

30p

# Christ Church and People



December Parish Magazine of  
Christ Church Stone 2007

# PARISH DIRECTORY

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## 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

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## THE PARISH TEAM

<b>Vicar</b>	Paul Kingman The Vicarage, Bromfield Court	812669
<b>Curate</b>	Tim Vasby-Burnie, 1 Navigation Loop	814244
<b>Parish Office</b>		811990
<b>Electoral Roll Officer</b>	Irene Gassor	814871
<b>Parish Office</b>	Christ Church Centre, Christ Church Way, Stone, Staffs ST15 8ZB Email christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com	
<b>Deaconess (Retired)</b>	Ann Butler	818160
<b>Readers</b>	David Bell John Butterworth Margaret Massey David Rowlands Michael Thompson Cecilia Wilding	815775 817465 813403 816713 813712 817987
<b>Music Co-ordinators</b>	Peter Mason Jeff Challinor	815854 819665
<b>Wardens</b>	Phil Tunstall David Rowlands	817028 816713
<b>Deputy Wardens</b>	Shirley Hallam, Arthur Foulkes	
<b>Prayer Request List</b>	Barbara Thornicroft	818700

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## CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

<b>Booking Secretary</b>	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 January magazine to us by 15th December

New Year Price Increase! We're sorry, but due to increased production costs the price of the magazine will be increased from January to 40p, or £4 for a year's subscription.

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**Cover Story:** Jerry Cooper drew lots of wonderful pictures for this magazine, all of them buildings in our parish. This month the picture is of Granville Square

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## Christ Church on the Internet

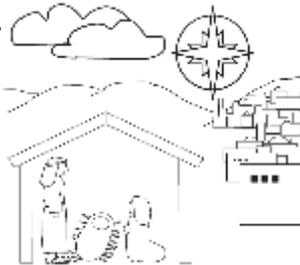
Parish website	<a href="http://www.churches.lichfield.anglican.org/stone/stonecc">www.churches.lichfield.anglican.org/stone/stonecc</a>
Parish office email	<a href="mailto:christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com">christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com</a>
Magazine contributions	<a href="mailto:christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk">christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk</a>

# December 2007

Sat	1	8:30am 9:00am	Prayer Meeting in Church Breakfast in the Centre
Sun	2	9:15am 6:00pm	Communion. 1 John 1:1-4 "The word of life" Evening Prayer at Christ Church 1 Cor 1:1-9 "His revealing"
Mon	3	9:00am 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	4	9:30am 10:30am 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Midweek service Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	5		
Thu	6	1:20pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly
Fri	7		
Sat	8		
Sun	9	9:15am 6:00pm	Morning Prayer. 1 John 1:5-2:2 "The Advocate" Communion at Christ Church 2 Peter 3:8-18 "The home of righteousness"
Mon	10	9:00am 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	11	9:30am 10:30am 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Midweek service Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	12	1:20pm 7:00pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly Fellowship evening (see page 12)
Thu	13		
Fri	14		
Sat	15	4:00pm	Crafts in the centre followed by Christingle in church
Sun	16	9:15am 6:00pm	Communion. 1 John 2:18-27 "The hope" Evening Prayer at Christ Church 1 Thess 5:12-28 "His coming"

# December 2007

Mon	17	9:00am 2:30pm 7:00pm	Prayers for schools and young people Carols at Autumn House Cornerstone for teenagers
Tue	18	10:30am 7:30pm	Midweek service Youth Club in the Centre
Wed	19	10:00am 7:00pm	Men's Fellowship Christ Church First School Nativity
Thu	20	2:00pm	Oulton Mothers Union carols and mince pies
Fri	21	11:00am	Christ Church Middle School Christmas service
Sat	22		
Sun	23	9:15am 5:00pm	Family Nativity. 1 John 2:28-3:3 "The Christ" Carol Service. Romans 16:25-27 "The final lap"
Mon	24		
Tue	25	9:15am	Communion. 1 John 4:7-12 "Divine Love"
Wed	26		
Thu	27		
Fri	28		
Sat	29		
Sun	30	10:00am	Morning Prayer. 1 John 4:13-16a "Divine life"
Mon	31		



**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.

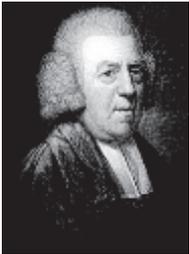
**Climbers** 3-7 years      **Explorers** 7-11 years      **Pathfinders** 11-14 years

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

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

## 4 Christmas celebrates God's amazing generosity

What have Christmas and the abolition of slavery got in common? Both concern a costly sacrifice in order to bring freedom to others. This is pure generosity or, to use another term, lavish grace. During this 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the abolition of the slave trade we've all learnt more about William Wilberforce. During his childhood the pastor at Wilberforce's church was John Newton (author of 'Amazing Grace' first sung 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 1773). In his twenties Wilberforce was on the brink of a career as a British MP, and met up with Newton. At a low point in his political life, Wilberforce asked if he should leave politics to become a vicar. Newton advised Wilberforce that he could best serve God in Parliament in working to abolish the slave trade. It was 20 years before Parliament passed the slavery abolition act - one month after Wilberforce died!



John Henry Newton  
(1773-1807)

William Wiberforce  
(1759-1833)



What inspired this costly service? He came to Christian faith which is founded on the profound reality of God's generosity in Jesus Christ: 'For you know the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich' (II Corinthians 8v9-10). Jesus voluntarily gave up his riches so that we could become spiritually rich. Jesus' personal existence did not begin with his birth in Bethlehem. He was immensely rich, but gave it all up when he left his heavenly home and became flesh i.e. entered the stream of history as a man. He lived and died as the suffering servant whose perfect obedience to the Father cost his life. After his resurrection he returned to heaven and poured out the gift of the Spirit on His people. His generosity means that we can be 'rich' in that through faith in him we are credited with a right relationship with God [the carol 'Thou who was rich' was inspired by these verses].

How do we respond to this lavish generosity? We should gladly receive Jesus as our King and be thankful for his sacrifice for our freedom from sin and death. We should also imitate His generosity in terms of our use of time, talents and treasure to further His purposes in the world and enrich the spiritually poor.

May you have a great Christmas as you reflect one these wonderful truths.



*Paul Kingman.*

## Family Tree of Grace

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“If you want to change the world with a book, don't start with a long list of names!” I imagine that's what an editor might have said if the manuscript of The Gospel According to Matthew had arrived on her desk. “And how about a punchier title?” Like most genealogies in the Bible, the “record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ” (Matthew 1:1) seems a bit boring at first glance. But like most genealogies in the Bible, treasures comes to light if you dig a little deeper.

As Matthew lists Jesus' ancestors, four mothers are mentioned, apart from Mary of course. He hasn't mentioned every mother, but wants us to pay attention to these four: Tamar (verse 3), Rahab (verse 5), Ruth (verse 5) and “Uriah's wife” i.e. Bathseba (verse 6). They are an odd collection. I think the technical theological phrase that describes what they have in common is that they are “dodgy”.

Tamar (Genesis 38) was the daughter-in-law of Judah. Judah married a Canaanite woman (a dodgy move), and later Tamar enticed her father-in-law into an incestuous relationship which resulted in the birth of twins (even more dodgy – the relationship, not the twins).

Rahab (Joshua 2) was a prostitute who lived in Jericho, but because she feared God and saved the spies, her family was kept safe when Jericho fell to the Israelite army.

Ruth (the book of Ruth) was a Moabitess, a member of a Gentile nation whose origins are in another incestuous relationship (Genesis 19).

Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11) was probably an Israelite, but married to a Hittite (dodgy). Her story is also rather sordid – an affair with King David that resulted in the murder of her first husband.

These four women are a rather unlikely collection! Each is either a Gentile (non-Israelite, not a member of God's chosen people) or was involved in some very dubious behaviour, or both. But each were included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. This is grace! Jesus' own bloodline speaks of God's intention to take the gospel to all nations, the good news that speaks of forgiveness and transformation.

We were born too late to make it into Jesus' genealogy. But we can become his brothers and sisters. As we celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas we remember that no-one is beyond the reach of God's grace. However dodgy your life has been, however dodgy your past – Jesus says, “whoever comes to me I will never drive away.” (John 6:37).

## **Jonathan & Robinah Beesigomwe - Botswana**

Great news!! They have received a large gift which is enabling them to purchase a 1999 Toyota station wagon, family car to replace their very old car which kept on breaking down. Praise God with them for answered prayer.

## **Owen & Tracy Humphreys with Ben, Steffan & Jonathan – Hebron School, South India**

Owen is now back at Hebron having stayed on with Ben in the UK until early October. He is enjoying his new role teaching English to those for whom English is a second language and also teaching maths.

Tracy is very busy as Head of Art with more students doing Art exams this year and still being one teacher short.

Ben has adapted fairly well to being back in the UK for his gap year before university. He is working at a sports shop and so will not be able to visit the rest of the family for Christmas.

Steffan has just done his Maths GCSE and thinks he did alright. He is taking most of his GCSEs next summer. He is dyslexic and so finds it hard to get his thoughts down on paper. He needs our prayers.

Three years ago, Jonathan was found to have a cyst on his brain which he has probably had since birth. He has recently had some blurred vision which they were warned could be a sign that the cyst is growing. He is to have a further scan to check on this although his visual problems seem to have gone away now.

## **Ralph & Dagmar Baron, Helen, Sarah & Simon – Hebron School, South India**

Ralph wrote on 11 November – ‘With 5 weeks left to go in this term it is becoming clear that many, if not all of us, are getting tired. The usual schedule of work, duties and other activities is augmented by preparations for Christmas activities, exams and reports. At least the weather has improved recently! The almost daily rain has eased and there is beautiful sunshine and a sky that is so blue you would think it is a postcard.’

Ralph says that his work (in IT) has calmed down and he has been able to start his investigation to see whether it is feasible to use Linux as an alternative to Windows. He is aiming to write a report on this for the beginning of next term. Dagmar is getting the students through their UCAS (university) applications which includes personal statements, references etc. A new leader is required for the ‘Alternative Service’ on Sundays. All students are expected to attend a church service on Sundays and ‘alternative’ is where many uncommitted go to find out what Christian faith is about. Dagmar is considering this but needs others to join her. Helen, and her husband Elliot, have settled to their studies in Oxford.

*(continued on next page)*

Sarah has likewise settled to her studies in Medical School in Brighton, Sussex. Simon is in Yr 13 at Hebron. He has sat his Oxford University exam and is now waiting to see if he has an interview. He plans to come to the UK the second week in December anyway to visit his other universities.

There are quite a few staff leaving Hebron next July so they need replacements especially in Maths, Physics, Modern Languages and Technology as well as a nurse.

### **Rebecca – Pakistan**

Rebecca continues teaching English in a girls school in Northern Pakistan. She asks prayer for peace and the governance of the country. She is coming home on home assignment just before Christmas and plans to visit us in March 2008.

### **Tim & Kate Lee with Rebekah, James and Grace – Philippines**

The Lees continue working amongst street children and families in a work called Jigsaw Kids Ministries. (See article on p ) They are in process of handing over much of the work to local people so that they can get going with a literacy programme for which they have been funded. The work is very demanding and stressful. They are looking forward to a 10-day holiday in Malaysia over Christmas and ask us to pray for a stress-free and enjoyable time.

*(Prayer requests for all the above are included in the pull-out 'Mission News and Prayer Diary' in the centre of this magazine, and on the Overseas Mission notice board in the Centre)*

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## **Confirmation Service October 28<sup>th</sup>**

Gordon Murcell, the Bishop of Stafford, visited us on the 28<sup>th</sup> to conduct our confirmation service. Three people were confirmed, Tricia Brown, Philip Beauchamp and Pippa Hipkiss, and many friends and family members came to support them.

Gordon spoke about the importance of being confirmed and said that one of the purposes of existence of the church is to bring in new members. As well as being welcomed, members of the church are also required to be involved, as there is a role for every one of us in the church.

Following the service we ate many cakes in the Church Centre and members of the three churches in the benefice had an opportunity to chat to each other and welcome the new members.

## Where did all the money go?

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*Back in June, Pete & Liz Mason organised a fund-raising afternoon in their garden (with trains) to raise money for Jigsaw Kids Ministries in the Philippines. Jigsaw works amongst street children and families in Manila.*

### **New Toys and Staff Training thanks to Your Fundraising**

Tim & Kate Lee write – ‘From climbing the three peaks, to trains in the garden, cycling Lands End to John O’ Groats, selling goods at village fairs in the rain, classical concerts, dinner dances, coffee mornings, Sunday school collections – I could go on – your support for Jigsaw has been amazing. Not to mention the supporters who give each month. All these events and others have really helped boost Jigsaw’s finances and has meant that money could be spent on replacing the rather worn out toys and making the community centres fun places to be. We have bought football tables, new chairs and tables, rocking horses, dollies, games, a TV and DVD player, play kitchens, cars and much more. These things may not change kids’ lives but they do give kids the chance to enjoy being kids which is a vital part of life. God created us to play – it’s his gift to us.

Also the extra funds allowed us to send eleven of our staff away on a four-day training programme on issues relating to child abuse, exploitation, child labour and trafficking. This conference has had a major impact on the staff that went. For some it was the first time they had travelled that far (7 hours by bus to the north of the Philippines) so that in itself was exciting. For others it was meeting other people doing similar work which gave strength and validity to what they were doing at Jigsaw. But more importantly, for all the staff it changed how they saw their own children and challenged the way in which they were bringing them up. Many of them felt convicted that big changes needed to happen in their families and in themselves if they were to effect change in the kids they work with. For some it was painful as the issues discussed had directly affected them as children and it was the first time they had felt able to begin to open up about it. So it was a difficult but worthwhile conference. All made possible through your fundraising efforts.

*(You can read more about Jigsaw Kids Ministries in the November Issue of Jigsaw News – copy in the red folder underneath the Overseas Mission notice board in the Centre. If you’d like your own photocopy, speak to Cecilia Wilding)*

www.e-sword.net

“E-Sword – the Sword of the Lord with an electronic edge”

Last month I mentioned sites for studying the Bible online. This month's website is the host of the E-Sword software to download and use on your own computer. There are a large range of Bible programmes to be used, but this one is free and has a lot to offer. The basic software (a 17-18MB download) gives you the machinery and the King James Version, together with Strong's numbers that allow you to discover the meaning of the original Hebrew/Greek word and search by these.

More importantly, there are lots of other modules to download and make this software great:

Bibles in English (e.g. ESV), original languages and other languages (from Welsh to Ukrainian!);

Commentaries (such as the excellent Matthew Henry and Spurgeon on the Psalms)

Dictionaries, graphics, devotional books and a large range of extras.

You can even make your own notes as you read the Bible – they will be stored alongside the passage you are reading.

With E-Sword you can search, compare translations, and while away your time reading great literature. Most modules are free – because they are old. The NIV unfortunately is not available, but some modern material is available for a price. If you have a slow connection, or want lots of modules, it's worth making a donation (PayPal or cheque) in return for which you will receive a “free” CD full to the brim with most of the modules.

E-Sword works with Windows and Pocket-PCs. I don't know about Macs. If anyone out there runs Linux (hello! so do I!) contact me for a Linux version I found.

Tim Vasby-Burnie

tim@timvb.plus.com

P.S. See <http://www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk/Tyndale/TTech.htm> for more about other Bible software.

## 12th to 20th January 2008

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> Jan**

8.30 am

at Christ Church

**Ecumenical Prayer Meeting**

Followed by **Breakfast**

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Jan**

4.30 pm

6.00 pm

at Christ Church

**CTiS AGM**

**United Service for Christian Unity**

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Jan**

9.00am

12.30pm

**Prayer Meeting**

at Christ Church

**Prayer Lunch**

at St John's, Stone

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> Jan**

10.30am

at Christ Church

**Holy Communion**

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> Jan**

7.30pm

at St Dominic's Church

**Taize Worship**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Jan**

10.30am

at St Michael's Church

**Holy Communion**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> Jan**

7.30pm

at Christ Church

**A Taste of Keswick**

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> Jan**

8.00pm

at St John's Church, Stone

**Late Night Worship**

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## ROADS FOR PRAYER

### 2nd December

Meaford Ave  
Mount Avenue  
Mount Crescent  
Mount Road

### 9th December

Mount Street  
Old Road  
Stonefield Court  
Stonefield Square



### 16th December

Victor Street  
Victoria Street  
Whitebridge Lane  
Alma Street

### 23rd December

Bromfield Court  
Dominic Court  
Granville Terrace  
King's Avenue

### 30th December

Longton Road  
Margaret Street  
Newcastle Road  
Newcastle Street

## Age Concern - Can we help You?

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Age Concern Stafford & District provides services within the community enabling older people to remain safe and independent in their own homes.

All of our home helpers are police checked and carry out induction training so they can carry out the tasks in your home to the best of their ability.

We all know how important it is to keep our homes clean and tidy. Unfortunately as we get older household tasks become difficult for us, if not impossible, to carry out. Therefore we offer a home care service to help you keep on top of these tasks.

### **What can we do?**

We can do the following:

- Hoovering / sweeping
- Washing up
- Cleaning bathrooms & kitchens
- Laundry
- Ironing
- Shopping
- Dusting / polishing
- Mopping floors
- Changing of beds
- Cleaning of windows inside only
- Escorting to shops

The helpers will use your cleaning equipment and products so you know exactly what they are using. They are also covered by insurance in case of any accidental damage caused in your home with a like for like replacement. When the service is set up you will have a regular worker who will come on the same day and same time each week or fortnight to suit your needs and when they are on holiday or off sick we will provide cover.

### **How much does it cost?**

Home care costs £10.20 per hour

### **What do I do now?**

For more information or a referral please contact our office in Stafford (Tel: 01785 607065). (information received from Dave Rowlands)

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## Thank You from Rosemary

Many thanks to all who visited and sent cards and letters during my unexpected six-week stay in hospital. A special thanks for all your prayers which meant so much during all the ups and downs and kept me going when things go really tough.

Thank you, God bless

Rosemary Blakeman

## Sermons in December

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In the morning services we begin a new series under the title: 'A sure and certain salvation.' We will be looking at the first letter written by John, which is all about living in the love of God. Questions to be answered include how can we be sure about Jesus Christ and what he is like? How can I face God if I fail? Does Christian faith affect daily life? How can I be sure God really does love me? Who belongs to God's family? John certainly has his own style – the writing style is similar to that of the Gospel of John – but he is certainly singing from the same hymn book. As we look at this together it will nurture our faith, love and good deeds.

Paul Kingman.

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### **Sun 6<sup>th</sup> January: covenant renewal service**

Our annual covenant service gives us the opportunity to remember God's covenant commitment to us and to pledge ourselves to His service as we look towards His future grace and may be assured of His great faithfulness.

We look forward to our guest speaker Revd John Marshall (from Stafford). Even if you aren't on the electoral roll do come to make a good start to the New Year.

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### ***EXPLORE* adult Bible reading notes**

Newly written and redesigned, Explore Bible reading notes will help you discover the riches of God's grace each day. Sample copies £1 or Jan-Mar edition £3 (£12 annual). Available through the vicar or miss out the middle man and contact The Good Book Company [Tel: 0845 225 0880 or online at [www.thegoodbook.co.uk](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk)].

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### **Looking forward to Christmas.**

On Wednesday 12th of Dec at Christ Church Centre there will be an evening of Christmas and Advent themed poetry, prose and music. Proceedings will begin at 7.00pm with a shared supper.

Diana Tunstall 817028

# CWR Advent Bible Readings

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In these Advent Reflections we invite you to consider the metaphors that describe Jesus in the Gospel of John, and to lead from there to related passages elsewhere in the Bible. As we do this, our prayer is that you will discover once more the power of Scripture to impact your life and equip you to serve and follow Jesus.

## **Sunday December 2nd**

**John 1:1-14**

**The Word of God**

What better way to start our Advent reflections than with this celebration of the incarnation! In this amazingly bold statement we are taken right back to consider the pre-existent nature of Jesus, as a part of the godhead. The ultimate being - the unknowable and unimaginable one - has emptied Himself in order to become one of us; a part of his creation. Reflect on v.14 and the immensity of its claim.

## **Monday December 3rd**

**Psalms 119:97-104**

**The Word of God**

The Old Testament laws of God were a pointer to Jesus, anticipating His salvation. The Word of God can be discovered through the words of the Scriptures Do you love the word of God in the Bible as this Psalmist loved God's law (v.97)? Ask God to open your eyes this Advent to the power of Scripture to change your life, and that its words might be 'sweeter than honey' to you.

## **Tuesday December 4th**

**Hebrews 4:12-16**

**The Word of God**

The words of Scripture might be sweeter than honey, but they also come with a health-warning attached to them! To read Scripture is to open ourselves up to being challenged, provoked, encouraged and spoken to. It is to lay ourselves bare before a holy God who sees everything. What a mercy it is, therefore, that through the sacrifice of Jesus we can approach God's throne with confidence and there find grace.

## **Wednesday December 5th**

**John 1:29**

**The Lamb of God**

As we reflect on the life of Jesus in this season of Advent, so we know that Lent will cause us later to reflect on His death. As John the Baptist sees right at the start, the pre-existent Word becomes human so that he might take away our sins. It's incredibly humbling to know that the all-mighty God loves us so much that He was willing to suffer horrendously that we might receive life.

## **Thursday December 6th**

**Genesis 22:1-19**

**The Lamb of God**

The father gives. The son surrenders. The Lord provides. The ram dies And the people profit! Here, in a story bound up in the history of the Israelite people, we see a foreshadowing of the sacrifice that Jesus was to make, nearly two thousand years later. Animal sacrifice cleansed the people from their sins so they could come before God but, through Jesus - the only Lamb of God - we are forgiven once-and-for-all.

## **Friday December 7th**

**Revelation 5**

**The Lamb of God**

Jesus' death does not only have significance for me: it impacts the whole of the world and all history, since it is precisely through Jesus' death that God brings his plans for salvation to bear on the world. What response can we make? There is only one: to bow down before the Lamb of God and worship him. Use this awe-inspiring vision of heaven and earth to bring you to Jesus in worship today.

## **Saturday December 8th**

**John 6:35; 48-51**

**The Bread of Life**

The disciples have just, the day before, witnessed Jesus' miraculous feeding from only five loaves and two fish. Thousands of people were given food that day, but the next day they were hungry again! Bread only satisfies us for a while, but in Jesus we can find true satisfaction and a hope that sustains us through the whole of our lives. Read verse 35 again and allow God to nourish you with His presence.

**Sunday December 9th****Proverbs 9:1-12****The Bread of Life**

Proverbs sets before us two ways: the way of life and wisdom, and the way of death and foolishness. We have a choice. This passage invites us to eat at Wisdom's table. Take some time to imagine yourself hearing her call; going into her house; eating her food... What does Wisdom say to you? What do you see on her table? Thank you, Bread of Life, for feeding me today'

**Monday December 10th****John 8:12****The Light of the World**

Yesterday we lit the second candle in the Advent wreath. As we light the candles each week, and maybe each evening at home, we count down to the day on which we celebrate the coming of the Light of the World. Death, night and darkness are all images that are linked with sin in the Bible, but Jesus came to reveal sin for what it is and show us the way to eternal life.

**Tuesday December 11th****Psalms 119:105****The Light of the World**

As we find the Word of God in the word of God, so we discover there that the Scriptures are able to guide and direct us through life. It is a wonderful thing that God has not given us a monotonous rule book, delivered direct from heaven, but a multi-coloured and fascinating array of books that direct our feet. Let us follow the exciting path of walking in God's purposes for His creation!

**Wednesday December 12th****1 John 1:5-10****The Light of the World**

One of the consequences of following the Light of the World is that he will show us any areas of darkness and sin in our own lives. There's no point covering these areas up: it's far better to acknowledge them and ask the Holy Spirit to help us change. In doing this we are called to live lives that reflect the Light: lives of holiness and compassion, justice and righteousness.

**Thursday December 13th****John 8:58-59****I am**

This verse is the climax of a dialogue between Jesus and a group of people, some of whom have believed His words (verse 31), some of whom haven't. Jesus' words have been getting increasingly baffling, with the unbelievers becoming increasingly irate at Him. Now He makes an open claim to divinity, applying the sacred Hebrew name for God (I AM/Yahweh) to Himself. This is either blasphemy or it is the truth.

**Friday December 14th****Exodus 3:1-15****I am**

The claim of Jesus seen yesterday is based on God's name that God reveals to Moses. God is. Upon this name stands the history of God's dealings with His people, Israel, and ultimately with the whole world. Through this name He is revealed as a God who listens, cares and acts out of His compassion (verses 7-8). Take ten or fifteen minutes now to sit, in silence, in the presence of I AM.

**Saturday December 15th****Philippians 2:1-18****I am**

It is hard to know from where to suggest we start and stop reading this wonderful passage! The great I AM has emptied himself to become human. In our own small ways, we must imitate Jesus in being humble and thinking of others first before ourselves. And so we learn constantly from the Scriptures that thinking rightly about God and worshipping Him must always impact the way we live.

**Sunday 16th December****Read John 10:11-15****The Good Shepherd**

Once again we find that we cannot celebrate Christmas without beginning to anticipate Good Friday, and the metaphor moves from Jesus being the sacrificial lamb to Him being the shepherd who dies that His sheep might live. The language of ownership is strong and one that our culture does not like with its emphasis on individuality and freedom of choice. Who owns us? Do we know which flock we belong to?

**Monday 17th December****Psalm 23****The Good Shepherd**

William is a sheep farmer. Despite the large number of sheep under his care, he knows all about each one. I watched him giving medication to a sheep that was ill and was struck by how quietly it lay in his arms, trusting in its experience of William's care. What a beautiful illustration of God's care for us. Use it to pray through this psalm and commit the needs of this week to God.

**Tuesday 18th December****John 10:7-10 and 14:6-7 The Gate for the Sheep**

In these two passages we find the central message of the Good News of Jesus: in Him, and in Him alone, is found fullness of life. We can hanker after money, or a successful career, or a perfect family, or a wonderful church, but those who are wise long only for their lives to be caught up in the life of Jesus. Thank you for showing me that through you I am saved!

**Wednesday 19th December****Deuteronomy 30:11-20 The Way**

When you boil it down, the Bible shows us that life is very simple and is about the straightforward choice between the way of life and the way of death. Reflect on the choices you've made in your life. In what ways and situations have you chosen the path of life? Have there been foolish choices that you regret? May we hold fast to the Lord and discover that He is, indeed, our life.

**Thursday 20th December****John 15:1-17****The True Vine**

Jesus, I long for my life to bear fruit. Thank you that you have chosen me to be your friend and I respond to your love by following your commands and loving others. May love become the hallmark of my life so that, through the things I do, the words I say and the attitudes I hold, people might see that I am your disciple and be brought to love you themselves!

**Friday 21st December****Psalm 1****The True Vine**

As we come near to the end of Advent, our hope is that these reflections have planted you more firmly in the streams of God's living water. A dead plant requires nothing, but a plant that is living and growing needs constant water and food. Take this moment to consider what your roots are growing in. Is the soil good? What opportunities does God have to feed and water you?

**Saturday 22nd December****John 11:17-27 The Resurrection and the Life**

Again, Advent anticipates Easter, and the metaphors of the Lamb of God and the Good Shepherd are incomplete without the reality of the resurrection. The pinnacle of the Good News that we are celebrating is that that which we most fear has been overcome by Jesus. We can take comfort in the face of death - whether or own or our loved ones' - because, in Jesus, we receive eternal life.

**Sunday 23rd December****Psalm 27****The Resurrection and the Life**

This psalm anticipates the confidence in God that comes from a knowledge of Jesus' resurrection life. We are never guaranteed an easy or a trouble-free life and all of us, perhaps, will have known heartaches of many different kinds. And yet, through them all, we can be secure in the goodness of God. On this final Advent Sunday, reflect on what verse 4 means to you.

**Monday Dec 24th****1 Corinthians 15:12-28, 58 The Resurrection & the Life**

On this Christmas Eve, we reflect on the tiny life of a newborn baby. In this life was the life of God and, through Him, God was bringing His plans for His whole creation to fruition. Jesus' resurrection gives us certainty for this future. Let us, therefore, place our lives firmly with His and take our place in working to see His salvation brought to this world, and its people.

# FROM THE REGISTERS

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## FUNERAL

2<sup>nd</sup> November Caroline Dorothy Smith Aged 82 years

## BAPTISM

11<sup>th</sup> November Georgia Louise Harrison

## SIDESPERSIONS ROTA

	AM	PM
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	B.Hutchinson, M.Hutchinson G.Holden, D. Pickles,	D. Shemilt
9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	C. Wilding, A. West V. Ledward, D. Davies	P. Tunstall
16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	J. Rowlands, D. Wilson B.Hutchinson, M.Hutchinson	D. Shemilt
23 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	P.Hipkiss, I. Gassor G. Holden, A. Greer	P. Tunstall
24 <sup>th</sup> Dec	(11:30 pm)	P. Tunstall, D. Shemilt
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	J. Abrahams, D. Pickles C. Wilding, T. MacFarlane	
30 <sup>th</sup> Dec	A. West, D. Davies V. Ledward, J. Rowlands	

## FLOWER ROTA

2 <sup>nd</sup> December	Mrs N. Challinor
9 <sup>th</sup> December	Flower Guild
16 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas
23 <sup>rd</sup> December	Flower Guild
30 <sup>th</sup> December	Flower Guild



<b>Deanery Synod Reps</b>	Mrs S Hallam, Mr I Hawley, Mr D. Rowlands
<b>P.C.C. Members</b>	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
<b>Secretary</b>	Jacqueline Abrahams.....817020
<b>Treasurer</b>	Kevin Reynolds.....851595
<b>Envelopes, Gift Aid</b>	Nesta Challinor

## GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

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

## 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!

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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](http://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](http://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).

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## Subscriptions

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