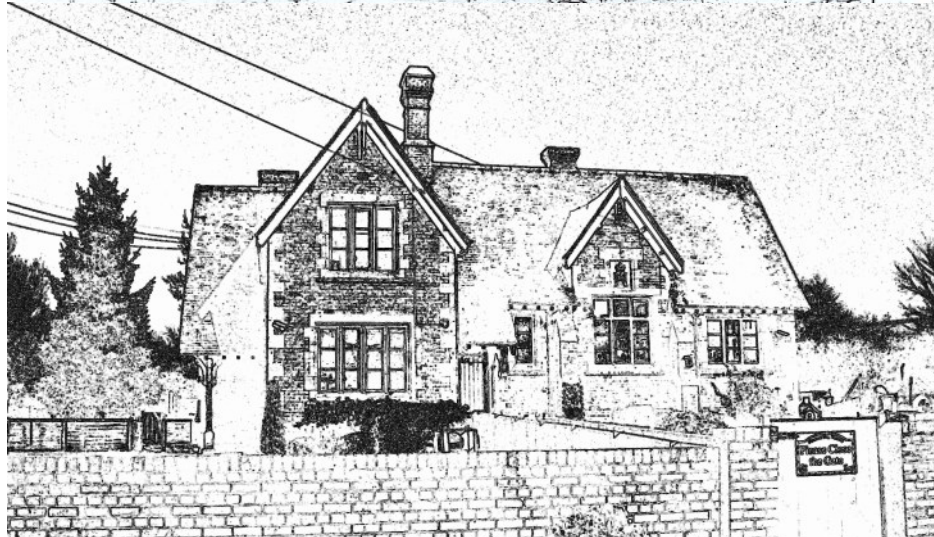


Christ Church and People



May 2021

PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on pages 4 and 5.

Young people's activities take place in the Centre at 9.15 am

THE PARISH TEAM

Vicar	Paul Kingman	812669
	The Vicarage, Bromfield Court	
Children & Families Worker	Peter Cuthbert	07733 042205
	peter.j.cuthbert@btinternet.com	
Electoral Roll Officer	Parish Office	811990
Parish Office	Christ Church Centre, Christ Church Way, Stone, Staffs ST15 8ZB	
	Email office@christchurchstone.org	811990

CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

Booking Secretary	Parish Office	811990
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CHURCH SCHOOLS

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

Headteacher Mrs A. Graham BA(Hons) NPQH	01785 336545
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Christ Church Academy, Old Road

Principal: Mr C. Wright MAEd	01785 334900
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Christ Church



and People

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

Cover Picture
Meaford School
building

Church and Zoom Services May 2021

Date	Time	Activity (sermon text same at all services each Sunday)
1st	9:00 am	Zoom prayer meeting
2nd	9:00 am	Morning Prayer, All Saints Moddershall Jonah 1 “Jumping ship”
	9:15 am	Communion, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer, St John’s Oulton
9th	9:00 am	Communion, All Saints Moddershall Jonah 2 “A deep prayer”
	9:15 am	Morning Prayer, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Communion, St John’s Oulton
16th	9:00 am	Morning Prayer, All Saints Moddershall Jonah 3 “The whole truth”
	9:15 am	Communion, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer, St John’s Oulton
23rd	9:00 am	Morning Prayer, All Saints Moddershall Jonah 4 “Compassion fail”
	9:15 am	Morning Prayer, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer, St John’s Oulton
30th	9:15 am	Morning Prayer, Christ Church Philippians 1:1-11 “Partnership in the gospel”
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Communion, St John’s Oulton

The lifting of restrictions

O how we've longed for the month of May! The pandemic lockdown restrictions have weighed heavily on us. The third lockdown has been harder to endure and perhaps aggravated by finding it more difficult to get out during poorer weather. There is no substitute for being with those we love. We've felt starved of human contact with family and friends. What was once just normal socialising has now come into focus as a real treat! As Easter was celebrated the blooming of spring flowers reminded us of the new life that only God can give.

There is an even greater lifting of restrictions to celebrate during May when we remember Jesus' ascension. The risen Jesus said he was returning to the Father's side and would continue to be at work as our great High Priest. So, having paid the ultimate price for the sin of the world – by his death on the cross - Jesus Christ is now risen and exalted to heaven. He grants the gifts of repentance and forgiveness of sins and the abiding presence of his Spirit. The previous restrictions of having no access to the holy God have now been lifted! All has changed! Access is possible!

In Hebrews the writer outlines the consequence of this living relationship: *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God"* (Heb 12v2). Jesus has blazed a trail for his people. He provides us with a model to inspire our steadfastness in the face of difficulties and even opposition. It assures us that even if God disciplines us, he does this as our loving Father in heaven so that we might become more like Christ. It gives us renewed energy to work at relationships with others as part of a life dedicated to God, who is our judge. This gives us motivation to serve God our great redeemer, knowing that His eternal kingdom is unshakable and glorious.



As we remember Jesus' ascension, the lifting of the ultimate restriction, let's be thankful for the full access that he gives and the blessings he pours out on his people.

Paul Kingman

Bishops' tributes to Prince Philip

The Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, paid the following tribute to HRH The Duke of Edinburgh:

"I join with people across the Diocese of Lichfield in expressing our sorrow on the death of HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and in sending our condolences to HM The Queen and all the members of the Royal Family. Prince Philip has lived a life of service, commitment and courage; he has been constantly loyal in his support of the Queen and tireless in his engagement with people of all communities across our country. His advocacy for young people, for conservation and for a wide range of charitable activities has been remarkable, and is an inspiration to us all. In this Easter season, our prayers for him are that he may enjoy the fulness of the life which is promised to us; and our prayers for our Queen are that in her grief she may know the comfort and hope which faith assures."

The Bishop of Wolverhampton, the Rt Revd Clive Gregory, added:

"I join with faith leaders across the City in expressing, on behalf of the communities we represent, our deep sorrow at the passing of Prince Philip. Many of us have cause to remember with gratitude his visits to our region, and the lively interest that he always showed in the causes and issues dear to our hearts. So many of our young people have benefited immeasurably from the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, helping them to develop the courage, loyalty and fortitude that he displayed in abundance during both his war and public service. Our thoughts and prayers are with Her Majesty the Queen, the close family and all who will miss him most."

The Bishop of Shrewsbury, the Rt Revd Sarah Bullock, said:

"Alongside the people of Shropshire I join in expressing my profound sadness at the death of HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and in sending my condolences to HM The Queen and all the Royal Family. Prince Philip was a man of commitment, dedication and service."

Bishops' tributes (cont)

His loyal support of HM The Queen and his selfless devotion and service will be long remembered and appreciated. His engagement with young people, through the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, was one of the Duke's most remarkable achievements, equipping and empowering young people from across all communities to develop the skills, confidence and resilience they need to flourish and make the most out of life. We give thanks for his life and the deep faith which was a comfort and resource to him and our prayers are with our Queen and all the Royal Family at this time."

The next Bishop of Stafford, Rt Revd Matthew Parker, said:
"There are many in North Staffordshire who have cause to be thankful for the long and full life of HRH Prince Phillip. In times of great change and turbulence the Prince offered a model of engaged, selfless and committed public service that will remain as an example to all who seek to find practical ways of loving and serving their neighbours. We can only marvel at the breadth of his interests and sympathies that encompassed a ground-breaking scheme for young people, a fascination with the potential of industry and engineering to improve human life and a profound respect for the integrity of the natural environment. Behind this notable public life lies the life of a man who was devoted to his family and most especially to Her Majesty the Queen and I add my deep condolences and prayers to the many already offered."

Coat of arms of
Prince Philip



A prayer for the Royal Family

Almighty and everlasting God, 'the life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.' But You are forever, from everlasting to everlasting, and we put our trust in You for You have promised never to leave us nor forsake us. Loving Lord, in this last year, through the worst of a global pandemic, we've been face to face with our fragility and vulnerability, perhaps for some of us as never before. Against that backdrop of hurt and loss, we give you thanks for the life and service of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. Some are called to the front of the stage, others to supporting roles and we rejoice in the way he supported Her Majesty the Queen through all of the years of her reign. We remember, too, his work supporting charities and, perhaps most memorably for young people for over sixty years, his patronage of The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. In this hour of loss, we offer our heartfelt prayers for Her Majesty and her family. Comfort them in their loss, bind up their wounds and grant them the consolation of a store of treasured memories. Grant Her Majesty the peace that comes from knowing you and which passes all understanding. These and all our prayers we ask in the name of Jesus, who through his life, death and resurrection offers us hope instead of despair, life instead of death. Amen

Mission Giving Top-up

For many years, Christ Church has given 10% of its income to support our Mission partners. At the January PCC meeting it was pointed out that the church income has fallen considerably during the Covid pandemic. This will mean a smaller amount for our Mission partners this year. There is an article on the work of six of our Mission partners in the March magazine (you can find this on the Christ Church website). £1320 has now been donated by church members to top up the church donations. A big "thank you" to everybody who contributed- our mission partners have had a difficult year so we should maintain our support for them.

Mission Prayer Diary	
	<i>Church Mission Society</i>
1st	MOLDOVA Mission associate Sharon Rose works in Dancu, using her professional skills as a speech and language therapist to support children with disabilities. Currently in UK, Sharon asks for prayer for a clear sense of when God wants her to return to Moldova
2nd	SRI LANKA Local partner Nevedita Jeevabalan's work with disadvantaged and traumatised children has been somewhat restricted over the past year. Praise God for the opportunities that have been possible and pray for wisdom for Nevedita and the team as they move forward
3rd	PERU Anna Sims working in prison ministry asks "Please pray for the Bible study group inside Santa Monica prison. Give thanks for women in that group reading their Bibles and praying together"
4th	RWANDA Gahini Hospital welcomed a paediatrician, an orthopaedic surgeon and a physician anaesthesiologist earlier this year. Praise God for this progress towards mission partners Catriona and Steve Bennett's goal of developing a sustainable, high quality service at the hospital
	<i>Stephen and Tabita Bell are planting churches in Croatia</i>
5th	As virus cases have been increasing in Croatia, pray for the churches there
6th	Stephen and Tabita are now at Capernwray Bible College (Lancashire). May will be their last month at the college. Pray that the chance to engage fully with Bible study will help them as they move to support a new churchplant on their return to Croatia
7th	Stephen and Tabita give thanks that they have received one vaccine dose and hope to have the 2nd before they return to Croatia in June to resume church planting
8th	Varaždin – We are moving Sept 2021 to this town 50 miles north of Zagreb and we already have a great relationship with Pastor Jonatan (Tabita's cousin)

	<i>Scripture Union provides Bible notes and runs activities for young people. Their online game “Guardians of Ancora” takes the gospel to gamers. “Revealing Jesus” is aimed at the 95% of UK under-18s not connected to any church</i>
9th	Thank God for our team of mission enablers working across England and Wales to envision, train and support Faith Guides as they reach out to the 95 in their communities
10th	SU in Macau asks us to pray for the video screening of Monthly Bible Talk this year
11th	A new curriculum based on the Guardians of Ancora app, is being used in at least 10 countries and 3 languages. Pray that church leaders around the world will catch the vision for this way of sharing the good news with children
12th	Ancora mission leader Maggie Barfield is looking forward to children’s clubs running again in schools, churches and communities. Pray for the release of new video resources to inspire Guardian of Ancora club leaders
	<i>Our CMS Link Missionaries Tim and Kate Lee helped to set up JigSaw Kids Ministries in Manila (Philippines)</i>
13th	God is working incredibly in Jigsaw. A women’s online Bible group based in several locations, over 100 women study the Bible each week. Jigsaw hands out internet data cards; women are sharing phones and Jigsaw’s tablets to join in.
14th	Please pray for Jigsaw’s sewing ministry and women’s bible groups. Pray for God’s love and Joy to fill the ladies through their creativity and for many to know Jesus through the online bible studies that are growing out of the sewing ministry. Thank you.
15th	Our big news is that we have made the decision to leave Kuala Lumpur in July. By June the bulk of what we came here to do will be complete and we feel God is calling us home.

16th	Please continue to pray for Jigsaw literacy ministry. For Judith who is the lead teacher for continued strength under so much work and for each child that they may know hope and new life as they begin to read and write for the very first time. Please pray for Bea too Jigsaw's teaching assistant who has recently had a beautiful baby girl and that God will raise up a temporary literacy assistant while Bea is on maternity leave. Thank you
	<i>Jonathan and Robinah Beesigomwe live in Gabarone, Botswana. Their organisation is "Bows and Arrows Ministry", and they work with older schoolchildren and young adults.</i>
17th	Pray for the "Foundations in Farming" project in partnership with the University of Agriculture
18th	Pray for Mission Outreach March 8-26 in North Botswana. Problems include Covid-19 and Gender-based violence
19th	Pray for a newer car for Ministry. The trail of smoke is scary and mechanics not excited to repair it. We keep praying God keeps Noah's spanner in action. Faith car is 21 years old this year
20th	Pray for farm land after mustering growing Safflower and training a team of thirty to reduce poverty
	<i>Mission Aviation Fellowship fly medical personnel, supplies and missionaries to far-flung, often inaccessible settlements</i>
21st	Last year, we delivered Bibles to Papua's Yali people. Due to their remote location this formerly cannibalistic tribe lived without hope—hating and being hated. Thanks to missionaries flown in by MAF, there is now a thriving Yali church
22nd	Praise God that MAF helps some 2000 partner organisations to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those they seek to serve.

23rd	Praise God that the Madagascar Medical Safari flights have begun again. A team from HoverAid was flown to Ampasinambo to run a one-week clinic
24th	MAF flew women from the jungles of eastern DRC to Panzi Hospital for restorative surgery after suffering violence. Ask Jesus to restore dignity to these women and help them recover from their trauma.
	<i>The Bible Society's Bible-a-month club is delivering Bible resources in Egypt, a country with a strong Christian tradition but where churches are now suffering persecution</i>
25th	Thank God that Bible bookshops have remained open and 1.5 million scripture items were distributed in 2020
26th	Pray for 1,500 teenagers who took part in the Bible competition in 202, that God's word will touch their hearts as well as their minds
27th	Give thanks for progress on the Arabic Study Bible and pray for the translation team working to complete in 2021
	<i>Tear Fund works with local churches and organisations to show God's love in action</i>
28th	Pray for partners working with vulnerable women in Mumbai's red-light district, providing hygiene kits during the coronavirus lockdown
29th	Pray for local churches in Colombia helping ensure that 600 migrant Venezuelan children have a meal every day
30th	Pray for an end to the Ebola outbreak in DRC. It was hoped that the virus had abated in March but new cases have emerged
31st	Pray for safety for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh who have been living in cramped camps for over 3 years

Greetings from our mission partners

The following messages were received in response to Easter greetings card sent by email to all our Mission Partners:

Stephen and Tabita

Thanks so much for sending us this lovely message and thinking of us. We do appreciate all the TLC that Christ Church Stone lavishes on us down the years. It was especially good to have been able to experience church at my Dad's funeral, where all our family got together, despite lockdown.

Please give our love and gratitude to all at Christ Church, regarding TLC, financial support and prayer. We always love visiting! Much love...

Tim and all in Jigsaw Kids' Ministry

Thank you for the beautiful Easter card, it brings such good news. He is risen indeed!

Thank YOU ALL too for your wonderful LOVE and empowering support for Jigsaw through your prayers, gifts, encouragement. Through 'your love in action' we are able to share God's love each day with many children and families in need, bringing hope and life in Jesus. Happy Easter and God's blessings of Peace and Joy be with you. With Love from Tim, Kate, Lendehl, Jolly, Jenalyn and all the staff, children and families in Jigsaw.

Jonathan and Robinah (extracts only)

Happy Easter to You all. Thanks you for your love and support and for the beautiful card. Great to hear you are kept by the grace of God. We are well too and protected and still able to serve in spite of increasing cases of Covid 19. Just this week vaccination started but we suspect it will not reach many people. Last night the Parliament increased the state of emergency for another six months to help control the spread of the virus. Thinking about you this Easter and remembering all the love we have shared over the years.

Thank you again for being a blessing to Botswana Africa and to us.

Mircea Pestean

Happy blessed Easter season....

Ralph and Dagmar

May you know much joy, peace and blessing this Easter.

Matthew Leung

Thank you so much for the card and all the prayer and support that Christ Church, Stone has given me.

I hope when the lockdown eases up, I'll be able to meet some of you in person.

WHY 50?

PENTE is Greek for the number 50. So what is Pentecost? Leviticus 23:15-21, describes a 'Feast of Weeks' or the 'Counting of the Omer' starting after the Passover, on the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, and lasting 50 days, or seven weeks, ending with Shavuot - the second of three major Jewish harvest festivals.

(An 'omer' was an ancient measure for grain equal to one tenth of an ephah. An omer of Barley was sacrificed after Passover and one of Wheat was sacrificed at Shavuot)

Also according to Jewish tradition, Moses received the Law from God at Mount Sinai on the 50th day after the first Passover.

Similarly, counting 50 days, or seven weeks, from Easter brings us to the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and they began speaking other languages. All the God-fearing Jews who had come to Jerusalem from the surrounding nations to observe Shavuot at the Temple, were amazed at what they heard.

Today, at Pentecost, we too need to stop and listen, and praise God for what He has promised us, and speak with others about what Jesus has done for us and for them...

(continued)

Malcolm Guite sums up the blessings of PENTECOST beautifully in this poem:

*Today we feel the wind beneath our wings
Today the hidden fountain flows and plays
Today the church draws breath at last and sings
As every flame becomes a tongue of praise.
This is the feast of fire, air, and water
Poured out and breathed and kindled into earth.
The earth herself awakens to her maker
And is translated out of death to birth.
The right words come today in their right order
And every word spells freedom and release
Today the gospel crosses every border
All tongues are loosened by the Prince of Peace
Today the lost are found in His translation.
Whose mother-tongue is Love, in every nation.*

And that's why we celebrate PENTECOST
50 days after our Lord, Jesus, rose from the Dead.
Hallelujah!

Elizabeth

The big picture

How have you occupied yourself in the long dark days of winter lockdown?

Over the last year we have done a few jigsaw puzzles, mostly 1,000 piece puzzles. However, the hardest puzzle we did had a mere 500 pieces. Even putting the edge pieces together was difficult, so many pieces seemed to fit in more than one place.

The picture was of Little Langdale, a place that we knew quite well once upon a time; we even had a full-size photograph to work from. After a considerable time 2/3 of the puzzle was done and that was how the puzzle stayed for weeks. The sky was really challenging to put together. The pieces fitted in several places but only one place was the right place, we just couldn't see it.

It reminded us that we are like pieces in a puzzle. As part of God's family we fit together to make the big picture. We may not always see God's purpose for us but we can be sure that he knows. He is the one who sees the big picture.

Anyone want a jigsaw of the Lake District? *Enid*

Christ Church 88 years ago

Egg Sunday. Another record!

April 23rd resulted in the collection of 2,635 eggs from Christ Church parish, of which total 1,887 were contributed by Meaford, largely through the untiring efforts of Mrs Lindsay, to whom our cordial thanks are due. These eggs were subsequently distributed between the N. Staffs Infirmary and the Stafford General Hospital, from both of which institutions letters of thanks have been received.

Milwich Church members collected 1880 eggs from local farmers and the congregation for Stafford General Infirmary. The eggs were presented to the Matron and a service of dedication held. The eggs were preserved until as and when they were required.

Christine Burslem 1948-2021

It is with great sadness we record the death of Christine Burslem. She had been for many years a member of the congregations up first Christ Church and then in more recent times Oulton.

Christine was born into a family of potters in December 1948. She moved to Stone in the 1970s to be close to her aunt and uncle, Enid and Cyril Venables. From that time until her death she lived in Edward St.

In earlier times visitors enjoyed Christine's hospitality and I remember a long and hilarious game of Monopoly played around her table, with a group of young people.

Christine had a beautiful voice and was an accomplished pianist. She played in church and in some local schools. Sometimes Christine gave private lessons. She had a deep faith, music being one way of expressing it and she prayed for people.

For some years Christine worked for the library service and she never lost her love of reading. It was not an uncommon sight to see her returning from Stone library with two big bags brimming with books. She also loved an opportunity to go to the Theatre.

Christine had a couple of very interesting and unusual skills. She had an excellent memory, almost photographic and was, like fewer than one in 100 people, ambidextrous. Writing with her left or right hand was equally easy for Christine; so much so her bank once asked her to please always use the same hand to sign the cheques as it was causing confusion!

Christine was delighted to be part of Oulton lunch club and enjoyed having a meal with friends.

Sadly, Christine had suffered from ill health for a number of years which she bore with great fortitude.

(continued)

Ruth Wilson has added some memories of Christine:

I am unsure when I first met Christine, but I got to know her more when she was working in Stafford library and I was working at Stafford Tourist information centre. When she found out Geoff (my late husband) worked for the gas board she asked if we could go and help sort her gas bill out for her. When we were shown into her living room I was amazed at how many books and papers she had.

When the time of the church service changed to 9.15 at Christ Church, Christine became a member of the church family at Oulton. She always sat at the front and had a lovely voice, when Ian played after the service she would always listen and clap, to say how much she enjoyed it.

My husband Geoff died in 2008 and shortly afterwards I decided to start a lunch club in the village and asked Christine to come along. She really enjoyed it and appreciated every meal. She was a lovely lady and we had good conversations together and with many other members of the group. When a group of us went to The Wheatsheaf for lunch Christine would very often join us. I seem to remember she was not very keen on vegetables.

When we went into lockdown with Covid 19, I kept in touch with Christine on a regular basis, I would ask what she was doing, the cross word, reading, or watching TV, I asked what she liked to watch and one was "A new life in the sun", so I started to watch it so we had something to talk about. Sometimes she was on the phone for ages, and other times she would not answer the phone towards the end.

I feel so many people throughout Christine's life had tried to help her, but she would not let them get too close. Her illness in the end stopped her from caring for herself. But it's been a privilege to know Christine and I will miss her.

Ruth Wilson

She will be missed by both Christ Church and Oulton. At the time of going to press no date has been set for her funeral. If you have any interesting memories of Christine please let us know.

Enid

Having to walk for miles each day is hard. But it's getting even harder. The climate crisis is causing prolonged droughts in places like Brazil, meaning that the few water sources communities rely upon are drying up. People are now having to travel even further for water that is often unsafe. But in one community, the local church stepped in to make a difference...

Alzira is 61 and lives in north-east Brazil. From a young age she has made long journeys to wash her family's clothes and collect water. 'It was very difficult,' Alzira shares. 'I had to carry [the water] on my back or on my head. We had to fetch water for everything. There were even situations that we needed to get up at midnight to wait for the cacimão (a small well) to fill, so we could fill a can of water. But whoever first arrived, would take it.'

Alzira's son talked to a local pastor about their situation. And the church responded. Tearfund partner Ação Evangélica (ACEV) works with local churches in Brazil to help communities build water sources, such as dams and wells. Communities are involved every step of the way – they own and maintain the water source for the long-term.

Clean water doesn't just protect communities from waterborne diseases and coronavirus. Agriculture is how most people in northern Brazil make a living. Access to water to help grow crops and feed livestock means a way out of poverty. And ACEV has been offering training in sustainable farming to help communities adapt to the changing weather conditions.

Alzira's church, working with AVEC, built a well in the community. 'The project helped me a lot. Now I have water here very close to my house,' says Alzira. 'I really wanted to have a vegetable garden, now I have one in my yard – all fresh and without pesticides – it is a wonder.'

Claudia Moreria

Tearfund Country Director for Brazil

FLOWER ROTA

2nd May	Flower Guild
9th May	Flower Guild
16th May	Flower Guild
23rd May	Flower Guild
30th May	Flower Guild



ROADS FOR PRAYER

2nd May	9th May
Rangeley View	Rendel Grove
Barnton Edge	Brindley Close
Anderton Way/View	Cressy Close
Bentley Close	Joules Drive



16th May	23rd May	
30th May		
Cauldon Way	Millenium Way	Miller's Gate
Harecastle Bank	Cameron Wharf	Hartley Drive
Saltersford Rise	The Crescent	Regent Street
Rolt Close	End Granville Terr	Harding Grove

Christ Church on the Internet

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