

Welcome to the Stainton Church e-News for

Friday 9th October 2026



Sukkot (*) Miracles and the Antidote to October 7

Your Editor is pleased to share with you this article from the [One for Israel website](#):

(*) [Editor's note: Sukkot is the Hebrew word for a major seven-day Jewish festival of thanksgiving and harvest that also commemorates the 40 years the Israelites spent wandering in the desert after leaving slavery in Egypt (source: the [American Jewish Committee](#)). In English the festival is known as the Feast of Tabernacles]

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Three years after the horrors of October 7, 2023, the nation of Israel is still in shock and trauma. Is there any antidote to the poison? Any balm that can bring healing? In His grace, God has given three Sukkot miracles, one each year since the attack, that have enabled us to rejoice at the Feast again.

Antidote #1: Poetic justice and a sigh of relief in Sukkot 2024

In 2024, as we approached the first anniversary of that terrible day, it felt like the whole nation of Israel was dreading the holiday of Sukkot. It was on [Shemini Atzeret](#), the last (and supposedly happiest) day of the Feast of Tabernacles, that the [October 7 massacre](#) wreaked destruction and death on Israel on a scale not known since the Holocaust. As the tabernacles started popping up all over Israel many felt conflicted. How could we rejoice at this time? But then on the very first day of the feast, news started spreading that Yahya Sinwar, the mastermind behind October 7, had been eliminated. The sense of extreme relief was palpable everywhere.

There was so much poetic justice in the end of Sinwar. A new soldier—just nine months into his army service—shot him dead in an operation to take out who they thought were just random terrorists. It was only later that the IDF discovered it was actually the notorious Hamas chief. The events reminded people of the “accidental” death of King Ahab in the Bible, who died despite his attempts to hide and disguise himself. God decided his time was up.

“But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armour...” (1 Kings 22:34).

Finally, Sinwar could trouble Israel no longer. The timing was remarkable, and against all expectations, the people of Israel were actually able to rejoice at Sukkot, as God commanded.

Antidote #2: All the hostages were released in Sukkot 2025

It was Shemini Atzeret, on the morning of the last day of the feast of Sukkot, that Hamas burst through the borders to rape, butcher and mutilate more than 1,000 people, taking 251 [people] hostage. The entire nation felt they, too, were held captive every day that hostages were imprisoned underground by terrorists just a short distance away. Yet it seemed almost impossible to get them out. We saw the

release of some in [painful hostage deals](#) which saw thousands of Palestinian prisoners with the blood of many Israelis on their hands set free in exchange. Yet still, many hostages remained.

But then, on the last day of Sukkot 2025, the miracle came.

They had been captured on the morning of Shemini Atzeret 2023 and astoundingly, it was on the eve of Shemini Atzeret two years later that the remaining 48 [hostages were finally released](#), on the exact anniversary in the Jewish calendar.

Many shared this fitting verse from Nehemiah 8:

“The whole company that had returned from captivity built temporary shelters and lived in them. From the days of Jeshua son of Nun until that [this!] day, the Israelites had not celebrated it like this. And their joy was very great.” (Nehemiah 8:17)

It was a miracle of God. We witnessed the harvest of millions of prayers, and all the hostages came home.

Antidote #3: Another 9/11 miraculously averted in Sukkot 2026

Before the West woke up on the third day of Sukkot 2026, Israelis had heard about three different accounts of what had happened to flydubai flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv. There were 174 people on board, the majority of whom were Israeli. Was it a hijacking, reminiscent of Entebbe in 1976? Was it a fist fight between Russian and Ukrainian pilots who had a disagreement? No, it was far worse. The plane emitted an emergency signal and simply dropped off the radar.

A newly trained pilot from Oman suddenly attacked and stabbed Captain Smit Machchhar beside him in the cockpit multiple times before commandeering the plane and plunging it into such a dramatic nosedive that it disappeared from view. It dropped 14,000 feet in less than two minutes. The Indian captain with 13 years of experience heroically managed to open the cockpit door before collapsing from his wounds, enabling Israeli passengers to force their way in. They subdued the attacker and rescued Machchhar before taking the plane out of the perilous nosedive.

In yet another Sukkot miracle, there just happened to be two off-duty pilots on board who were able to land the plane safely in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, where medical experts cared for the wounded pilot and passengers.

Reports called it a “stroke of luck” that an extra crew happened to be on the plane, and praised the courage and quick thinking of Captain Machchhar and the three Israelis who rescued him. But we see the hand of God at work. It could have become another 9/11, with the Omani terrorist able to take not only 174 lives of those on board but potentially crash into Israel and take thousands more. When they realized they had been saved, the Israelis burst into song, declaring “Our Father lives! The people of Israel live!” clapping joyfully while singing [“Am Israel Chai!”](#)

One of the passengers, Meital Tsoler, was flying back with her husband and two little children from their holiday in Thailand via Dubai and talked about what happened when they finally landed:

“It was moments of terrifying madness,” she told the Times of Israel on the brink of tears. “I didn’t pray that we would come out of this alive. I simply prayed that it would be over quickly, and that I wouldn’t see my children suffering.” There were well over 20 children on that flight. “Thank God, we were saved!” she said.

Asaf Rejuwan, one of the Israeli heroes on board, reflected on the miracles involved in the incident and how so many people on the plane had a contributing role to play. After the Shabbat, when he was safely home, he posted on social media:

"I am not a religious person. I believe in God in my own way, and I don't usually look for signs in everything. But today, something happened that completely astonished me. Completely by chance, today in the synagogue I read from Parashat Devarim (Deuteronomy 33:26):

*"There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides the heavens
to help you, and in His majesty rides the skies."
אין כאלו ישראל רכב שמים בעזרך ובגאותו שחקים*

I read the verse, stopped, and got goosebumps, and so did all the other worshippers who knew the story and understood why I was there with them. After everything that happened on that flight, after the fear, after the storming of the terrorist, and after realizing how thin the line between life and death really was – finding myself facing those exact words, 'rides the heavens to help you,' was a moment I can hardly explain.

I don't know if it was divine providence, a coincidence, or simply a moment that took on a profoundly deep meaning for me. But today, in the synagogue, as I recited Birkat HaGomel, I felt mainly one thing: Thank you. Thank you for life. Thank you for the miracle. And thank you for the privilege to stand here and tell the story. Am Yisrael Chai!"

The ultimate antidote: Peace between Abraham's sons, dwelling together in unity

Every year since 2023, God's grace has given us reasons to rejoice each time at this painful time of year. [But the real antidote to the poison of October 7 lies in the reconciliation between Jews and Arabs, the sons of Abraham.](#)

The opposite of the hatred that drove Sinwar, the hate that filled the Hamas terrorists who cruelly murdered and kidnapped Israelis, and that makes people want to terrorize and kill Jewish people, is love.

Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, is a time when we think about the fragility of life, and the way God came to tabernacle in our midst, to dwell among us. Whether it was the desert tabernacle pitched up in the camp of the twelve tribes, or God made flesh and dwelling among us as man, love wants to draw close in relationship. [It is only God who can change the hearts of those who hate us, and it is only God who can soften the hearts of Israel to embrace their enemies. For this we need Jesus. The Gospel is the true antidote and the only hope to dissolve the destructive hatred between us.](#)

But the good news is that it is happening. [God can transform hearts full of hatred to abound with love. He has the power to heal the deep wounds and trauma in the Middle East, bringing peace and joy instead.](#) It is the healing balm. It is the precious oil of blessing.

Join us as we proclaim the life-giving truth of Jesus, the One with the power to heal, restore, and do miracles that take our breath away.

*Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,
life forevermore.
(Psalm 133)*

Stainton Church Annual Gift Day and Harvest Celebration

On Saturday 3rd October 2026 we held our **Annual Gift Day**; from 9.30am to 12.00 noon our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild, and our Churchwarden, Vernon Clare, were at the Church gates in Hemlington Road to receive any very kind financial donations our Members and Friends may make. **Stainton Church was open that morning** and we welcomed people to call in for **free refreshments**. We also welcomed donations of flowers in memory of a loved one and/or donations of non-perishable food – **tins, packets and jars** – which we used to decorate the Church for our **Harvest Festival Café Church Service** at 11.00am the following day, **Sunday 4th October 2026**. The tins, packets and jars were taken to the **EcoShop in Hemlington** the following Wednesday, after the *Coffee and Kids* Toddler Group session.

Can we take this opportunity to say a
HUGE “THANK YOU”
to everyone who gave generously more than **£900** to the Church
before, during and after our Gift Day!

An opportunity to join Stainton Mothers' Union in supporting **MY SISTER'S PLACE**

My Sister's Place is a Middlesbrough-based specialist domestic abuse charity that provides confidential, non-judgemental support to anyone affected by abuse. You can find out more about their vital, often life-saving, work by visiting their website at this [link](#).



Here is an opportunity not to be missed - For **one week only**, between noon on 6th October and noon on 13th October, there is an opportunity for match funding of monies given, meaning that every donation made via the dedicated link below **will be doubled** up to the value of £7000:
<https://donate.biggive.org/campaign/a05WS00000GNhRGYA1>

Teesside churches unite to open up Bible conversations

Across Teesside, more people are asking questions about Jesus, exploring Christianity, and stepping through church doors. This autumn, churches across the region will respond together through **[Bible Conversations: Teesside](#)**, an initiative led by the [Bible Society](#) in partnership with [Transforming Teesside Together](#).

Churches across Stockton, Middlesbrough, and Redcar and Cleveland, **including the three Churches in our Church Family**, are creating opportunities to continue those conversations by hosting courses, small groups, one-to-one conversations, and relaxed spaces where people can explore the Christian faith together.



You will be able to find out what is happening where and when, and book free tickets, [by clicking on this link](#) or by scanning this QR Code with your smart-phone.



From 15th September 2026, our Church Family will be hosting **[The Bible Course](#)**, an 8-week course with videos and informal discussion that aims to give an **[overview of the Bible and its 'big questions'](#)**. This is open to **everyone** from our three Parishes (and beyond...) – no experience necessary! The course will be held at St Margaret's Church, Brookfield on Tuesday evenings at **[7.00pm for a 7.30pm start, beginning on 15th Sept 2026](#)** and then each Tuesday evening until 3rd November. [Editor's note: Our Vicar, Revd Laura, has asked me to include the following link which will take you to **[the YouTube website where you will be able to watch the whole set of the Bible Course videos](#)** – here is the link: [\(49\) The Bible Course Collection - YouTube](#)]

We are excited to be holding **[Bible Conversations](#)** – an opportunity to chat and share our understanding or questions about the Bible with others - in each of our three Parishes as follows:

- ~~St Peter's Church, Hilton~~ Thursdays at 11.00am from 10th Sept to 1st Oct 2026
- **St Peter and St Paul's Church, Stainton** **Mondays at 1.30pm from 5th Oct to 26th Oct 2026**
- **Community Living Room, Hemlington** Thursdays at 12.00noon from 22nd Oct to 12th Nov
- **St Margaret's Church, Brookfield** Wednesdays at 11.15am from 4th Nov to 25th Nov 2026

Pease join us in praying for Teesside, for churches preparing to welcome people, and for everyone who will encounter God's Word through the campaign.

Services and Events in our Churches over the next two weeks

On **Sunday 11th October 2026** it is **Trinity 19** and there will be services as follows:

At 9.30am at Brookfield Church a service of **Holy Communion** at which our Pioneer Minister, Revd Vanessa Kirby, will preside;

At 11.00am at Stainton Church a service of **Holy Communion** at which our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild, will preside; and

At 4.00pm at Hilton Church a service of **Evensong** led by Revd Vanessa.

The scripture passages set in the Lectionary for Trinity 19 are:

- Isaiah 25:1-9
- Psalm 23
- Philippians 4:1-9
- Matthew 22:1-14

On **Monday 12th October 2026** at 1.30pm in **Stainton Church** there will be a **Bible Conversation** session.

On **Tuesday 13th October 2026** at 9.30am at **Stainton Church** there will be a half-hour **Church Family Prayer Gathering**.

On **Tuesday 13th October 2026** at 7.00pm (for a 7.30pm start) at **Brookfield Church Hall** there will be **the fifth session** of our eight-week **Bible Course** led by our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild.

On **Wednesday 14th October 2026** at 10.00am at **Brookfield Church** there will be a service of **Holy Communion** at which our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild, will preside.

On **Sunday 18th September 2026** it is **Trinity 20 – It is also the Feast of Saint Luke the Evangelist**, which we shall be celebrating in our Family of Churches. There will be services as follows:

At 9.30m at Hilton Church a service of **Morning Praise** led by Julia Ardley, our Authorised Lay Minister;

At 9.30am at Brookfield Church an **All-Age Holy Communion Service** at which our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild, will preside;

At 11.00am at Stainton Church a service of **Holy Communion** at which our Pioneer Minister, Revd Vanessa Kirby, will preside; and

At 4.00pm at Brookfield Church a **“Church Family at 4” service** led jointly by Revd Laura and Revd Vanessa.

The scripture passages set in the Lectionary for **the Feast of St Luke the Evangelist** are:

- Acts 16:6-12a
- Psalm 147:1-7
- 2 Timothy 4:5-17
- Luke 10:1-9

The scripture passages set in the Lectionary for **Trinity 20** are:

- Isaiah 5:1-7
- Psalm 96:1-end
- 1 Thessalonians 1.1–10
- Matthew 22:15-22

On **Monday 19th October 2026** at 1.30pm in **Stainton Church** there will be a **Bible Conversation** session.

On **Tuesday 20th October 2026** at 9.30am at **Stainton Church** there will be a half-hour **Church Family Prayer Gathering**

On **Tuesday 20th October 2026** at 7.00pm (for a 7.30pm start) at **Brookfield Church Hall** there will be **the sixth session** of our seven-week **Bible Course** led by our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild.

On **Wednesday 21st October 2026** at 10.00am at **Brookfield Church** there will be a service of **Holy Communion** at which our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild, will preside.

On **Saturday 24th October 2026** it is the **Hilton Church Annual Gift Day** when, between 9.30am and 12.30pm our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild and the two Hilton Churchwardens, Hilary Tulloch and Angela Sayer will be at the **Hilton War Memorial** near the entrance to the Churchyard to receive any kind donations from Members and Friends of **St Peter's Church, Hilton** that will be used to support the work of the Church in the local community.

Please pray

... for the people of Middlesbrough and the surrounding area following the recent deaths after the crash on the A66 and the house fire.

To help guide our prayers – yours and mine - here are four specific areas [that Bishop Barry has mentioned]:

1. **The timing of recent events coincides with a major ecumenical outreach across Teesside, funded and supported by the Bible Society.** As Christians, we know the life-changing difference knowing the love, identity, hope and call of Jesus Christ makes individually, and in a community, **so please pray that much fruit and transformation will result [from the Bible Conversations Teesside campaign] that will last many years across our region;**
2. **The emergency services continue to face extraordinary pressures. Please pray for** Firefighters, Paramedics and Ambulance Crews and Police Officers [who] continue to serve the community as they deal with their own grief and trauma;

3. **And finally, as a community many people have lived in fear for some years and for others recent events have highlighted and heightened anxiety. Please pray for** a spiral of de-escalations rather than a pattern of escalating violence. May God's peace and protection be known across our community.

... for Nepal and Tibet following the recent flash-floods that have occurred.

Here is a prayer from [The Methodist Church](#):

Loving God,

We pray for all those affected by the floods in Nepal and Tibet.

Be near to those who mourn the loss of loved ones, and to all who wait in uncertainty for news of family and friends.

Hold close those whose homes, livelihoods and communities have been swept away, and all who are shocked, displaced or afraid.

Strengthen rescue workers, local communities, churches and all who are searching, serving and offering care in the midst of this crisis.

Grant courage and resilience to those waiting for news, facing uncertainty, and fearing the days ahead.

As we witness the growing fragility of creation, renew our commitment to care for one another and for the earth of which we are a part.

In the name of Christ.

Amen.

... and for Venezuela following the recent double-earthquake that hit the city of Caracas and the state of La Guairá and especially for the aid-agencies seeking to support the Venezuelans at this difficult time.

Here is a guide from the Christian Charity [Tearfund](#) to help us pray for the people of Venezuela;

Pray for:

- search and rescue teams;
- those grieving the loss of loved ones;
- everyone dealing with extreme emotional distress;
- those who have been injured;
- provision of emergency aid and supplies;
- local churches; an
- those co-ordinating the response.

... for Ukraine and Russia for an end to the war started by Russia.

Here is a prayer from the [Baptist Union of Great Britain](#):

Lord God

Three years after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine we pray for the people of Ukraine who have suffered so terribly.

We bring before you each person affected, for you know their suffering better than ourselves. We pray for those on the frontlines, for families torn apart, for the widows and for the orphans. We pray for those displaced from their homes, whether living in Ukraine or exiled in other countries.

We are thankful for the strength that your faithful followers have found in you, their witness to hope in the face of such adversity, and for the Ukrainian churches that have served their communities sacrificially with love.

Grant your grace to us. Help us, sinful human beings that we are, so that we learn to forgive one another and love, recalling Christ's love for us.

We relentlessly pray for peace in the hope that you have placed before us. We pray for the efforts of leaders who seek to negotiate a just and lasting peace. May all in Ukraine and Russia be encouraged to hope for a better future.

In your precious name, we pray.

Amen

... for Israel and Palestine, for Lebanon, for Iran and the wider Middle East

especially for the war between America and Iran and its proxies, and that the fighting between Israel, Hamas and Hezbollah would endure and become a lasting Peace. Please pray too for Jewish and Arab Christians, and especially for the Iranian people at this time of civil unrest.

[Embrace, the Christian Charity tells us](#) (*accessed 8/10/2026*)

Unsurprisingly, Christianity in the land where Jesus walked dates back to the days of the Apostles. In Arabic, Christians are known as *Nasrani* (from the Arabic word for Nazarene) or *Masihi* (from the Arabic *Masih*, meaning Messiah). In Hebrew they are *Notzri*, which also means Nazarene.

How many Christians are in Israel and Palestine today?

Approximately 45,000 out of the West Bank's Palestinian population of 3.2 million are Christian. Before 7 October 2023, an estimated 1,000 Christians lived in Gaza, representing 0.05% of the population. In

Israel there are around 180,000 Christians. These are made up of indigenous Christian citizens of Israel, Christians who have emigrated to the country, and a growing number of Messianic Jews.

The two largest churches in Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank are Catholic and Greek Orthodox. A smaller number also belong to other Christian denominations, including Protestant and Anglican communities.

What are the challenges facing Christians in Israel and Palestine?

One of the biggest challenges facing churches in Israel and Palestine is to persuade Christian families to stay. In 1948 Christians made up around 10% of the population, compared to around 2% today. In Gaza more than half the Christian population is estimated to have left over the past decade, while the human cost of conflict since 7 October 2023 continues to unfold, amid catastrophic humanitarian conditions and the displacement of around 90% of the population.

The main drivers of emigration include limited economic opportunities and the ongoing Israeli occupation. Like their fellow Muslim Palestinians, Christians in the West Bank face restrictions on their movements, military check points, [Settler expansion and attacks](#) and military raids. Access to water, electricity, and healthcare is limited, and the use of [child detention](#) and forced displacement represents a denial human dignity.

Since the escalation of violence following the Hamas attacks on 7 October 2023, the situation for Christians in Gaza has deteriorated dramatically. Many have lost their homes and livelihoods, and the collapse of healthcare, and severe shortages of food and water have created a critical and long-term humanitarian crisis. In this context, a growing number of Christians have either left or expressed a strong desire to leave Gaza in search of safety and stability.

Please join us in praying for our Churches to Grow

Our Bishop Barry and Archdeacon Amanda have asked us to pray fervently for people to come forward to fill a number of clergy vacancies in our Archdeaconry. Praise God for the vacancies that have already been filled, and pray for all involved in the recruitment leading up to the Licensing of Priests in remaining Parishes/Benefices.

Can we invite you to use our [Revitalise](#) "prayer for growth" in your personal quiet times with God?

Revitalise us Lord,
Enthuse in our congregations the desire for mission. Give
Vision to our planning and
Inspire our thoughts as we seek Your will.
Teach us to be more like You, Christ
Abiding in You and
Loving one another.
In growing healthy churches,
Sharing our faith, living Christ's story
Every day, help us to be faithful disciples and bear much fruit. Amen.

This autumn the Parishes in our Stokesley Deanery and the Deanery Leadership Team (DLT) will begin the preparation of a revised Deanery Plan to help us all Live Christ's Story. **We are asked to use this prayer often:**

Gracious God,
You are the source of all wisdom and the giver of every good gift.
As we gather to plan for the life and mission of our deanery,
fill our hearts with your spirit of discernment and peace.
Guide our conversations so they may be rooted in love,
our decisions so they reflect our desire to live Christ's story together,
and our vision so it may serve the needs of all in our communities.
Help us to listen well, speak kindly,
and work together in unity for the sake of your kingdom.
May all we do bring glory to your name and bear fruit that will last.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen

Pastoral Support - Here are the contact details for our Vicar, Revd Laura Wild:

Address: The Vicarage, 89 Low Lane, Brookfield, Middlesbrough TS5 9EF
Phone: 01642-598621
E-mail: rev.laura.wild@gmail.com

Laura's normal "day off" is Friday - if you need to contact her on that day, please leave a message on the answerphone.

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