for a piece of chocolate before breakfast having opened the door of an advent calendar. Or nowadays, in the more adult versions, to try 24 types of cheese, 24 different perfumes or aftershave, build up a set of 24 spanners it seems the list is endless.

A countdown to Christmas, which might be a time of increasing excitement or of an increasing sense of isolation and stress. A time of waiting for an extra day or more off work.

For Christians, Advent is the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas, starting this year on 30th November. For manufacturers of Advent Calendars it starts on 1st December!



Advent means Coming in Latin. This is the coming of Jesus into the world. Advent is a time of preparation. Preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, who came to earth to reveal more of God's love and nature. At the same time looking to a future return of Jesus. Jesus, also named Immanuel, God with us

All too often we skimp on Advent. We start to sing carols, hold carol services and nativities long before Christmas day – and as opportunities to engage with our communities and to share the important message of God's love there is no problem with that. Traditionally though in Advent only Advent hymns were sung, carols waited until Christmas Eve! I know that all too often I get tied up with all the extra activities and forget to take time to be still, time to reflect on Elizabeth and John the Baptist, on Mary and Joseph, and on the many prophecies not just of Christ's first coming in Bethlehem but on Christ coming again.

It's wonderful to have special treats as part of that preparation but maybe it is a time to develop alternative advent traditions. Instead of opening a calendar and getting a gift how about putting an item of food in a bag or box which can be donated to a foodbank? Or maybe aiming to show some particular act of kindness each day, a word of encouragement, calling on a neighbour?

O come, O come Immanuel!

Bev

Dates for your Diaries

December

Eldon Grove Academy are holding their Christmas services in St George's again this year. The services will take place late in the afternoon on Tuesday 9 December, Tuesday 16 December and Thursday 18 December. If you can help on any of these dates, please see me Margaret H as soon as possible.

Saturday 6th December – Carols for Hartlepool concert.

Sunday 14th December – Concert by former members of the Hartlepool Youth Choir.

January

Wednesday 14th January – Group Elders' Meeting at Thornaby Mission, 10.30am.

Thursday 15th January – Elders' Meeting 2.30pm.

Sunday 18th January – Church Meeting following morning worship.

Thursday 22nd January – Lunch in St George's for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Churches Together

Sunday 18th – Friday 23rd January - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. A united service will take place on Sunday 18th January at New Springs City Church, Ward Jackson School, Clark St. at 4.30pm.

Joint prayer and a soup lunch will take place at 12noon as listed below.

Monday 19 Oxford Road Baptist Church

Tuesday 20 Holy Family St John Vianney's, King Oswy Drive.

Wednesday 21 Stranton Parish Church, hosting at St Matthew's Hall, Elwick Rd

Thursday 22 St George's URC

Friday 23 Central Estate Methodist Church

Coffee

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|------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Dec. | 7th. | Liz Moss, Barry Liddle. |
| | 14th. | Gillian Rodgers, Paul Rodgers. |
| | 21st. | Gillian Cartman, Margaret Fraser. |
| | 28th. | Enid Bushnall, Val Rigg. |
| Jan. | 4th. | Gillian Rodgers, Paul Rodgers. |
| | 11th. | Liz Moss, Barry Liddle. |
| | 18th. | Gillian Cartman, Margaret Fraser. |
| Feb. | 25th. | Enid Bushnall, Val Rigg. |
| | 1st. | Liz Moss, Barry Liddle. |
| | 8th. | Gillian Rodgers, Paul Rodgers. |
| | 15th. | Gillian Cartman, Margaret Fraser. |
| | 22nd. | Enid Bushnall, Val Rigg. |



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.

34th Hartlepool (St George's) Scout Group



The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts all took part in services of Remembrance in November.

The Beavers and Cubs have been working towards their 'Skills challenge'

including learning how to tie their shoelaces, how to tell the time from a clock face, First Aid, including how to dial 999 in an emergency, and aspects of road safety. Currently they are learning about different categories of food and what benefits they have for us. They also enjoy playing team games.

The Scouts are currently working towards their 'Chef's badge' and are learning about food hygiene and are planning menus. For a 'personal challenge' they will each set themselves a personal goal to be approved by the leaders and will also work towards achieving a goal set by the leaders.



PROJECT AFRICA

The fund was just pennies short of £150 so I bought 15 trees. These are a mixture of frankincense and shea. Both of these trees produce saleable nuts or resin which can provide the farmers with an income as well as being good for the environment. As the fund is now empty, it might be a good idea to see if this is something we want to go on supporting in this way or if somebody can come up with something different. Thinking caps on, please.

Christmas Giving

Every year our money gifts are used locally. This year, Christmas giving will be in the form of vouchers, such as Amazon vouchers, which will enable Social Services Children's Section to help provide for some of the needy children in Hartlepool. So please give generously so we can buy lots of vouchers for local children and young people who may not be as lucky as our own families.

Christmas Fayre

Thank you to everyone who supported our recent Christmas Fayre. The total raised was £1,062.61.
Gillian Rodgers



Annual Reports

Sorry folks, I know we haven't had Christmas yet but my mind is already turning towards 2026 and the Annual Reports. Could the leaders of all groups and organisations please let me have their reports by Sunday 18 January 2026. I am more than happy to receive them by email. Thank you, Margaret H.

Reading Rota

I am starting to prepare the reading rota for 2026. If you would like to be added to it, or removed from it, please let me know as soon as you can, but by the end of December if possible. Thanks, Margaret H.

Food Bank

Please continue to support the Food Bank as you are able in these difficult times. The box is in the hall area. Thank you.

THANK YOU

Link to Hope (Shoe Boxes)

One hundred and one shoe boxes and approximately Fifty Knee blankets are on their way to Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, & Bulgaria because of your generosity, be it knitting or crochet, gifting items or donations. Thank you so much. Betty Woodhall



Link to Hope – Shoebox Appeal (2)

For those who don't already know 101 shoeboxes were filled and sent to Link to Hope. Betty and Alan Woodall are thanked for all the hard work they have put in to organising this over the years. They are now going to have a well earned 'rest'.

Some members of the Hobbies group are going to organise collecting items so please pass any donations to them or Gillian Elliston.

To continue this work all those who have helped knitting hats, gloves and scarves are asked to keep Knitting! In addition to the knitted items all the boxes should include toothbrushes and paste, sweets or chocolate, candles or tealights, soap and flannel, small games (cards, draughts dominoes)

Shoeboxes for families should also include things like colouring pads, crayons, pencils, small toys, teddies, tape measure / DIY tool, sewing kit, shampoo, calculator Safety razors, Hairbrush / comb.

Watch out for more details in future newsletters.

VenUE from the Back.

Paul gets a month off from telling you about all the gigs and concerts in line for you. At most concerts, you'll find me sitting at the back selling tickets for future events. Quite often this involves just talking to people and hearing their opinions and answering their questions. This can be very interesting, for example, I found myself talking to a descendent of the Baines who donated the organ to the church, so she was the great something daughter of Sir William Gray. She was looking forward to coming again so she could hear the organ played.

I hope she will be there on Saturday, 6th December, for the Carols for Hartlepool 2025 which has Ian Pounder playing the organ, and other music from Hartlepool

Children's Choir and Step of Faith. There will also be readings from a variety of people. It starts at 6.30 and it's free!

The last concert of the year is by the Ex Hartlepool Youth Choir and this will be their swan song. It takes place on Sunday afternoon 14th December at 4.30pm. You are invited to bring along gifts for the Food Bank or donate to the collection.

You never really know what you will discover at the events. At the last one, I had never heard of Eclectic Lite, but I can now say I'm a fan. There will be plenty of opportunity next year when the concerts start again to find old and new favourites. I can honestly say there is something for everyone and, as so many strangers say, the atmosphere in St George's is truly special.

CHURCH REGISTER

Saturday 1 November 2025 – Wedding of Matthew James Owens and Lucy Ann Bell.

Sunday 9 November 2025 – Zikoramachi Janelle Anachuna, daughter of Henry and Ijeoma, was baptised

Flower Donors

December 7 Mrs K Thompson
 December 14 Mrs M Bell
 December 21 Mrs W Parkinson
 December 28 Mr N Simpson
 January 4 The Granger Family
 January 11 Mr and Mrs P Humberston
 January 18 Mrs S Harrison
 January 25 Mrs S Twist
 February 1 Mrs W Parkinson

News of People

Please pray for our members and friends who may be unwell including, Kathy, Pam, Mary and Janet. Also keep our other friends and members, including Judith, Jacqui and their families in your prayers as they mourn the loss of Joan who died in November.

Efosa Igbinosa will be 40 on 18 January. Congratulations!

Worship in St George's

December

7th 10.30am Rev David Whiting, Communion
 14th 10.30am Rev Bev Hollings
 21st 10.30am Mr Ray Trench
 24th 6.30pm Mr Brian Carter & Mrs Margaret Humberston
 25th 9.30am Mrs Chris Eddowes
 28th 10.30am Mrs Judith Winn

January

4th 10.30am Rev Bev Hollings, Communion and Methodist Covenant Service
 11th 10.30am Rev John Pugh
 18th 10.30am Mrs Pauline Caswell
 25th 10.30am The Worship Team (BC)



February

1st 10.30am Mrs Maranny Jones, Communion

| | Stewards. | Keys |
|------|--|------------------|
| Dec. | 7th. Gillian Elliston, Alan Wood hall. | Paul Humberston. |
| | 14th Sandra Hindmarch, Liz Moss. | Alan Woodhall. |
| | 21st. Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston. | Liz Moss. |
| | 24th Gillian Elliston, Liz Moss. | Paul Humberston. |
| | 25th. Sandra Hindmarch, Alan Woodhall. | Paul Humberston. |
| | 28th. Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston. | Liz Moss. |
| Jan. | 4th Gillian Elliston, Liz Moss. | Alan Woodhall |
| | 11th. Sandra Hindmarch, Alan Woodhall. | Paul Humberston. |
| | 18th. Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston. | Liz Moss. |
| | 25th. Gillian Elliston, Liz Moss. | Alan Woodhall. |
| Feb. | 1st. Sandra Hindmarch, Alan Woodhall. | Paul Humberston. |
| | 8th. Pam Branfoot, Paul Humberston. | Liz Moss. |
| | 15th. Gillian Elliston, Liz Moss. | Alan Woodhall. |
| | 22nd. Sandra Hindmarch, Alan Woodhall. | Paul Humberston |

Communion Rota

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| January | Gillian Elliston | Ray Tench |
| February | Chris Eddowes | Sandra Twist |

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 Contact Mrs Humberston

St George's Regular Activities

Sun 10.30am Family Worship

Mon 6.00pm Beavers 6.30pm 7.0pm Cub Scouts Scouts

Thur 10am Hobbies Club

The deadline for the next newsletter is Jan 25th. Reach me on chris.richard.eddowes@ntlworld.com or 01429 269412. Meanwhile, from the



Newsletter Team