

Christ Church and People

Parish Magazine of
Christ Church Stone

40p



January 2010

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 inside back page 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
Assistant Minister For Youth	Adam Rushton, 26 Victoria Street	813654
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	Dave 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	Andy Stone, Arthur Foulkes, Tim Saxton	

CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

Booking Secretary	Kate 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

IN THIS ISSUE

Diary for January	2-4
Covenant service January 3rd	4
Sermon series in January	4
How can I give you up?	5
What Legacy do I want?	6
For God's sake give and take	7
An evening with Phil and Arthur	8
Singaporean visit	8
Colin Buchanan concert	8
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	9
Tough Questions... Real Answers	10
The Lord's Table: God's Soup Kitchen	11
Andrew's South African News	12
PCC News	13
Australia's No.1 Christian Entertainer	14, 15
New Year Resolutions	16, 17
Dubrava Church in Zagreb	18
Roads for Prayer	18
An Advent Evening	19
From the Registers	20
Rotas	20
Groups and Activities	21

Christ Church



and People

Please get your contributions for the February magazine to us by 15th Jan.

Cover Story:-
A snowman on the Common Plot

Subscriptions

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

January 2010

Fri	1		
Sat	2		
Sun	3	10:30am 6:00pm	Communion. United benefice Covenant Service (to be recorded by Radio Stoke). Coffee before service, shared lunch after service. Luke 9:18-27 "Christ and the Cross" Evening Prayer at Christ Church Isaiah 62 "A new year"
Mon	4		
Tue	5	10:00am 3:45pm 7:30pm	Coffee before midweek service. Service at 10:30am Lighthouse Club (years 3-5) Christ Church Youth Club (years 12-13)
Wed	6	7:30pm	Standing Committee
Thu	7	1:20pm 7:00pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly The Rock Youth Group (years 9-11)
Fri	8	10:00am 6:30pm	Friday Fellowship Breathe (years 6-8)
Sat	9		
Sun	10	9:15am 6:00pm	Morning Prayer Acts 8:26-40 "An Ethiopian Official" Communion at Chrstit Church Isaiah 62 "A new name"
Mon	11	7:00pm	Cornerstone
Tue	12	9:30am 10:00am 12:30pm 3:45pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service. Service at 10:30am Seekers Club Lighthouse Club (years 3-5) Christ Church Youth Club (years 12-13)
Wed	13		
Thu	14	7:00pm	The Rock Youth Group (years 9-11)
Fri	15	10:00am 6:30pm	Friday Fellowship Breathe (years 6-8)
Sat	16		

January 2010

Sun	17	9:15am 4:15pm 6:00pm	Communion Acts 9:1-19 "A religious bigot" St John's Methodist/URC Stone CTiS AGM St John's Methodist/URC Stone CTiS service for Christian Unity. Followed by bring & share tea
Mon	18	7:00pm	Cornerstone
Tue	19	9:30am 10:00am 10:30am 12:30pm 3:45pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service. Midweek Service with Churches Together in Stone Seekers Club Lighthouse Club (years 3-5) Christ Church Youth Club (years 12-13)
Wed	20	7:30pm 7:30pm	Taize Worship - St Dominic's Church (CTiS) PCC meeting
Thu	21	10:30am 1:20pm 7:00pm	Holy Communion - St Michael's CTiS Christ Church Middle School assembly Rock Youth Group (years 9-11)
Fri	22	9:15am 10:00am 6:30p	Prayer Walk CTiS Friday Fellowship Breathe (years 6-8)
Sat	23	8:30am 6:00pm	CTiS Prayer Meeting in Centre, followed by breakfast Youth Service - Stone Baptist Church
Sun	24	9:15am 6:00pm	Family Service. Acts 16:16-34 "A prison officer" A taste of Keswick Service. Isaiah 64 "The potter"
Mon	25	7:00pm	Cornerstone
Tue	26	9:30am 10:00am 12:30pm 3:45pm 7:30pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service. Service at 10:30am Seekers Club Lighthouse Club (years 3-5) Christ Church Youth Club (years 12-13)
Wed	27	7:45pm	Tough Questions - Real Answers

**VISION
BRASS**

**Remember this name and look out
for it later in the year
-- and mark 20th November in your
diary.**

January 2010

Thu	28	1:20pm 7:00pm	Christ Church Middle School assembly Rock Youth Group (years 9-11)
Fri	29	10:00am 6:30pm	Friday Fellowship Breathe (years 6-8)
Sat	30		
Sun	31	9:15am 6:00pm	Morning Prayer. Acts 2:42-47 "A community" Communion at Christ Church Isaiah 65:17-25 "The new creation"

Numbers after clubs refer to school years, not ages.

Covenant Service 3rd January 2010

We will hold an united benefice covenant service at 10:30am on Sunday 3rd January 2010. The purpose of this service is to remember God's covenant faithfulness to His people and in the light of this to joyfully recommit ourselves to the Lord for the year to come. We will have a guest speaker Revd Tim Hanson (from Winsford) who will also be visiting us in March as part of our celebration and sharing of faith in 'A Passion For Life.'

Come early for coffee from 10am, stay after the service for a shared lunch at 12. Christ Church people are asked to bring savouries (see Kate Latham about this), Oulton with Moddershall people are asked to bring desserts (see Ruth Parsons).

Radio Stoke will be present to record the service for subsequent broadcast (a week later). Do attend so that we make a joyful noise.

Sermon series in January

Mornings at Christ Church & Oulton: '*Stories of conversion in Acts.*' As we look at the life of the early church, we see how the good news of Jesus Christ was and is a message that changes lives. No-one is beyond the reach of its transforming power!

Moddershall & Evenings: '*Isaiah describes a bright future.*' In the final part of the Isaiah's prophecy our attention is turned to Israel's homecoming – the end of the long exile. Here Isaiah anticipates a new creation in some eye-watering visions. It's truly exhilarating! It's eternal! It's not to be missed!

Paul Kingman

How can I give you up?

It's commonly said that there's no gain without pain. It's a true enough comment when it comes to making resolutions for the New Year. We may think of reading something different to broaden our minds, to take more exercise, to start a new hobby, brush up a skill that has gone rusty, attend to a neglected garden or decide to fight the flab in order to shed some weight. The calorie counters will sympathise with an old Garfield cartoon I once saw. Garfield, the original fat cat, stares at his meagre portion of food. Just one thought bubble comes from his glum face: "Diet is die with a t!"

God's resolutions differ from ours as He keeps His promises perfectly. One particular Old Testament prophet had to act out the role of God. His name was Hosea and he was to marry an unfaithful wife. This was to depict the LORD as the faithful husband while His people Israel were like an adulterous wife. This was a relationship that tested God's covenant promises to the extreme. Yet, due to His covenant faithfulness and love God does not back out. Here's just a flavour of the moving words delivered by Hosea as he delivers God's message: *'how can I give you up Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? ...My heart is changed within me, all my compassion is aroused'* (Hosea 11v8). God cannot and will not give up on His covenant people. God's passionate love for His people is seen from His total commitment without reserve even when His people have gone astray.

Together we will remember God's covenant love on Sunday 3rd January at the special United Benefice **covenant service**. During the service we will recall God's commitment to us before rededicating ourselves to His service. We have the pleasure of **BBC Radio Stoke** recording the service for broadcast. This is a service for all in the benefice and especially those who are on the church electoral rolls. The service will be followed by a shared lunch immediately afterwards. It will be a great way to start the New Year together.

A very happy New Year to you all.
Paul Kingman.



What Legacy Do I Want?

2010 may be my last year in Stone. Or maybe I'll still be here next year. I have no idea – thankfully, God does! A few years ago, when Tony Blair was coming to the end of his time as Prime Minister, there was a lot of talk about what his “legacy” would be. What lasting contribution had he made to the nation and the world?

What would be a good “legacy” for a curate to leave behind? Lots of mentions in PCC minutes? Happy memories of me by the Wetherspoons staff? Come to think of it, what legacy would you like to leave behind? In years to come, what would you like people to remember about you?

(I'm reminded here of a Woody Allen quote: “I don't want to live on in my work. I want to live on in my apartment.”!)

There's only one legacy I really want, whether it is when I move on from Stone or when I die. The legacy is this: people captivated by Jesus' love. More than anything else I want to see men and women, young and old, treasuring Jesus with all their heart and living their lives for him.

Does that describe you? Can you say with the apostle Paul, “I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord ... I consider them rubbish [dung], that I may gain Christ and be found in him...” (Philippians 3:8)

There is a world of difference between considering yourself 'religious' or 'spiritual' (maybe attending church regularly) and actually knowing the Lord. It's the difference between being told that honey is sweet, and actually tasting its sweetness. Over the coming months, in these articles, I want to explore some different titles given to Jesus. My hope is that these titles will warm your heart, thrill your mind and motivate your hands and feet into action.

Everything else is a waste of time.

For God's sake give and take

Dear Friends,

One day Jesus sat watching as people put money into the Temple collection box. Many of the rich were making large contributions. Then a poor widow came and put in two small coins - just a couple of pence. Jesus turned to His Disciples and told them how she had in fact given more than all the rest, because what they gave, they wouldn't miss; but she gave what she couldn't afford - she gave her all.

This story challenges and disturbs us. It challenges us because we who are relatively rich know that Jesus has us in His sights. He knows that we give less than we can afford. It disturbs us, because the Temple authorities were apparently prepared to take the widow's pence and so leave her with nothing to live on. Jesus commended her generosity - but surely the religious leaders should have been less ready to take her money and more ready to give her a share of what the rich had contributed.

Christian stewardship of money should always be a matter of give and take. Whilst 2010 will be a year when special efforts will be made to help us all to take Christian Giving seriously, whether to the Church or to Charity, it must also be a year when we make it easier for those in most need to receive their share of what we have at our disposal.

The Archbishop of Canterbury once asked: "For whom is your wealth good news?". If the answer is "me and mine", then we fall well short of what would be an appropriate Christian response to that question. Whether we are talking about surpluses on our personal Current Accounts or our Deanery Share Accounts, the challenge is there: for whom is your wealth good news?

Christmas is a time of giving. But why stop at Christmas? Every day is Christmas Day insofar as we receive many gifts from God including, above all, the gift of life itself. So make every day a giving day, then those who need to take because they cannot give will be able to do so. And there will be plenty left over to fund the mission and ministry of our Church as well as those many other good causes which are so dear to our hearts.

Don't give in order to receive - that way giving simply becomes another way of purchasing! Give so that others can take what they need, just as we take from God what He provides to meet our needs day by day.

John Lincoln (Bishop of Lincoln)

An Evening with Phil and Arthur

Saturday 6th March at 7pm in the Centre
 Something for Everyone
 Sale of plants and pots of spring bulbs
 Guessing games to play 50p a go, great prizes
 Take part in a lighthearted team quiz
 Refreshments
 Tickets £1 from Phil or Arthur
 Proceeds to church general fund

Singaporean Visit

Jeanatte and I visited our son Andrew and his family, who have lived in Singapore since April, during the latter part of November. We had a wonderful time together at his home and doing many of the touristy things like “Raffles”, the British Club and Jurong Bird Park. However, for me, one highlight was, on discovering that Nedie, a Philippine lady who works for Andrew is a Christian who had only a New Testament, being able to buy her a complete bible of her own. Dave Rowlands

Colin Buchanan concert – a must see!

We have been able to secure the services of singer-songwriter **Colin Buchanan** – Australia’s number one children’s Christian artist - who will be bringing his one hour action packed family concert to the Westlands on **Tuesday 16th March 2010**.

“Colin Buchanan is an 8-times Golden Guitar winner, an APRA and ARIA award winner with career album and DVD sales that stand in excess of 240,000 units. A regular on national TV and radio for over 15 years, a leading children's entertainer, award-winning singer/songwriter and highly sought after co-writer, #1 selling Christian artist, genial host... Colin Buchanan is a hard man to pin down!” [see also pages 14 and 15].

Although primarily aimed to suit children, Colin’s infectious style is accessible to everyone, entertaining all ages from 3 to 93. It’s also a brilliant opportunity to bring along those who wouldn’t normally come to Church and those on the fringe who attend holiday clubs, after school clubs, uniformed organisations etc. We hope to secure a block booking of tickets. Please register your interest with the benefice office.

Churches Together in Stone

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

17th to 24th January 2010

Sunday 17th

at St John's Stone 4.15pm CTiS AGM
 followed by Bring and Share Tea and Service for Christian Unity

Monday 18th

at Christ Church 9.00am Prayer Meeting
 at St John's Stone 12.30pm Prayer Lunch

Tuesday 19th

at Christ Church at 10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 20th

at St Dominic's Church at 7.30pm Taize Worship

Thursday 21st

at St Michael's Church at 10.30am Holy Communion

Friday 22nd

Assemble at Christ Church Centre *Prayer Walk to*
 9.15am *Churches in Stone*

Saturday 23rd

at Christ Church at 8.30am Ecumenical Prayer Meeting
Followed by Breakfast

at Stone Baptist Church at 6pm
 (Manor Hill First School,
 Manor Rise, Walton)

Youth Service
 followed by drinks & do-nut.

Sunday 24th

at Christ Church at 6.00pm A Taste of Keswick Service

Tough Questions... Real Answers

Many of our friends and neighbours have tough questions about God and Christianity. And, let's be honest, so do we.

This year's Lent Course will be a bit different. With the **PASSION FOR LIFE** mission taking place in March (6th - 21st) we will begin early, on Wednesday 27th January. Using discussion, video and teaching we will think about these tough questions and try to discover how Jesus answers them. Our aim is to know the answers ourselves and be able to speak naturally about them to others. We will also set time aside to pray for **A PASSION FOR LIFE**.

We will think about tough questions such as:

If God is good why does he allow suffering?

Does God exist? How can we answer the claims of Richard Dawkins and others?

Isn't the Bible full of errors?

Why isn't Christianity more inclusive?

Time and Location:

Please see weekly notice sheets for accurate details as they are confirmed. We will *probably* meet at Christ Church Centre, from 7.45pm. I hope we can again run a daytime version, *probably* somewhere in Oulton.

Wednesday 27th January

Wednesday 3rd February

Wednesday 10th February

Wednesday 17th February *This is Ash Wednesday. 'Tough Questions' will not meet but the service will pick up on some of the themes of the course.*

Wednesday 24th February

Wednesday 3rd March

For more details please contact Tim Vasby-Burnie .

The Lord's Table: God's Soup Kitchen

This table is God's soup kitchen. This table is where God feeds the hungry, the outcast, the disabled, the orphaned, the abused, the neglected, the lonely, and the lost. And this means at least two things:

First, this table is not for people who are fine thank you very much. This food is not for the well-fed, those who get along pretty well on their own, the fit, or the popular. This table is not for people who are basically good but screw up every once in a while. This table is for the messed up. It's for people who are failures. It's for parents who have failed their children. It's for children who have failed their parents. It's for spouses who have failed one another. This table is for the needy, the broken, and the weak. It is for those who are starving for God's grace and mercy, and they will die if they do not have it. If you know your need, if you know that you are weak, that you are lonely, that you are failure on your own, and that you need your faithful Father's love and care, then come. This meal is for you. This is grace and mercy for you.

Secondly, Paul says that when we eat this sacrament we need to discern the Lord's body, we need to see Jesus. And as we have emphasized before, this doesn't mean squinting hard at the bread and wine trying to see flesh and blood somehow. Paul is talking about seeing Jesus in those around you, seeing Jesus next to you and behind you as you serve one another and partake together. But putting these two things together means that Jesus wants you to see Him in the neediness of those around you; He wants you to see Him in the hungry, the outcast, the disabled, the orphaned around you. He wants you to see Him there. He wants you to see Him in those people who are different from you; He wants you to see Him in those you have had disagreements with. He wants you to see Him even in those who may have wronged you. He wants you to give them bread for their hunger and give them wine for their thirst. So come to God's soup kitchen. Come to the banquet spread for the needy of the world. Come and rejoice because there is plenty of grace for you. Jesus gives Himself to you, and He calls you to eat, drink, and rejoice in and with one another.

Discovered by Tim V-B at

<http://havingtwolegs.blogspot.com/2009/09/gods-soup-kitchen.html>

HIV Prevention

We have started to implement the findings of my report into the day-to-day practice of Oasis, ensuring that the methods we use are backed up by evidence, which is posing some interesting challenges. We are also trying to ensure we have measurable outcomes of success which we will help us to make best use of the money we have: stopping projects that aren't effective and augmenting ones that are. I am going through all of our thirty projects and specifically looking at how they can help Oasis' goal of reducing HIV levels next year; with the biggest intervention being with our HIV testing team to ensure that we offer re-tests to negatives and get positives into a treatment program.

GodFirst Church

It is going to be a busy year ahead as we will be having services in seven venues from January. One of those venues will be in a township which will be good because although we are quite racially diverse we tend to be quite middle class and this will help us break out from that.

We are also hosting some conferences next year and gathering church leaders on a monthly basis to have a greater sense of unity. One of the speakers coming is Tim Keller who is arguably the next CS Lewis. His book 'The Reason for God' (www.reasonforgod.com) is a compelling apologetic for the intellectual basis of Christianity. It is well worth a read. The other big speaker we have visiting is Mark Driscoll. My parents have just finished his account of growing a church 'from the size of a Mormon family' to just over 8000 people in America's least churched city, Seattle where there are 'more dogs than children'. 'Confessions of a Reformissional Rev' tells of people attacking him while in the pulpit and holding a demonstration outside his church when he said it was ok for parents to smack their children. It is quite a rollercoaster ride, and worth the read.

Well, that's the end of my rollercoaster year. Thanks again for your support and I hope you

Andrew Butterworth

The PCC met on Wednesday 18 November 2009 and the following matters were reported on, discussed and/or decided.

- Maintenance on the church yard pathway that leads from the back of the church to Bromfield Court will take place in the Spring of 2010. Watch this space for further details of how to become involved.
- From 2010 our offering to mission work will be based on the free will giving and it will also include the amount we receive back from the gift aid claim in the calculation.
- A review of the cleaning contract for the church centre has resulted in a greater focus being made on the paintwork and the glass. Paper towels have been installed in the toilets in a bid to improve hygiene.
- Following the completion of the new entrance, the PCC agreed to proceed with some final minor alterations within the church. The crèche is to be moved to the back corner of the church where the old font was and pews reinstated along that wall. This will provide extra seating which is needed especially when the schools hold their services in church. It is hoped to have this work completed before Christmas.
- Some members of the original Rock Youth club, aged 16 and over, are still meeting on a Tuesday evening. They are being supported by the Assistant Minister for Youth.
- Two vacancies on the Christ Church Middle School Governing Body have been filled by the Vicar and Mr R Brandon.
- An American Oak cross is to be commissioned and is to be mounted on the curved tower wall opposite the new entrance. It is hoped to have this installed by Christmas to promote the church as a Christian centre.
- Local fees are to have a nominal increase from 2010. This includes charges for hiring the church, expenses for an organist and a vergger, interment of ashes and room hire in the church centre. Full details are available in the church office.

The next PCC meeting is on Wednesday 20 January 2010 at 7.30pm.

Jacqueline Abrahams

Australia's number one Christian Family Entertainer comes to the Midlands

Singer / songwriter **Colin Buchanan** – Australia's number one Christian family entertainer – brings his one hour action packed family concert to the Midlands for the first time in March of this year as part of "Passion for Life 2010".

Although on his fourth UK tour, this is the first time that Colin has visited the Midlands and there will be a double opportunity for those in our Diocese.

He will be performing at Edgbaston High School for Girls at 3.00 p.m. on Sunday 14th March and then, within our own Diocese, at **6.00 p.m. on Tuesday 16th March at St. Andrew's, Westlands, Newcastle-under-Lyme.**

Although best suited to children from Reception to Year 8, Colin's infectious style is accessible to everyone, entertaining all ages from 3 to 93. It's also a brilliant opportunity to bring along those who wouldn't normally come to Church and those on the fringe who attend holiday clubs, after school clubs, uniformed organisations etc.

Colin has been a regular on Australian national TV since 1993, first appearing on ABC TV's Play School and then on the 7 Network / Disney Channel's Playhouse Disney. Colin has been solidly ensconced as one of the most beloved faces of Australian children's television. His happy, engaging and slightly mischievous persona has endeared him to a generation of young Australians (and a growing number of young people in the UK) and their families. With his guitar (and often a suitable self-penned tune) ever at the ready, Colin's exploits have seen him construct countless cardboard creations, read innumerable stories, and discover the many wonders that lie "out and about" on location.

Continued on next page

If you happened to wander into one of Colin's many energetic live performances for kids, you'd likely hear kids and adults alike enthusiastically singing "10, 9, 8... God Is Great!" or "Jesus Rock the World!" at the top of their voices. In 1996, Colin released the first of his hugely successful "Aussie Praise for kids" (AP4K) albums. Independently released and distributed to the Australian Christian market, Colin has become the nation's number 1 children's Christian artist, with seven top selling CD's and five DVD and video releases. Embraced across the denominational spectrum, his Christian songs for kids are catchy, deliberately biblical and, musically speaking, refreshingly eclectic. His musical Bible memory verses, including the well-known Isaiah 53:6 ("We all like sheep have gone astray...Baa baa doo baa baa...!") have helped thousands learn and remember the scriptures. Other AP4K favourites "Super Saviour", "Jesus Number 1", "Remember the Lord" etc. appear amusingly simple at first, but have a substantial quality that minister to adults and children alike.

Be it on stage, on television, on radio or in a song, Colin Buchanan's infectious warmth and substantial talent has earned him a unique place in Australia's entertainment landscape. Part writer, part performer, part actor, part raconteur, Colin's career path has been characterised by a cheerfully resourceful ability to adapt, create and connect with young and old alike.

Tickets for both concerts are priced at £4.50 each for young and old alike and for the concert at St. Andrew's, Westlands are available from Chris Gill (chris.gill@tesco.net or 01782 625924). For directions to the Church please see the Church website www.churchinthewestlands.org.uk

For further details of the Birmingham event please contact dan@gracechurchsc.org.uk.

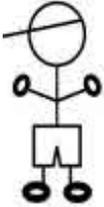
Tickets are expected to sell quickly and if you are thinking of coming along please consider buying a ticket for a friend who may be on the fringe.

More information about Colin and his work can be found on his website www.colinbuchanan.com.au

New Year Resolutions

Members of the congregation have suggested the following new year's resolutions. What would be your hopes and plans for the new year?

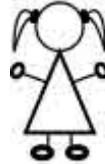
Pray more



Have pure motives



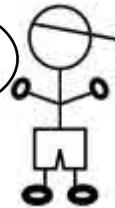
Love more



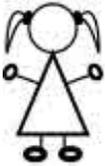
To continue seeking the Lord more



To do several talks to schools for the Gideon organisation



Share my faith more



Be more loving



To keep up-to-date with letter-writing



Read more of the bible

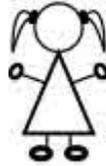


New Year Resolutions

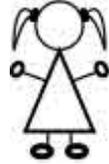
Read the bible more



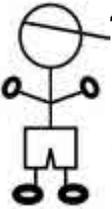
Resolve to know Jesus better



Do less!



Be a better neighbour



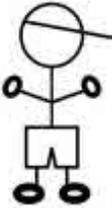
Not to be closeted with my faith



Be more organised



Have more patience



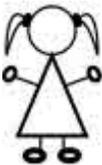
Give up chocolate!



That I would truly live out "Thy will be done"



To deal with everything coming through the letterbox on the day it comes



Dubrava Church in Zagreb

Hi once again! Here we are quite encouraged. Sunday church services are regularly seeing many visitors coming and there is a joyful "hubble-bubble" before and after our services. On the house group, youth and children front we are seeing blessings. We had baptisms at Radiæeva church, where Stephen baptised Nikolina and Roberto, two recent converts.

Stephen & Tabita Bell, Zagreb Croatia

God has blessed us in the Dubrava church with many new regular visitors. Please pray that as they integrate they become Christians.

Please pray for the developing church lay leaders, they they are mobilised into ministry, take up more responsibility and see God's blessing on their lives.

Pray for the youth. We have seen 4 new girls attend regularly this Autumn. Pray for joy, conversions and further newcomers.

Pray for us as a couple and a family that we would continually know the joy of the Lord! Pray for colleagues Ulrike & Tihomir Vekia as they have furlough Jan-June 2010 in Germany. May they be refreshed and encouraged as they seek to encourage German believers.

House groups: Praise God we are seeing numbers increase at our house group in Sesvete. Pray for Nada and Ruben who host and co-ordinate the event. We are regularly seeing 10 coming and just recently 14 came! Pray that our friends Milan and Snjezana would come this Tuesday.

Joshua had his birthday on 6th Dec. He is amazingly 11 years old!

Serbia & Bosnia 2nd-6th Dec

Stephen Bell & Stuart Rowell visited the Serbian and Bosnian teams. Branko is recovering from a heart by-pass operation and Radovan has also had serious illness. Pray for their families as they lead the respective works in very difficult circumstances. Pray for new conversions and that leaders would be raised up to help them and extend the work.

Much love to you all,
Stephen & Tabita, Sheona, Joshua and Benjamin

ROADS FOR PRAYER

3rd January

The Crescent
End of Granville Terrace
Millers Gate
Hartley Drive

17th January

Chestnut Grove
Edward Street
Field Terrace
Field Terrace Court

10th January

Albert Street
Alexandra Street
Arthur Street
Berkeley Street

24th January

Kent Grove
Meaford Avenue
Mount Avenue
Mount Crescent



31st January

Mount Road
Mount Street
Old Road
Stonefield Court

An Advent Evening

On December 12th, Diana organised an Advent Evening, at which we heard from several talented members of the congregation. There was wonderful food, though only one sort of quiche.

Mr Pickwick goes Skating.

Pickwick Papers was published in a monthly magazine, Charles Dickens was paid £14 per month- this was sufficient a sum to enable Charles Dickens to marry.

The Christmas Present

Audrey visited Miss Sherrat, when the discussion turned to the quality of stockings.

Christchild Lullaby

Callum had lost his mother and suffered from the severe tellings-off of his stepmother. Then the stepmother saw a vision of the Virgin Mary stroking the head of Callum, and from that time she became more loving. This is the origin of the Hebridean Christchild Lullaby.

Star

Origami. Making a star from paper defeated even the most highly-qualified teachers and theologians, but children succeeded. There must be a moral there somewhere.

Narrow Dog Christmas

Christmas on Monica and Terry's narrowboat in Savannah, Georgia. Jim was very popular with the hotel doorman, the hamburger stall man and many others. Colonel Frank Williams III invited T&M round on Christmas Day. Jim cocked his leg on the Christmas presents and threw up over the hearth-rug. But Col Frank was very kind and understanding [perhaps it wasn't his Christmas present].

Calypso Carol

Pam and Louise led us all in singing this carol.

Carpenters Need Not Apply

Poems by David Hill of Trinity Church, Stafford.

A Christmas Poem [Luci Shaw]

From a book of Christian poems given to Dorothy by John Williams, with illustrations from shop window displays and stained-glass windows.

The People who Walked in Darkness

From Isaiah 9- with parts for us all to speak.

Epilogue

From 1 John 1. Based on a bicycle wheel. Jesus is the hub, we are the spokes, radiating God's message to the world. The nearer we are to centre, the nearer we are to the other spokes [our brothers+sisters].

Dave Bell

FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERALS

10th November	Reg John Sellman	81 *
18th November	John Nevitt	77 *
3rd December	Stella Hadon	62

Stafford Crematorium

2nd December	Edna Elsie Smith	87
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* An incorrect date was printed in the December magazine. Apologies.

SIDESPERSIONS ROTA

	AM		PM
3rd Jan	D. Pickles D. Wilson	B. Hutchinson M. Hutchinson	P. Tunstall
10th Jan	A. West A. Lloyd	G. Holden J. Abrahams	D. Shemilt
17th Jan	J. Rowlands D. Davies	D. Wilson T. MacFarlane	P. Tunstall
24th Jan	I. Gassor C. Wilding	B. Hutchinson M. Hutchinson	D. Shemilt
31st Jan	A. West A. Lloyd	A. West J. Abrahams	P. Tunstall

FLOWER ROTA

3rd Jan	Flower Guild
10th Jan	Mrs C. Jaques
17th Jan	Flower Guild
24th Jan	Mrs J. Booth
31st Jan	Flower Guild



Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website	www.christchurchstone.org
Parish office email	christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com
Magazine contributions	christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk

Deanery Synod Reps	Mrs S Hallam, Mr D. Rowlands	
P.C.C. Members	Mr G. Holden, Mr K. Reynolds, Mrs J. Rowlands Mr A. Stone, Mrs E. Woodhead, Mrs D. Davies Mrs I. Gassor, Mrs E. Mason, Mr M. Thompson Mrs D. Wilson, Mrs J. Abrahams, Mrs K. Latham Mr P. Mason, Mr A. Rushton, Mr T. Woodhead	
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
3rd Stone Brownies (Mo 6:00-7:30pm, First School)	Janet Smith.....	815939

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

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

Prayer diary - this is printed in the middle of the magazine
TEARFUND

Prayer requests in the weekly World Watch Prayer Link include the following:

Fri 1st At the beginning of a new year, please pray for the 75 million children worldwide who have no access to education, and a further 150 million children who don't complete their primary school education. Give thanks that last year Tearfund funded the building of seven new schools in the Fizi area of east **Democratic Republic of Congo**. When the new schools were built, new water-piping systems were built too, bringing clean water to the schools and their communities.

Sat 2nd Give thanks that new **HIV** infections are now officially in decline. Please pray for those living with HIV (a rising number due to the life-siding effects of ARV drugs). Please pray for those infected who are not being treated – at the moment 60%. Pray also that the help given to AIDS victims can set a benchmark to tackle other conditions.

Sun 3rd Please pray for the ongoing political situation in **Honduras**; that the next leader will bring much-needed peace, reconciliation and security. Please pray also that God will strengthen the churches in Honduras so that they can be a source of love and hope in their communities. (*Today is Covenant Sunday when we renew our commitment to God and His work*)

Mon 4th 20 million people in **E Africa** are still affected by the 2009 food crisis. There's also some concern that other parts of Africa may be affected during 2010. Please pray for communities affected and a generous response from churches.

Tue 5th Please pray for God's comfort for those still suffering due to the disasters in **SE Asia** in 2009. Pray also that the relief efforts in Indonesia, Cambodia and the Philippines will continue to be effective in bringing hope to communities. Give thanks for the financial and prayer responses of churches in the UK to these disasters.

24 **TIM & KATE LEE, Rebekah, James & Grace – PHILIPPINES**

Tim, Kate and the children have settled fairly well into life in this country in St Ives, Cambridgeshire while continuing to support Jigsaw Kids Ministries in Manila.

A numb

Wed 6th Please continue to pray for the Jigsaw staff as they seek to re-establish the Jigsaw Centres after the devastating typhoon three months ago. Many Jigsaw staff suffered loss or severe damage to their own homes. Pray for them that, as they minister to others, they too will experience God's loving care for them.

Thu 7th Praise God for His amazing and abundant financial provision for the emergency work Jigsaw was involved in after the typhoon. Pray for the continuing relief work that is still needed.

Fri 8th Kate has been doing part-time supply teaching work. Pray that she will get a permanent, or more long-term, post which is just right for her and the family needs.

Sat 9th Pray for Tim as he continues to support Jigsaw's work via skype and e-mail. He has a skype meeting with the Manila Jigsaw folk most mornings. Pray for Tim as he prepares for a further trip to Manila soon.

Sun 10th Tim & Kate have their house in Huddersfield on the market. No news of its sale yet. Pray for a quick sale and that they will find a suitable house in Cambridgeshire which they can afford.

OWEN & TRACY HUMPHREYS, Ben, Steffan & Jonathan – S.INDIA

Owen e-mailed us a newsletter recently at the end of term. The family are now on their winter break and are delighted that Ben was planning to spend it with them.

Mon 11th Praise God that the Art Department has been going well and Amy, the IG (International Guest) who has joined the Department, is 'brilliant' a 'God-send'. Pray for Wendy, Tracy's colleague in the Art Department. Her husband has been made redundant which means that the family may need to return to their home country. Pray for the family for guidance as to the way forward, and for Tracy as she once more faces the loss of a valued colleague.

Tue 12th Pray for those who lost homes, livelihoods, and loved ones in the recent floods and landslides in the School area. Please pray for the bereaved and that the Christian community (including the School) can be a positive help and witness at this time.

Wed 13th Owen wrote last month that there had been a lot of discipline problems at the School. he's not known anything quite like it. It feels like a spiritual attack. Please pray for protection and for good to come out of it.'

Thu 14th Owen specially asked us to pray over the winter break for safety on the roads as some families travel great distances on roads notoriously prone to accidents. Pray for a restful break for staff and students over this holiday period that they may return refreshed for the new term.

**RALPH & DAGMAR BARON, Helen, Sarah & Simon
– S. INDIA**

Ralph & Dagmar e-mailed us in mid-November from Hebron School saying – 'We have just been through a challenging week or two. There are five weeks left of the term and we need plenty of strength to see us through.' They were looking forward to seeing all their family at some point in the winter break. No news since.

Fri 15th Pray for safe travel and a refreshing time over this winter break.

Sat 16th Pray for those affected by the floods and land-slides *(See Tue 12th above)*

Sun 17th Pray for the two boys who were expelled and their families – for wisdom and guidance to know how they should proceed. Pray for the School staff who had to deal with the situation (*See Wed 13th above*) and could face repercussions.

Mon 18th Please pray for protection for Helen and Elliot and all known to Ralph & Dagmar working in different parts of Pakistan. Pray for the Pakistani government in its efforts to establish peace and security.

Tue 19th Ralph and Dagmar's contracts are up for renewal in June, but they need to decide in December whether they will seek to stay on at Hebron. Please pray for clear guidance.

ANDREW BUTTERWORTH – SOUTH AFRICA

Andrew e-mailed us in mid-December. 'December is a strange time of year to be in Joberg. There is a mass exodus of people to sunnier parts of South Africa as many people engage on their summer holidays. Oasis operate two year cycles before returning home so I will be celebrating my first Christmas away from Christ Church and my family but it will be great fun to see how Christmas is done in South Africa.'

Wed 20th Praise God with Andrew: for a great year, having seen both Oasis and his home church mature as organisations and himself grow closer to God; for strong friendships, enabling him to feel quite at home there and enjoying and serving the city; and for real evidence of his time in Joberg having a lasting effect in other people's lives, both spiritually and physically.

Thu 21st Pray that Andrew's church, Godfirst, will enable many more lives to be transformed by the Gospel, particularly reaching more people who have never been to a church.

Fri 22nd Pray that Oasis not only provides good services to the community in Cosmo city but can inspire real hope for the future for the many residents afflicted by poverty and HIV.

REBECCA – PAKISTAN

Rebecca e-mailed us in mid-December – ‘Thank you very much for your prayers. In January I plan to stay in our city. This is the first time I have stayed through the winter. It should be a good time for spending time with people.’

Sat 23rd ‘Pray for the army, the government and all in authority, for the police and all security personnel.

Sun 24th Pray for all those who have been displaced last year and lost their homes.

Mon 25th Please pray for me as I will be the only person on my team here in January. Please pray for safety and good health and that this would be a fruitful time.’

STEPHEN & TABITA BELL, Sheona, Joshua & Benjamin – CROATIA

Stephen & Tabita are involved in a church-planting ministry in Zagreb, Croatia.

Tue 26th Stephen writes – ‘God has blessed us in the Dubrava church with many new regular visitors. Please pray that as they integrate they become Christians. Praise God we are seeing numbers increase at our housegroup in Sesvete. Pray for Nada and Ruben who host the event.

Wed 27th Stephen writes - Pray for us as a couple and as a family that we would continually know the joy of the Lord.

Thu 28th Please pray for the developing lay leaders Davor and Ruben, that they are mobilised into ministry, take up more responsibility and see God’s blessing on their lives.’

JONATHAN & ROBINAH BEESIGOMWE – BOTSWANA

Jonathan and Robinah engage in evangelism and discipleship training with students and young families and with organisations working in HIV education and prevention.

- Fri 29th Jonathan & Robinah hope to work with more young families in 2010, especially helping husbands and wives to treat each other as we are taught in the Bible. They would like children to grow up in loving families, cared for by both their father and mother. Pray to this end.
- Sat 30th Please pray for the Botswana government, that they will choose to support Christian groups and churches trying to work in schools and among poor people. Recognised 'faith-based groups are trying to do this work but have very few funds.
- Sun 31st Schoolchildren and young people in Botswana face many problems – poverty, witchcraft, child abuse. Jonathan & Robinah have been shocked by stories of these problems they have heard about while visiting schools. Please pray that J & R and other youth workers will be able to provide assistance.