

Christ Church and People

40p



Parish Magazine of
Christ Church Stone



April

2008

PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on pages 2 and 3.

Young people's activities take place in the Centre at 9.15 am
(see page 21 for details)

THE PARISH TEAM

Vicar	Paul Kingman The Vicarage, Bromfield Court	812669
Curate	Tim Vasby-Burnie, 1 Navigation Loop Email tim@vasbyburnie.net	814244
Electoral Roll Officer	Irene Gassor	814871
Parish Office	Christ Church Centre, Christ Church Way, Stone, Staffs ST15 8ZB Email christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com	811990
Deaconess (Retired)	Ann Butler	818160
Readers	David Bell John Butterworth David Rowlands Michael Thompson Cecilia Wilding	815775 817465 816713 813712 817987
Music Co-ordinators	Peter Mason Jeff Challinor	815854 819665
Wardens	Phil Tunstall David Rowlands	817028 816713
Deputy Wardens	Shirley Hallam, Arthur Foulkes	
Prayer Request List	Barbara Thornicroft	818700

CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

Booking Secretary	Carole or Irene	(Office)	811990
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CHURCH SCHOOLS

Christ Church C.E.(Controlled) First School, Northesk Street.

Head: Mrs Lynne Croxall B.Ed.(Hons) 354125

Christ Church C.E.(Aided) Middle School, Old Road

Head: C. Waghorn B.Ed(Hons),DPSE,ACP,FRSA 354047

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Christ Church



and People

Please get your contributions for the May magazine to us by 15th April

Cover Story:- The canal and the Joules brewery building

April 2008

Tue	1	10:00am 10:30am 7:30pm	Coffee before midweek service Midweek service Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	2	7:30pm 8:00pm	Standing Committee Christianity Explored in the Centre
Thu	3		
Fri	4		
Sat	5	8:30am 9:00am	Prayer Meeting in church Breakfast in the Centre
Sun	6	9:15am 6:00pm	Communion: 2 Chronicles 7:1-22 "God's agenda" Evening Prayer at Oulton Matthew 8:1-17 "God is able and willing"
Mon	7	9:00am 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	8	9:30am 10:00am 10:30am 12:30pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service Midweek service Seekers Club, Christ Church Middle School (planning) Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	9	8:00pm	Christianity Explored in the Centre
Thu	10	1:20pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly
Fri	11		
Sat	12		
Sun	13	9:15am 6:00pm	Morning Prayer. 2 Chr 12:1-16 "Humble yourselves" Communion at Oulton Matthew 8:18-27 "Faith put to the test"
Mon	14	9:00am 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	15	9:30am 10:00am 10:30am 12:30pm 1:00pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service Midweek service Seekers Club at Christ Church Middle School CTiS Fraternal meeting Youth Club in the Centre

April 2008

Wed	16	9:30am 7:30pm	Men's meeting Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Thu	17	1:20pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly
Fri	18		
Sat	19		
Sun	20	9:15am 6:00pm	Communion 2 Chron 15:1-19 "Seek my face" Evening Prayer at Oulton Matthew 8:28-9:8 "Satan and sin overcome"
Mon	21	9:00am 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	22	9:30am 10:00am 10:30am 12:30pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service Midweek service Seekers Club at Christ Church Middle School Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	23		
Thu	24	1:20pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly
Fri	25		
Sat	26		
Sun	27	9:15am 10:15am 6:00pm	Family service 2 Chronicles 20 "Pray" Fairtrade goods stall Communion at Oulton Matthew 9:9-17 "Dedicated disciples"
Mon	28	9:00am 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	29	9:30am 10:00am 10:30am 12:30pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service Midweek service Seekers Club at Christ Church Middle School Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	30	7:30pm	Standing Committee

The real cost of Marriage

I was stunned when I read about the cost of marriage. A newspaper reported that the average cost of getting married is £18,500. That's the average cost! I tried to tot up the figures in my head: a bride's dress and suit, bridesmaids outfits, two gold rings, a church service (*circa* £300), presents for various people, reception, cake and drinks *etc.* Yes, when you think about it things soon add up. It may be understandable especially since many marry later and so have many more friends to invite. But we may want to haggle over what is justifiable.

As a pastor I want to blow the whistle on this issue for two reasons. The first reason is that the **economic cost** of marriage is often a reason that couples do not get married: either leading to a delay or long-term postponement of tying the knot. In reality the lavish spread can be financially crippling if all our dreams are to be fulfilled. So, we have to ask from the practical standpoint is this really the priority? Yes we want to celebrate as best we can, but is a celebration better if we spend much more? This makes the day of marriage more important than the marriage itself.

The second reason is that a lavish celebration can disguise the **real cost** of marriage. The real cost of marriage is the cost of commitment. Listen to a snippet from the apostle Paul: *'husbands love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her;'* then again concerning husbands: *'each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband'* (Ephesians 5v25, 33). Paul explains that through the cross Jesus showed the ultimate commitment to his *'bride'* the church (Eph 5v32). Such love is to be shown in practical action through self-sacrifice, faithfulness, forgiveness and persevering commitment. Such love is precious. So we are deeply saddened when a marriage ends in separation: we long for their reconciliation but aim to be a support where this doesn't happen. On the other hand, we delight in seeing even just a pale reflection of Christ's love between a man and a woman.

So, marriage is something well worth celebrating, but the real cost has not changed.

Paul Kingman.



Demanding Discipleship

The Bible often uses military terms to describe God and his people. Jesus Christ is our Commander-in-Chief (see Revelation 19) and Christians are his soldiers. Sometimes this has been wrongly used to condone physical violence (e.g. the Crusades), but bad use must not rob us of such rich imagery.

General Tony Zinni mentions a paradox at the heart of the US Marines, one that (in his opinion) helps make them a great fighting force.

“We make the most detailed and specifically significant demands on our people in terms of iron discipline and precise standards. Yet of all the services, we probably have the greatest tolerance for mavericks and outside-the-box thinkers.”

When reading this, I cannot help but contrast this with much British Christianity that a) makes few demands on people, but b) has little room for mavericks, preferring to do church the way it has always been done!

We will think about being mavericks next month. What about “specifically significant demands”?

There can be no doubt that the call to follow Jesus is a call of radical, demanding discipleship. Good Friday speaks of a crucified Saviour, who calls us to crucify our interests and desires (Mark 8:34). Easter Sunday proclaims “Jesus is Lord”: obedience is not an optional extra! No-one can read the Sermon on the Mount without realising that Jesus' demands on his people are all-encompassing, far-reaching and profoundly life-changing. How tragic that so many people think they can be faithful to their baptism vows by trying to be nice and occasionally visiting church. How tragic that people can regularly attend church but never seek to bring their whole life under the liberating reign of King Jesus.

However, unlike the Marines, discipleship is not a product of shouting Sergeant Majors! It is the fruit of grace. “For the grace of God that brings salvation ... teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age” (Titus 2:11-12). Sometimes grace comes as the gentle word of our Saviour, who says “Come to me all who are weary and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Sometimes grace is less gentle; soldiers go through pain and hardship in training, but it may save their life when battle comes.

Easter has happened – the great victory has been won! So discipline yourself, follow the Captain and let's extend that victory to the whole world.

Tim Vasby-Burnie

It is with sadness that the Reader Team comes to terms with the loss and absence of Margaret, but we celebrate with joy her promotion.

What an encouragement for us all as we remember we only have to die once. Even Jesus only had to die once for all of us.

Margaret was persistent in that belief, and in making it known to others over many years.

A faithful colleague with whom to enjoy Christian work and fellowship, her friendly and enthusiastic contribution as a member of the team will long be remembered.

Mike Thompson

What Easter means to Me

God's love for us which brought him to the cross for our sins.
See 1 Peter 1:3-7 (below)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

(this contribution didn't make the March magazine "What Easter means to Me" section)

- At its meeting on 10th March 2008, the PCC approved a proposal for the distribution of 10% of the 2007 free-will offering (£4,950) to the missionaries and organisations we support as a church. Cecilia is happy to show a breakdown of the giving to anyone interested. The giving of this money is spread out over the year.
- Rebecca Williams met with the Mission Task Group informally on 28th February where she was able to share things that she could not share at an open meeting. She spoke about her experiences in Pakistan at an open meeting of the Oulton Missionary Fellowship in the Church Room at Oulton on 13th March 2008. A large number came and found her presentation very interesting and had their questions answered.
- Sheila Hawley is enquiring whether Tearfund could send a speaker to tell us more about Tearfund's work at the Harvest Supper on Saturday 27th September 2008.
- The Lee family are back in the UK from the Philippines for two months this summer. They will be staying at the Atwills' home near Skipton for three weeks in July and hope to be with us on Sunday 6th July.
- Ralph and Dagmar Baron with Simon are also back from India for two months in the summer and suggest visiting us the week-end of 19-20 July. This is not ideal but may be the only chance we have of seeing them.
- £200 has been sent to the Diocese from the Benefice towards helping with air fares for representatives from the Matlosane Diocese in South Africa to come over as part of the diocesan CrossTalk project. Matlosane Diocese is one of Lichfield Diocese's 'companion dioceses'.
- We have had no recent news from the Lees in Manila or from the Barons and Humphreys at Hebron School in South India. However, they, and the Bells and Beesigomwes, value our continued prayers – see prayer insert in the centre of this magazine.

Christ Church First School

We can't believe that it's Easter already! As the Festival is early this year, our feast of activities have to be tailored to fit an unusually short term.

Year 4 bucket ball teams took part in a Small Schools Tournament at Standon, winning 3 games 12/1, 7/1 and 6/1 and losing 2 games 3/2 and 6/3. Well done to all those taking part!

Our football teams have several fixtures to play, weather permitting, including matches against Tittensor, Manor Hill and Springfield. They are also shortly to take part in the Primary School Football Tournament at Leasowes. Here they will meet teams drawn from Year 3 and 4 in Primary Schools throughout Stone and Stafford. We wish them luck!

Year 2 spent a very enjoyable day at Barlaston First School last week where they joined with other First Schools learning and developing the skills of puppet-making. Reports from children following their return confirmed that this was as usual a most exciting event not only making puppets, but also meeting friends from other schools and having lunch out!

This week Year 4 and Year 1 are eagerly anticipating their trips to Hanley Museum and Newcastle Museum respectively. Year 4 are to find out more about the work of the Archaeologist and Year 1 are studying Toys from the Past and will be able to dress up and have time to use some artefacts at the Museum.

Reception children are awaiting the visit of Joanne Wild from the Road Safety Education Team. She will talk to them about staying safe outdoors and will bring high visibility clothes, pedestrian crossings, Road Crossing Patrol clothes (complete with child- size "lollipop"!) and a set of Pelican lights which actually work! All this equipment adds another dimension to our outdoor activities and is a fantastic way for young children to become aware of the world outside.

Lastly, our Choir and Handbell children have recently taken part in the Mothering Sunday Service at Church and are about to perform at The Gatehouse Theatre in Stafford and The Victoria Hall in Hanley.....and finally our Easter Presentation in Church on Tuesday March 18th at 1.45.

I think that these children well deserve their Easter eggs this year!

Janet Booth Reception Teacher.

The PCC met on Monday 10 March 2008 and the following matters were reported on, discussed and/or decided.

- Q A sound system is to be installed into the middle room in the Church Centre. This will ensure that an audio link to the service can be provided to those who are in the crèche during the Sunday morning service.
- Q The noticeboards in the Church grounds are to be improved with new sign writing and additional space to publish notices and seasonal information. It is planned to have another noticeboard at the car park end of the grounds.
- Q Our web site is to be relaunched. We have purchased a new domain name and software to help build the site. This will ensure that we have full control of our information.
- Q There is much activity in our mission focus. Many projects are being supported through the free will giving. These include Gospel distribution in colleges and universities by UCCF and helping with air fares for representatives from the Matlosane Diocese in South Africa to come over as part of the diocesan CrossTalk project. We are also working to secure a speaker to tell us more about Tearfund's work. It is hoped that this will tie in with our Harvest celebrations.
- Q Monthly cleaning of the Church Centre has recommenced with a new contract funded by the mother and toddler group. This is to be reviewed in July to establish if the frequency of cleaning is suitable.
- Q We are still hoping to secure a replacement Youth Worker. One expression of interest is not being pursued, however there is another one being considered.

The next PCC meeting is the APCM on Wednesday 16 April 2008 at 7.30pm. Please do come along and see what we do. There will be coffee and cakes after the meeting.

Children's Society Boxes.

Thank you so much to all who gave so generously through the house boxes to the Children's Society.

House boxes raise over £2 million a year for the Society's work, bringing new hope to children who face danger, discrimination and disadvantage in their daily lives here in Britain.

In Solihull the Children's Society run a project called 'The Youth Inclusion & Support panel' (YISP). Here experienced youth workers called 'Key Workers' spend time with young people aged from 8 to 13, who are at risk of offending. They also work very closely with the police, schools and social services and many other organisations to support young people and encourage them towards acceptable behaviour.

If you think for a moment, I'm sure there was someone who taught you why you should not hit other people or take things that did not belong to you? In my case it was my parents who taught me my values and I in turn have passed them on to my children as they were growing up. There are many children here in Britain who do not have that support. Parents may have drug or alcohol or mental health problems and are simply unable to give their children the childhood they deserve. As a result they drift from getting into trouble at school, into petty crime and possibly serious crime. As you can appreciate the work of the Children's Society is very important, there are thousands of children at risk who need our help.

This year £226.77 from the house boxes will in a small way help with this work, but there is much more to do. Support at the right time can turn a child away from crime and antisocial behaviour.

As they say at Tesco - Every little helps.

If you are interested in a house box please let me know and I will be pleased to let you have one.

Sandra Morray.

Multiple Sclerosis, Marathons & Me

As a youth, due to my skinny build, I was quite a useful distance runner, competing quite successfully in various school and youth club events. My ambition was always to run a marathon and I first achieved this in Exeter in 1982. As I finished in a surprising 3 hours and 4 minutes I was determined one day to break the 3-hour barrier, and entered the Edinburgh Marathon later that year. Unfortunately, typical Scottish weather, linked with me foolishly going out for 'a drink' on the eve of the race, meant that I didn't quite achieve my 3-hour target (only by a couple of hours!), and I consequently 'retired' from running.

A few years later I returned to live in Edinburgh and, during an evening out with friends in the City centre, I suddenly started limping for no apparent reason, but with no pain in my legs at all! During the evening this eventually passed, though that night in bed I experienced quite a severe and worrying 'tightening' feeling in my legs and neck. This was accompanied by a tingling sensation in my fingers and toes though, once again, this also passed.

Not being one to panic, I carried on at work feeling that these symptoms had been a blip, and that I'd be fine in a couple of days!

As chance would have it, at the hotel where I was working at the time there was a large medical conference that I was looking after. While I was discussing programme details and meal arrangements with the conference organiser I happened to mention what I had just experienced. He asked about my symptoms and told me that it sounded neurological and that I should see my GP as soon as possible.

I phoned the surgery to ask whether I could see a doctor, and when I told them that I was looking after a major physician's conference at the hotel, I suddenly received a home visit! Or rather a work visit in a bedroom at the hotel!

After the doctor's examination I was referred to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary as an out-patient to see a neurologist and subsequently, while I was waiting for a diagnosis, spent the next three months off work, in and out of hospital, and generally getting under Lynda's feet (things haven't changed on this score over the last 20 years!).

It was a very worrying time for both of us, and obviously both of our families were equally concerned. Frustratingly, the general manager at our hotel was leaving and I had been about to take charge of the hotel prior to a replacement being appointed. So I missed out on this opportunity!

(continued on page 12)

During this period away from work I suffered a further couple of attacks, leaving me very wobbly on my feet and unable to hold things properly in my hands. On one occasion, while at some friends' house for dinner, I dropped a bowl of chocolate sauce all over their cream carpet!!

I underwent several tests and endless physiotherapy, and after three months I was eventually diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Bizarrely, this came as a somewhat of a relief as at least I had a name for what was wrong with me and, although I knew very little about the condition, I could now get my head round what I could do about it. In one respect I was very fortunate, as Edinburgh had an excellent neurological centre and I was given the best possible care. In the mid 1990's, a new wonder drug for MS patients called beta interferons was being tested, and after having had the appropriate numbers of relapses, I was again very lucky to be able to take part in the trials. I can honestly say that since I have been provided with the interferons treatment I haven't suffered a single relapse.

I realise that with most types of treatment, a positive mental attitude will often help towards recovery. And I am also confident that the huge support and prayers of so many of my friends and family over the years has helped me tremendously, as it is of great comfort to know that there are so many people spurring me on to be able to carry on a perfectly normal life.

Returning to my current challenge, it has always been my ambition to run another marathon before putting myself out to pasture, and last year I decided to try for the 2008 London Marathon. I contacted the Multiple Sclerosis Resource Centre in Colchester which enters a team, and put myself forward to run with them.

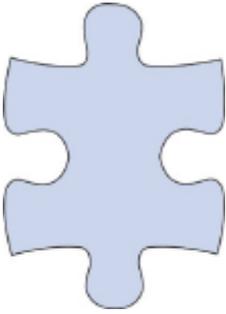
Their only condition was that I raise £1,500 in sponsorship for their charity. I was unsure how successful I would be with this but stuck my neck out and told them that I would try my best. With loads of support from many of you at Christ Church, various Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, friends and family, and many others that I've badgered and cajoled over the months, my current total is over £6,500!!! People have been so very kind and generous.

I know that there is more money due after the marathon in April, though if any of you have missed my message so far and would like to support me you can do so on line on my web page at www.justgiving.com/petermarenghi, or by phoning me on 07736-522474 or 819084.

Similarly, if you would like any more information either on my battle with MS or my forthcoming battle on the streets of London, please give me a call.

Peter Marenghi

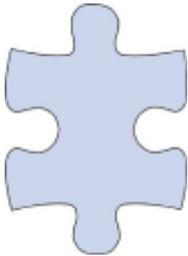
A jigsaw piece



A 'jigsaw' piece is made up of its own unique lines, shapes and colours. It has a specific place where it fits perfectly joining with those around it to build and complete a picture.

Without any one jigsaw piece the picture is incomplete and all the other pieces are incomplete without that single piece.

We believe we are a 'jigsaw piece' within God's vision, called to fit and work with other organisations, churches and groups to complete God's vision picture. We believe the picture is of a Christian community; Christ centred and family based. A vision of restoration of God's people back to Him.



It is a vision which recognises that we are not all the sky or all the trees or all the grass and we can't be all things, we just need to do our jigsaw part, working with the other pieces, trusting in God to complete the vision picture.

Donations to JIGSAW Kids Ministry can be sent to:-

Christine Bleasdale, Secretary
 Jigsaw Kids Ministries,
 21 Matthew Lane,
 Meltham, Holmfirth HD9 5JS

The world is full of great things: great beauty and achievements but also great tragedy and corruption. Christians sometimes get the feeling that the church is becoming an irrelevance to society or even a despised minority. Yet we sense that there is a greater need for revival than ever before.

At Christ Church and Oulton morning services we will think about how to live with God as the centre of our lives. We will see what God can do when His sovereign will is acknowledged and obeyed in our community, churches and hearts.

Paul Kingman.

A God who understands

There must have been times when you have discovered that experiencing something is more difficult than it looks. For example, when we were young, It was easy to be full of ideas on how parents ought to be bringing up their children. However, when we have our own, we discover that **"it's not as easy as it looks."**

Perhaps there was a time when you thought someone ought to be handling a divorce or a death in the family better than they did. May be it was a serious illness or injury. But after experiencing it for yourself, you found out that **"it's not as easy as it looks."**

Most of the time there's no way to know what it feels like to go through something without actually experiencing it yourself.

That's why the incarnation is so important.

There's no way we can say to God, "Living here on this earth -- **it's not as easy as it looks!**" God knows. He's taken on flesh and blood and walked this earth. He's experienced temptation, frustration, persecution, disappointment and a host of human emotions. He knows how tough it is. He understands. And that's why He is in a position to be of help to us.

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:15-16)

It's true. Living life on this earth is **"not as easy as it looks."** But let us find comfort today in knowing that God understands that more than we can begin to imagine.

From Mike Thompson

Providing assistance in Madagascar after cyclone Ivan

Cyclone Ivan struck the eastern coast of Madagascar, and was followed by torrential rain which caused flooding, leaving many communities cut off. Winds gusting at more than 140mph caused widespread damage with nearly 145,000 people left homeless and 60 people killed.

Both our aircraft were used to respond immediately to survey the affected areas. Our team has flown for several aid agencies, including the Red Cross, World Food Programme and World Health Organisation as they survey the damage and assess the best way to help. Pilot Josh Plett shares, 'It was an interesting experience to see the destructive power of a cyclone from wind this year, as last year it was floods.' Tons of rice have also been flown to the isolated town of Marolambo which has been totally cut off by severe flooding.

Supporting eye work

Following two weeks of eye surgery, a Christian Blind Mission team of one doctor and four nurses flew back to Juba, southern Sudan, with pilot Laura Westley. Laura reports, 'They had 400kg of stuff! They carry tents, a generator (no power), fuel, meths, sterilising goodies and the kitchen sink!'

Joseph, one of the nurses, shared how people began shouting and yelling with delight as they could see again following cataract surgery. The team is relocating to Entebbe, Uganda, and is looking to us to support them with regular flights.

Bible training for students in Mongolia

In Khovd, Mongolia, 20 students took part in 3 days of Bible training run by Mongolian Mobile Training Centre (MMTC). Pilot Juuso Koponen flew the team to Khovd where they taught on many subjects including the family and false sects. Pastor Mojic shares, 'Many students were blessed by these subjects and learned how to protect their church members from false sects.' The MMTC team relies on our flights to support Bible training in remote parts of the country.

The MAF website "www.maf-uk.org" has more stories like these, together with details of how to get involved. Alternatively, phone 0845 8509505 for information about how to give.

An Evening with Phil and Arthur

Having paid our £1 each (which Arthur assured us, would help to pay one of the many bills that Kevin receives during the course of a year) we took our places at the labelled tables laid out in the Centre. By a complex system, we were then re-distributed to other tables before the questions began. Arthur's knowledge of 1940's musicals is encyclopaedic! Those of us at table A, however, were not so knowledgeable on this subject and we were therefore either last or next to last (mercifully, we never found out). The cakes during the interval were very tasty, and we had the opportunity between questions to catch up on news from old friends. Church funds were better off by over £100 and we went home with an elegant spring plant each so everyone was a winner in the end.

Dave Bell

Mystery Worshippers!

(from Lichfield Diocese website)

Back to Church Sunday has highlighted for many the need to improve our Welcome and Integration. Therefore, in preparation for Back to Church Sunday this year on 28th September, Lichfield Diocese have decided to put on two identical Training days looking specifically at this area. They are looking for 20 churches (10 each Saturday) to book in to this course.

The Requirements:

Clergy and a good number in the church need to attend – at least half the PCC and Leadership/Ministry team. We are looking for churches to commit to sending a team of at least about ten people to the day itself.

You need to be willing to receive “mystery worshippers” to scrutinise your welcome – and provide mystery worshippers to scrutinise other's welcome!

Do an audit of your ‘welcome’ before the conference.



The bible says that we should always be ready to welcome strangers (Hebrews 13:2) and some already had been visited by mystery worshippers over 1900 years ago.

Has the Great Experiment failed?

A few weeks ago we were observing Lent as a time for giving up things in order to make space for God. It is a good thing to do each year. Our lives are too cluttered. God has to break through our busyness to reach us. It is strange that we put so much effort into the forty days of Lent but so little effort into the fifty days of the season of Easter. Yet during this month of April we are invited not only to feast and to celebrate, but to be transformed. We are challenged not just to remember the events of Easter, but to be transformed by them. As Augustine put it, 'We are an Easter people and "Alleluia" is our song'.

Augustine reminds us that resurrection is not just a doctrine which we affirm in the creeds each week, but a reality to be lived each day. It requires as much effort, imagination and practice as does the observance of Lent. As St Paul put it, 'If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on things that are on the earth'. Perspectives and aspirations need to re-focus.

In the lead up to the Lambeth Conference journalists are already sharpening their pencils with glee at the thought that there may be some public show of disagreement over human sexuality. It is as if the only thing that Christians are interested in is condemning others' behaviour. Yet the strange thing is that the hallmark of the first Christians was the explosion of love and practical care that was detonated as a result of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. Their extraordinary displays of generous love and care – not just for their own people, but for everyone – confounded their critics and spoke powerfully of the presence of a loving, forgiving God. This tidal wave of resurrection love swamped the misunderstanding and hatred of so many people and swept them back irresistibly to God.

So how might we be an Easter people this year? How might we 'live the resurrection'? Well, how about looking out for an opportunity to bring about some resurrection each day, either at home, work or leisure? It might be through some hidden act of generosity or kindness, or of practising the discipline of thanksgiving for someone or some situation that you find difficult. It might be by campaigning for a better world. Above all, the hallmark of 'living the resurrection' is joy. So this month let's be an Easter people and let 'Alleluia' be our song'.

Alan Smith, Bishop of Shrewsbury

6th April

Victor Street
Victoria Street
Whitebridge Lane
Alma Street

13th April

Bromfield Court
Dominic Court
Granville Terrace
King's Avenue



20th April

Longton Road
Margaret Street
Newcastle Road
Newcastle Street

27th April

Northesk Street
Radford Close
Radford Street
Station Road

Changing Rooms

Pathfinders are now to be found in the Upper Room (formerly known as the Upstairs Vestry). We are delighted with our new home.

Many Pathfinder hours have been spent transforming the rather dingy surroundings into a “home fit for Pathfinders”. Parents champed at the bit while Pathfinders declared they were having the “best time for ages”.

The grime has been removed from the window and an excellent electric heater makes this a very comfortable room.

So far we have resisted the temptation to light a fire in the grate we have uncovered but feel a fireplace adds a gothic feel to our turret.

If you are between 11 and 14 the Upper Room is THE PLACE TO BE. See you on Sundays!

Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website www.churches.lichfield.anglican.org/stone/stonecc
Parish office email christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com
Magazine contributions christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk

Windup Torch

On a recent visit from our daughter, in the middle of cooking dinner we had a power cut. Needing two hands to get a paraffin lamp out of an awkwardly placed cupboard, I was about to ask Ann if she could reach to shine the torch by my head, when she popped a head torch on my head. It made such a difference. I no longer thought of head torches as really for potholers and the like.

In March we visited the Outdoor Show at the NEC and discovered a little windup torch which, since it doesn't need batteries, must be better for climate change.

It is a head torch which can be used as a hand torch, almost egg shaped, two + three quarter inches X one + three quarter inches. Possible to use 1 of the 3 LEDs alone - then 1 minute charge will give approximately 90 minutes of light, or 40 minutes using all 3 LEDs (the 3 LEDs can be made to flash). The price with £2 off was £6.99, made by Uni-Com(Global)Ltd. and we bought it from the Yeoman stand. Since Yeoman's have an outlet at Trentham Gardens, it could be a possible place if anyone would like to have a battery free torch.

Patricia Foulkes

Aoccdrnig

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FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

17th February	Rosie Evelyn Bowyer
17th February	Ellen Victoria Bowyer
17th February	Charlotte Lucy Bowyer

FUNERALS

20th February	Michael Flintham
6th March	Irene Bond
12th March	Margaret Massey
Stafford Crematorium	
29th February	John Alfred Hollingworth

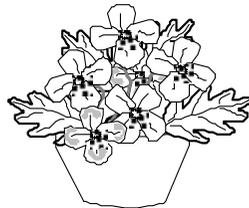
SIDESPERSIONS ROTA

AM

6th April	A. West.	J. Abrahams
	V. Ledward,	T. MacFarlane
13th April	D. Davies,	A. Greer
	D. Wilson,	J. Rowlands
20th April	B. Hutchinson,	M. Hutchinson
	G. Holden,	I. Gassor
27th April	P. Hipkiss,	C. Wilding
	D. Pickles,	J. Abrahams

FLOWER ROTA

6th April	Mrs W. Caroll
13th April	wedding
20th April	Mr & Mrs A. Stone
27th April	Mrs A. Greer



Deanery Synod Reps	Mrs S Hallam, Mr I Hawley, Mr D. Rowlands
P.C.C. Members	Mrs I Gassor, Mrs M Hillman, Mrs E Mason, Mr P Mason Mrs D Wilson, Mrs E Woodhead, Mrs J. Rowlands Mrs S. Morray, Mrs J. Abrahams, Mr K. Reynolds Mr A. Stone, Mr G. Holden, Mrs A. Greer
Secretary	Jacqueline Abrahams.....817020
Treasurer	Kevin Reynolds.....851595
Envelopes, Gift Aid	Nesta Challinor

GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

Climbers 3-7 years	Sandra Morray.....286093
Explorers 7-11 years	Estella Woodhead.....761659
Pathfinders 11-14 years	Enid Bell.....815775
Banner Group	Jeanette Rowlands.....816713
Church Missionary Boxes	Cecilia Wilding.....817987
Flower Guild	Marylyn Hillman.....815936
Men's Fellowship	Mike Thompson.....813712
Missions Secretary	Cecilia Wilding.....817987
Prayer Group	Jeanette Rowlands.....816713
Parents & Toddlers (Mon 9.30 – 11.15am)	Sandra Morray.....286093
Friday "Little Fishes" (Fri 11am – 1.30pm)	Cecilia Wilding.....817987

Young People's Activities take place in the Centre during the Sunday morning service except on the fourth Sunday in the month, which is the family service.

Climbers 3-7 years **Explorers** 7-11 years **Pathfinders** 11-14 years

The following activities take place every week in the Centre during term time.

Monday Toddlers 9.30 am **Friday Little Fishes** 11.00 am

THE MAGAZINE TEAM

Mission News & Prayer Diary Cecilia Wilding 817987

Please send material for the magazine to

Dave Bell, c/o Christ Church Parish Office, Christ Church Way,
Staffs ST15 8ZB or by email to christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk

Christ Church welcomes you!

Whether you are new to the Stone area or have been living here for some time you are welcome to come to this church. The church is made up of adults and children who want to know more about the living God, who has supremely revealed Himself in Jesus Christ and continues to speak to us through His Spirit-inspired word, the Holy Bible (which can be read online at www.biblegateway.com and we recommend a modern translation e.g. the New International Version or English Standard Version).

We are a Christian church, because at the heart of what we believe is the fact that to know God personally we must put our trust in Jesus' death for our forgiveness so that we can be reconciled to God. We are part of the Anglican church, the basis of its Trinitarian belief is summarised in the Book of Common Prayer with its 39 articles, though we unite in Christ irrespective of denomination. We are an Evangelical church, as we see that the Bible is God's word for us and so is to inspire all that we do. This church was established with the help of the renowned Charles Simeon.

Our church meetings help us to grow in our understanding of what the Bible tells us about God, and this is something that we encourage others to investigate especially through our *Christianity Explored* course (see details on the national website www.christianityexplored.com). If you would like details of when the next local course is starting then please contact the church office.

We have children's and youth activities running during the Sunday meetings and also during the week, such as our Tuesday evening youth club. Adults may be further involved through small groups which meet for Bible study and prayer, a midweek communion service and a monthly prayer meeting.

Our community involvement includes links with the local schools: Christ Church First, Oulton First, Christ Church Middle and Alleyne's High.

We also have links with the Church in India, The Philippines, Croatia, Botswana and Pakistan.

This magazine and the church website concern Christ Church in Stone, but we are linked with the churches in Oulton and Moddershall (see separate magazine and website).

Subscriptions

If you would like this magazine delivered to you regularly, please contact:
Mrs Marylyn Hillman, Park Lodge, Beech Court, Stone. Tel 815936