

THE PARISH MAGAZINE

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ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,
TOTTENHAM



IN MEMORY OF
REV'D CATE IRVINE



IN
LOVING
MEMORY
OF
CATE



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ST. ANDREW'S PARISH MAGAZINE





OUR BELOVED CATE

by Dixie Locke, Churchwarden

Cate was our vicar for almost 3 years, but she achieved more in that short time than many vicars do in a lifetime. She understood the meaning of the church family and welcomed us all, respecting our idiosyncrasies and our individuality and differing viewpoints, believing we are all God's people and deserved to be loved.

Cate was unflappable; never letting things get on top of her. She was always ready with solutions, not necessarily what you were looking for but when tried, they often worked. She was kind and compassionate and interested in us all. She instinctively knew who

needed comfort or a chance to share their problems. Cate made changes slowly and carefully and it is a tribute to her tact and understanding that there were few complaints and within a very short time those changes became a much-loved part of our worship.

Cate was an excellent spiritual leader. She helped us all to reflect on our faith and with quiet determination encouraged us out of our comfort zone to broaden and deepen our religious knowledge and our faith. Alongside Cate there was Brian, whose enthusiasm and guidance into the subject of ecology helped us gain our bronze award.

Cate's big passion was craft. I loved the little angels and Christmas trees she had us all knitting, crocheting or crafting to decorate the church at Christmas. She was determined to cover the lych gate with poppies which hasn't happened yet. So would all those who can knit or crochet get busy so we can achieve Cate's dream for her in November.

Cate was a real friend to us all and along with everyone who knew her I shall miss her so much.



Cate, teaching us to crochet



A CALLING

by Noah Lewis, Safeguarding Officer

I believe I was drawn to St Andrew's Church, and there are simply too many reasons to explain why here. Yet, for me, the evidence is compelling. I also believe I was brought to Cate for what could only be described as a crash course in being a Christian and in understanding the power, mystery and enormity of the Holy Sacrament.

Cate took me under her wing. Her teaching was not always gentle, nor should it have been. There were times when I was firmly corrected and told, quite plainly, when I had got something wrong. Looking back, I treasure those moments just as much as her encouragement.

The first lesson she taught me was how to approach and treat the altar. Until then, I had never truly understood what reverence meant.

One day, while discussing an upcoming event, I absent-mindedly rested my elbow on the altar. The response was immediate. "This is God's table. Do you think anyone would just lean on God's table?" It was a sharp reprimand, but one I have never forgotten. The lesson stayed with me, and I have never made that mistake again. But there were so many lessons therewithin.

Within two short years, Cate had mentored me, guided me, challenged me, taught me and prepared me for pastoral ministry as well as a number of roles in the church. She recognised something in me long before I fully recognised it in myself. She saw that God was calling me to something, and she seemed determined to ensure that I answered that call without delay.

Our one-to-one meetings at the vicarage became some of the most formative conversations of my life. Cate was deeply spiritual, but never distant. She asked searching questions, shaped my thinking, encouraged my prayer, and gradually drew me into every aspect of the life and ministry of the Church. She did not simply teach me what to do; she taught me how to be.

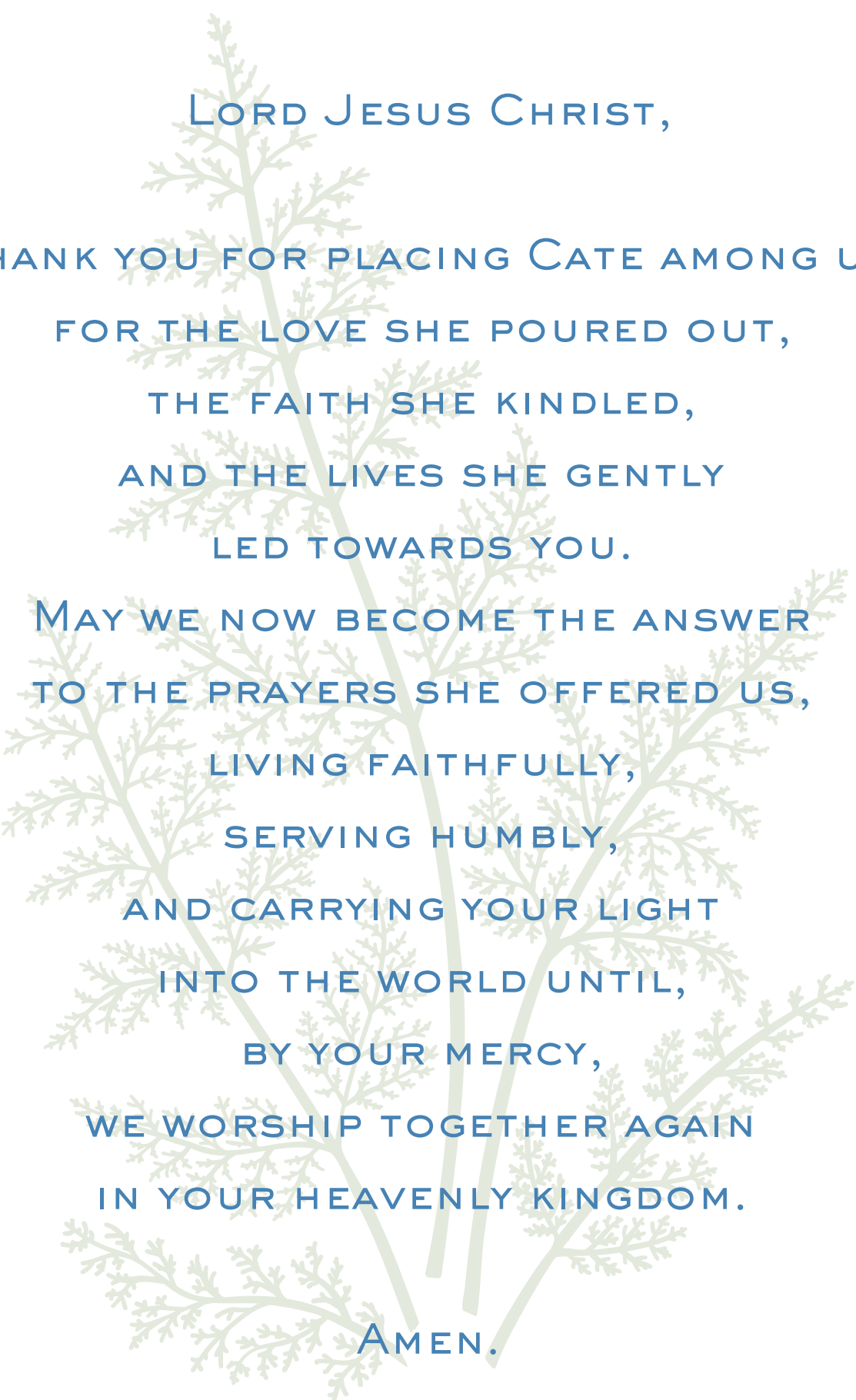
Cate changed the direction of my life. Looking back, it almost feels as though she knew what God intended for me before I did, and that she understood there was no time to waste. For that, I owe Mother Cate more than I could ever adequately express.

I am deeply thankful that, before she died, I was able to send her a card telling her how much she meant to me and how grateful I was for her love, guidance and friendship. That will always be one of my greatest comforts.

Now it is our turn to carry her legacy forward. I intend to pick up Cate's baton and run with it, striving to do for others even a fraction of the good that she did for so many. And, of course, should anyone be tempted to rest their elbow on the altar... I shall be there to 'guide' you!

There is so much more I could write, and perhaps one day I will, but for now, let us simply remember that we were blessed with a truly remarkable priest. Cate touched countless lives, and mine is one of them. I thank God for bringing her into my life, and I pray that I may honour her memory by living out the faith she helped to nurture in me. In the meantime, I feel empty and exposed without Cate's guidance and reassurance, but I take great comfort from my church family.





LORD JESUS CHRIST,
THANK YOU FOR PLACING CATE AMONG US,
FOR THE LOVE SHE POURED OUT,
THE FAITH SHE KINDLED,
AND THE LIVES SHE GENTLY
LED TOWARDS YOU.
MAY WE NOW BECOME THE ANSWER
TO THE PRAYERS SHE OFFERED US,
LIVING FAITHFULLY,
SERVING HUMBLY,
AND CARRYING YOUR LIGHT
INTO THE WORLD UNTIL,
BY YOUR MERCY,
WE WORSHIP TOGETHER AGAIN
IN YOUR HEAVENLY KINGDOM.
AMEN.

ST. ANDREW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cate brought with her a new lease of energy to our parish and our school when she moved to Totteridge. She forged an enduring partnership between our parish and our school allowing everyone to feel her warm welcome and being part of one united community. She worked closely alongside the school worship team to create accessible worship opportunities for all which the children were inspired by and looked forward to and will cherish. She will be greatly missed by our school community.

Jess Roberts & Chris Psara
Teachers



I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Cate to strengthen the bond between our school and St Andrew's Church. She helped strengthen our vision and gave us many gifts. On a personal level It was a privilege to know her, albeit all too briefly. Her warmth, commitment and pragmatism will never be forgotten. May she rest in peace.

Lisa-Jane Bonfield,
Deputy Head Teacher



KNITTED INTO OUR VILLAGE HEART - A THANKSGIVING FOR CATE'S MINISTRY

by Sylvia Solomon

I. Her Homeward Journey

The church stands quiet beneath evening skies,
Yet heaven rejoices as Cate homeward flies.
The angel who dwelt at our village heart's core,
Has passed through the veil to God's heavenly shore.
She journeyed among us with kindness and grace,
Now welcomed by Christ in His radiant embrace.

II. The Knitting Vicar

She taught us to fashion the Christmas tree bright,
Then knit herself into our days with delight.
A beautiful thread in the tapestry spun,
Through every sweet hour till day's work was done.
Her love wove through fabric and fibre with care,
Still stitched in the life of our worship and prayer.

III. Our Chief Chorister

Our chief chorister at the fading of day,
She lifted our Evensong praise on its way.
With order and grace she ennobled our lays,
And brightened our worship through all of our days.
The beauty she cherished in liturgy's art,
Still echoes in song through each thankful heart.



IV. The Preacher and Guide

God's goodness and mercy shone through her living,
Awakening virtue in all of her giving.
An erudite guide whose sermons would start,
A deeper reflection in mind and in heart.
Each Sunday we left, uplifted and wise,
Beholding our faith with more open eyes.

V. Our Spiritual Companion

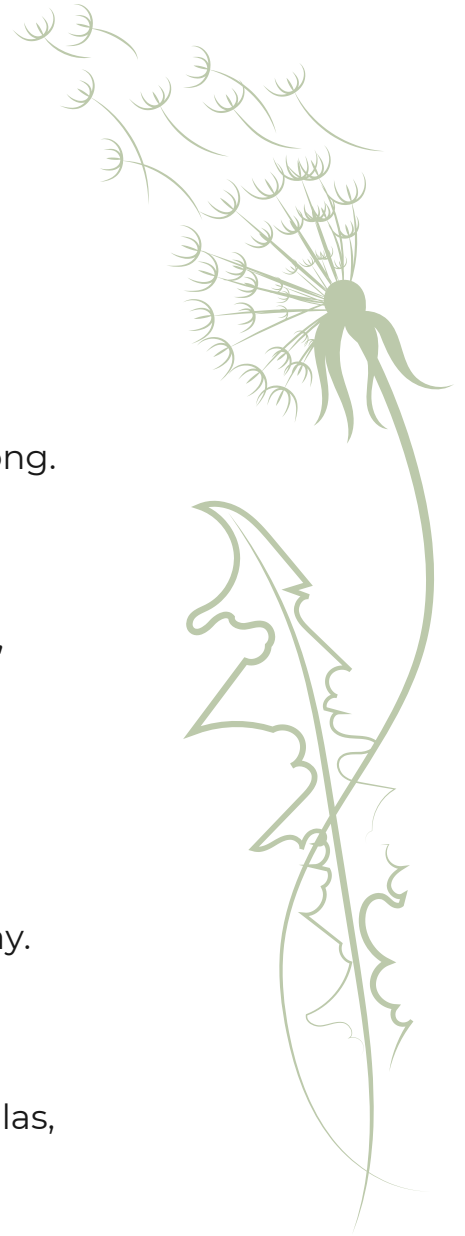
Through solemn Lent she led us to reflect,
With holy wisdom and profound respect.
Her hands poured water at the sacred font,
Proclaiming life beyond all earthly want.
In confirmation, counsel, prayer, and song,
She helped God's people know where they belong.

VI. The Marriage Blessing

Her words to every bride and groom still bloom,
Like gold finely inscribed to adorn every room.
A legacy lasting for all who would hear,
Encircled in love that remains ever near.
The blessings she offered on love's sacred day,
Still guide many homes as they journey life's way.

VII. To Her Family

We thank you, dear Brian, and Rufus, and Douglas,
For sharing all her light and her love among us.
May God's rich blessings fall softly upon you,
And keep you deep-rooted in grace ever new.
For Cate loved deeply, and love never dies,
A truth still resounding through earth and the skies.



Our thoughts, prayers and gratitude remain with Brian, Rufus, Douglas,
and all of Cate's family during this time.



*Cate beside our ancient
churchyard yew, a fitting symbol of
the enduring faith, love and
renewal she nurtured among us.*

EXPOSITION AND COMMENTARY: KNITTED INTO OUR VILLAGE HEART

Cate's life and witness profoundly shaped both the worshipping community of St Andrew's Church and the wider village; this poem intentionally seeks to balance personal memory, communal thanksgiving, Christian hope and theological reflection.

The decision to express this thanksgiving as a poem is itself intentional, honouring Cate's lifelong love of poetry and her conviction that beauty, language, and worship belong naturally together.

The structure follows the broad arc of a vicar's calling and legacy:

'Heaven → Village → Church → Faith → Family → Hope

(Interpretation in footnote below)

THEME	SIGNIFICANCE
JOURNEY AND HOMECOMING	The poem begins with earthly grief and heavenly rejoicing, reflecting the Christian understanding of earthly life as pilgrimage and heaven as home.
KNITTING AND TAPESTRY	The central metaphor of the poem. Knitting, thread, tapestry and stitching symbolise the way Cate wove herself into the life of the parish and village community.
MUSIC AND LITURGY	Reflects Cate's devotion to Evensong, choral worship and the beauty and dignity of Anglican liturgy.
PREACHING AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION	Celebrates Cate's gifts as preacher, teacher and spiritual companion, helping others to behold their faith with renewed understanding.
SACRAMENT AND DISCIPLESHIP	Through baptism, confirmation, prayer and pastoral accompaniment, the poem acknowledges Cate's role in nurturing Christian discipleship and belonging.
MARRIAGE AND COVENANT	The imagery of rings, inscriptions and encircling love expresses permanence, faithfulness and the enduring nature of Christian covenant.
CREATION, ROOTEDNESS, AND RENEWAL	The yew tree imagery honours Cate's environmental ministry. Long associated with churchyards, the evergreen yew symbolises resilience, renewal, resurrection and life continuing across generations.
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY	The poem culminates in thanksgiving for Brian, Rufus, Douglas and the wider family, recognising that ministry is rarely exercised alone.
RESURRECTION, HOPE AND ETERNAL LOVE	The poem ultimately affirms the Christian conviction that love, grounded in God, transcends death. The final line returns to the skies of the opening stanza, bringing the poem full circle and expressing the communion of saints.

DETAILED COMMENTARY

STANZA: I. HER HOMEWARD JOURNEY

KEY LINES

HIDDEN MEANING AND COMMENTARY

*The church stands quiet beneath
evening skies, Yet heaven rejoices as
Cate homeward flies.*

The poem opens with deliberate contrast. The earthly church experiences silence and absence, while heaven rejoices. This juxtaposition reflects the Christian understanding that death is both an occasion of grief and of resurrection hope. The use of "homeward" reflects the belief that earthly life is a pilgrimage and that our true home is with God. "Evening" symbolises both the close of earthly life and the traditional time of Evensong, so beloved by Cate.

*The angel who dwelt at our village
heart's core,*

This line reflects the affection with which Cate was regarded within the parish. "Village heart" intentionally echoes the poem's title and presents her not as a distant clergy figure, but as someone deeply woven into village life.

Has passed through the veil

The veil symbolises the boundary between earthly and eternal life. It also subtly anticipates later marriage imagery, where veils traditionally signify covenant and transition.

*Now welcomed by Christ in His
radiant embrace.*

The poem begins with welcome rather than death, reflecting resurrection hope and Christ's promise: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

STANZA: II. THE KNITTING VICAR

*She taught us to fashion the
Christmas tree bright,*

This stanza celebrates the affectionate title by which Cate was known, referring to the knitted Christmas trees that became both a communal activity and an expression of fellowship.

*Then knit herself into our days with
delight.*

Both literally and metaphorical: as Cate taught others to knit, she also knitted herself into the fabric of parish life.

*A beautiful thread in the tapestry
spun,*

Cate is presented not as apart from the community, but as one of its most enduring and beautiful threads.

*Still stitched in the life of our worship
and prayer.*

"Still" is one of the poem's leitmotifs, conveying continuity. Though she has passed, her influence remains woven into the church's life.

STANZA: III. OUR CHIEF CHORISTER

*She lifted our Evensong praise on its
way.*

Cate had a beautifully fine singing voice. The use of "Our" is intentional, conveying affection and belonging; Evensong was especially dear to her and a cherished part of parish life.

*With order and grace she ennobled
our lays,*

"Lays" (an old poetic word for songs or hymns), paired with "ennobled", reflects her love of traditional poetry and commitment to dignified, beautiful worship.

The beauty she cherished in liturgy's art,

Cate believed that worship should be offered with care, reverence and beauty; "liturgy's art" reflects this conviction.

STANZA: IV. THE PREACHER AND GUIDE

*God's goodness and mercy shone
through her living,*

Echoes Psalm 23: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Cate embodied the Gospel she proclaimed.

Awakening virtue in all of her giving.

Celebrates how her generosity and ministry inspired goodness in others.

An erudite guide

Acknowledges Cate's intellect and scholarship, which shaped her thoughtful preaching ministry.

*Beholding our faith with more open
eyes.*

"Beholding" is especially significant: shortly before her illness, Cate preached on the biblical command to "behold". The line gently alludes to this and reflects her gift for helping others see familiar truths anew.

STANZA: V. OUR SPIRITUAL COMPANION

*Through solemn Lent she led us to
reflect,*

This heading reflects Cate's role not only as priest, but as fellow pilgrim and friend, with references to her Lent courses and spiritual accompaniment.

*Her hands poured water at the
sacred font, Proclaiming life beyond
all earthly want.*

Echoes Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Baptism proclaims abundant and eternal life in Christ. The juxtaposition of water and want reflects the Psalm.

*In confirmation, counsel, prayer, and
song,*

Captures the breadth of her ministry: sacramental, pastoral, spiritual and musical.

STANZA: VI. THE MARRIAGE BLESSING

*Her words to every bride and groom
still bloom,*

Reflects the lasting impact of Cate's wedding ministry (and the privilege of hearing her addresses as part of the choir). Marriage is included not simply because Cate conducted weddings, but because Christian marriage reflects the covenant between Christ and his Church, making it a fitting symbol within a poem that traces the arc of her priestly ministry from calling to eternal hope.

*Like gold finely inscribed to adorn
every room.*

Suggests her words held lasting value, like an inscription on a ring or framed text; "gold" evokes wedding rings.

*Encircled in love that remains ever
near.*

"Encircled" evokes the wedding ring: suggests covenant, permanence and enduring love.

*Still guide many homes as they
journey life's way.*

Cate's counsel continues to shape marriages long beyond the ceremony; the movement is gold → inscription → ring → covenant → enduring love.

STANZA: VII. TO HER FAMILY

*May God's rich blessings fall softly
upon you,*

The final stanza shifts from remembrance to blessing, functioning as a benediction for Brian, Rufus, Douglas and the wider family.

*And keep you deep-rooted in grace
ever new.*

Linked to the image of the ancient churchyard yew; a symbol of eternity, renewal and resurrection. Yews renew themselves internally, literally "knitting" new trunks within old and can survive for millennia. The image also honours Cate's commitment to Eco Church and creation care, reflected in St Andrew's achievement of the A Rocha Bronze Award, a milestone that brought her particular joy.

*For Cate loved deeply, and love never
dies,*

Expresses the poem's central theological affirmation: that love, grounded in God, transcends death.

'Footnote – Interpreting the Arc 'Heaven → Village → Church → Faith → Family → Hope'

The overarching themes intentionally follow what might be described as the arc of a priest's calling and legacy.

- **Heaven → Village:** Marks the beginning of a priest's calling. The vicar receives a divine, heavenly calling and is sent into a particular local community to live among the people, share their joys, and carry their burdens. This echoes the model of the Incarnation: Christ leaves Heaven to enter the human "village". Ministry begins by leaving one's comfort zone and going where people are.
- **Village → Church:** This represents the daily work of ministry. By walking the streets of the village and building relationships, the vicar gathers the community into the local church, transforming a geographical place into a spiritual home. This is the work of evangelism: meeting people where they are and drawing them into the fellowship of the Church.
- **Church → Faith:** Within that church, through preaching, baptisms, marriages, funerals, and pastoral care, the vicar nurtures community into deep, personal Christian faith.
- **Faith → Family:** This speaks to the intimate legacy left behind. A priest's faith is not merely a public ministry; it also shapes the life of their own household, children, and immediate family, who share in and support that ministry. True faith transforms, turning ministry outward into legacy and helping shape the next generation.
- **Family → Hope:** This is the final movement that loops back on itself. As the priest approaches the end of earthly life, surrounded by family, all that has gone before, the village, the church, the years of faith and ministry, distills into a pure and unwavering Christian hope: the hope of resurrection and eternal life. The legacy of a faithful life points towards the eternal promises of God.





The net of knitted and crocheted poppies, started by Cate, and which we will be adding to until it eventually covers the entire lychgate, as was Cate's vision.

MORE TEA, VICAR?

by Sarah Newlyn, Parish Administrator

From the first day I met Cate I knew we would be friends. It was the Wednesday morning after Cate's Licensing Service, and I was nervously awaiting her arrival to the office, wondering if she would a) be annoyed that I hadn't made it to her Licensing Service, b) whether I should call her 'Reverend' or just 'Cate', and c) whether she liked dogs! (For those who don't know, my poodle, Woodford, is my very capable office assistant).

As it turned out, I had no cause for concern, as a) "just Cate is fine" were her first words after "hello", b) "just Cate" was not at all upset about my missing the service, and c) she loved dogs, and bonded immediately with Woodford.

And so began a lovely, easy working relationship, but more than that, a true friendship that I had come to treasure. Working with Cate just didn't feel like "work".

Whatever the task of the day, we always seemed to find ourselves laughing, and drinking quantities of tea that you may be forgiven for thinking would defy human capabilities. We shared what some might term a wicked sense of humour (I know she would have chuckled at the title of this) which made our working day always a pleasure, and never a chore.

Cate had a warmth and an ease about her that meant she quickly slotted in to life at St. Andrew's. She was so full of ideas and creativity, and it was a joy and an honour to be a part of helping bring those ideas to life. The way she seamlessly wove her love of all things craft into her ministry always fascinated me – the crocheted poppies will be a wonderful reminder of Cate every Remembrance, as will the Tiny Trees that adorned the church on her first Christmas as St. Andrew's Vicar.

She seemed to have an innate understanding and vision of what would work in our little church, and the results were always beautiful.

Cate and I shared many lunches, both working and not, at the vicarage, where we would happily while away the time chatting – and drinking more tea – and we enjoyed several walks across Darlands together, where Cate would share her impressive knowledge of flora and fauna, butterflies and birds. Her passion for nature was obvious, and she would whip out her phone to photograph the patterns of the lichen on branches, or the texture of the moss on the roots at the base of a tree. She saw beauty everywhere, and that enthusiasm was infectious. Because of Cate, I find myself more aware of the magnificent patterns of nature that surround us daily.

Just as obvious as her love of nature was Cate's love of her family. Her eyes would light up if Douglas or Rufus wandered in while we were chatting work, and she would

delight in asking their opinion on something we were working on. Brian, too, would pop in on our “meetings” and share insights – always useful, often hilarious – and I could not have felt more welcome in their home.

As well as all the amazing things Cate did in her time at St. Andrew's, we also kept a “long list” of projects too, and, over time, I hope to be able to implement some of these, in Cate's memory and honour. I know that I am not alone when I say that we have lost so much more than our Vicar. Cate was a much admired and much loved friend, to so many. Woodford still awaits her arrival at the office on a Tuesday morning, toy at the ready, and I am already missing her more than I can say.

Rest in peace, my dear friend.



MEMORIES OF CATE

by John Abbott

I first met Cate at the back of St Andrew's church drinking coffee after (perhaps) her first service. Within no time at all we had covered many subjects and put the world to rights smiling in the agreement that we were perfect human beings!

Cate and I had several meetings together whilst discussing part of my Foundation Readership Course and they were always very enjoyable. At one meeting we found that we both had indifferent secondary school experiences; I would often feign sickness whilst Cate would often be truant (so much braver than me I exclaimed!).

Cate's openness and honesty I admired a great deal. This was a lady that understood the educational challenges that many people face. Along with Brian we found a common ground on the needs of those whom our education system fails.

One of my fondest conversations I had with Cate was in church. Cate was wondering about what we thought about her as the Revd of St Andrews Church (she had been with us for about 12 months). I assured Cate of what a truly magnificent job she was doing and how favourably we thought of her as our first female Vicar. What an honour for us I exclaimed! We then discussed some common ground of speaking in public and the many, many mishaps that we both had experienced whilst being in front of an audience.

For the short time that I knew Cate, I could tell that she embraced all life in all its diversity that included a variety of beliefs, cultures, personalities, not to mention the myriads of genus, flora and fauna that populate God's Earth. Cate embraced it all.

On a Saturday afternoon I received a text from Sophie informing me that Cate had passed away. Although I was expecting it, it was horrible to receive it and my heart sank. I simply texted back, 'so very sad, my thoughts are with an incredible lady.' Cate was quite simply that, an incredible human being whom I was so privileged to have met. God Bless you Cate and quite simply, thank you.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION IN CATE'S MEMORY,
THESE CAN BE MADE TO
THE DARLANDS CONSERVATION TRUST,
FOR A PLACE SHE LOVED.

SCAN THE QR CODE
OR VISIT: [HTTPS://CATEIRVINE.MUCHLOVED.COM/](https://cateirvine.muchloved.com/)



TAKE HEED, DEAR FRIENDS,
TO THE PROMPTINGS
OF LOVE AND TRUTH IN YOUR HEARTS.
TRUST THEM AS THE LEADINGS OF GOD
WHOSE LIGHT SHOWS US OUR DARKNESS
AND BRINGS US TO NEW LIFE.

*from Advices & Queries, The Yearly Meeting of the
Religious Society of Friend (Quakers) in Britain*

