

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)

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Paul Kingman Vicar 812669

The Vicarage, Bromfield Court

Andy Cranston Curate 818983

1 Navigation Loop

Youth and Children's Kieran McKnight 600734

Worker

Music Co-ordinator

07731984755 Electoral Roll Officer Irene Gassor 814871

Parish Office Christ Church Centre, Christ Church Way, Stone, Staffs ST15 8ZB

Email christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com

811990

815854

Deaconess (Retired) Ann Butler 818160

Readers Dave Bell 815775

John Butterworth 817465 **David Rowlands** 816713 Michael Thompson 813712

Cecilia Wilding 817987

Andy Stone Wardens

David Rowlands 816713

Deputy Wardens Phil Tunstall, Arthur Foulkes, Tim Saxton

Pete Mason

CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

Booking Secretary Kate or Irene (Office) 811990

CHURCH SCHOOLS

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

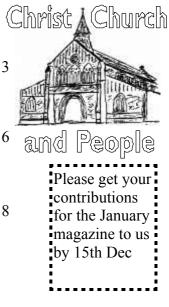
Head: Mrs Lynne Croxall B.Ed.(Hons) 354125

Christ Church Academy, Old Road

Principal: Mr C. Wright 354047

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Cover Picture:Alexandra
Street

The magazine costs 40p per issue or £4 for a full year.

Subscriptions

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

December 2012

Sat	1	8:30am 6:00pm	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast Advent evening in Centre
Sun	2	9:15am 4:00pm 6:00pm	Communion. Romans 15:5-13 "To confirm God's promises" Families at Four - service for the whole family Evening Prayer. Luke 12:35-40 "A watchful servant"
Mon	3	6:30pm	Breathe yrs 5-8
Tue	4	9:30am 10:00am 12:30pm 3:45pm 7:00pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30am Seekers Club Lighthouse yrs 2-4 Youth Club yrs 9-13
Wed	5		
Thu	6	1:20pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	7	7:30pm	Girl Guides - Mombasa Trip Presentation
Sat	8		
Sun	9	9:15am 6:00pm	Morning Prayer. 1 Timothy 1:12-17 "To save sinners" Communion. Luke 14:16-24 "A banquet guest?"
Mon	10	6:30pm	Breathe yrs 5-8
Tue	11	9:30am 10:00am 12:30pm 3:45pm 7:00pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30am Seekers Club Lighthouse yrs 2-4 Youth Club yrs 9-13
Wed	12	6:30pm	Stone Cubs and Scouts service
Thu	13	1:20pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	14		

Sat	15		
Sun	16	9:15am 2:30pm 4:00pm 6:00pm	Communion. Acts 3:17-26 "To bring blessing" Carols at Autumn House Families at Four - service for the whole family Evening Prayer. Luke 15:11-32 "A shrewd manager"
Mon	17	6:30pm	Breathe yrs 5-8
Tue	18	9:30am 10:00am 12:30pm 3:45pm 7:00pm	Christ Church First School assembly Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30am Seekers Club Lighthouse yrs 2-4 Youth Club yrs 9-13
Wed	19	7:00pm	Christ Church First School Nativity
Thu	20	1:20pm 7:00pm	Christ Church Academy assembly Stone Choral Society concert
Fri	21	10:45am	Christ Church Academy Christmas service
Sat	22	12:00pm 4:00pm	Churches Together in Stone Carols in the Market Square Crafts followed by Christingle service
Sun	23	9:15am 5:00pm	Family service 1 Peter 1:20-21 "That we might hope in God" Carol service
Mon	24	11:00am 11:00pm	Advent window opening at Church Late night communion Mark 10:45 "To give his life as a ransom"
Tue	25	9:15am	Christmas Day Communion. John 1:14 "To reveal God's glory"
Wed	26		
Thu	27		
Fri	28		
Sat	29		
Sun	30	11:00am	Morning Prayer at St. John's Oulton John 1:15-18 "To make Him known"
Mon	31		

What would you give up to own a precious jewel? Just recently the world's most precious diamond was auctioned. It was sold for an eye-watering amount: just a few dollars change from \$21.5M (= £13.5M). That's a staggering amount to be raised during a worldwide recession for a colourless stone!

This 'Archduke Joseph Diamond' is named after its original owner. It spent most of its life in a bank vault and then was held by an anonymous buyer during WWII. It reappeared in 1961 at an auction in London were it reached a sale price of \$6.5M. From there it resurfaced at a Geneva auction in 1993, when Christie's sold it for \$6.5M. This year it was up for sale once again in Geneva, at a luxurious hotel by the lake. Two bidders were involved wanting to own the 76.02-carat diamond, with perfect colour and internally flawless clarity, which came from the ancient Golconda mines in India. The successful, but anonymous, bidder has said that this 'one of a kind' diamond will now be displayed in a museum.

It is hard to put a monetary value against what matters most. Precisely what we should value most is highlighted by one of Jesus' briefest parables: "the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it" (Matthew 13 vv 45-46). Jesus explains by this parable that the value of the life he alone can give is precious above all things. So much so, that it is worth giving up everything else in order to have it!

At Christmas we can become preoccupied with searching for things: gardening gear, gym-wear, games, gadgets, or getaways! But few, if any, would say it was worth giving up everything in order to have these things. At the very heart of Christmas is the pearl of great price: Jesus, the gift of God to the world. He uniquely reveals God. He alone can grant us eternal

life. He is worth giving up everything for, because he is priceless. Our Christmas celebrations are to be on a grand scale as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the gift of God for the world.

You are invited to join our Christmas celebrations of Jesus' birth. He is 'Immanuel', which means God with us and it is this that makes him priceless.

I hope that you have a very happy Christmas.

Paul Kingman



In his pastoral letter for December, the Bishop of Wolverhampton, the Rt Revd Clive Gregory, admits to some driving transgressions as he looks forward to Advent

During my 30 years of driving I have picked up 4 speeding fines, all of which have occurred when I have mistakenly thought the speed limit was 40 miles per hour when it was actually 30

Unfortunately two of these occasions have arisen in the last month! So I am now just two mistakes away from possible disqualification. A very sobering thought and rather ironic really as my wife frequently gets fed up with my generally sedate driving style. After receiving these successive penalty notices I went through various stages of response; anger ('shouldn't they be concentrating on catching dangerous drivers rather than setting traps for people like me?'); denial ('I'm sure the speed limit wasn't signposted properly'); resignation ('I wonder whether I can do a course rather than take all the points on my licence?'). But a sense of smouldering resentment lingered and a little self- pity ('They would have films in those particular cameras wouldn't they?) . I have thought of myself as a victim of the arbitrary and cruel hand of fate And the truth is that countless transgressions (motoring and otherwise) go unnoticed and unpunished every minute of every day. If there were cameras on every road in the country I don't suppose many of us would be left eligible to drive after a little while. If there was a film of our lives detailing every thought we have had and every action we have taken, could any of us bear to watch it?

Thank God, literally, for the season of Advent. A time when Christians are encouraged, as we look forward to celebrating the coming of Christ, to prepare ourselves, as if to meet Him for the first time. And a crucial part of the preparation, urged on us by the prayers, readings and hymns of the season, is to make ourselves accountable to God, with fresh transparency, for who and what we are. Our lives are all disfigured by what scripture calls 'works of darkness'. Most of them, most of the time, like motoring offences, can safely be got away with, so it takes honesty and courage to bring them into the light, the place of painful scrutiny. But it is only when held up to the light, the light of Christ's teaching and example, His love and forgiveness, that our particular pools of darkness can be dispelled and their power over us taken away.

(continued on next page)

Transgressions (cont)

I very much hope that I don't commit another speeding transgression. I hope I have learnt my lesson. But if I do, I hope that next time I might meet the consequences with due penitence rather than anger, denial and evasion. In the meantime, I think I have a few other 'works of darkness' in my in tray to practice on

This Advent may;

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, Scatter the darkness from before your path And make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory

The Bishop of Wolverhampton The Rt Revd Clive Gregory

Families @4

Owing to the success of Families @4 (we've had 100 different people pass through the doors since we started in January) we will be meeting twice monthly - on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

The format will remain the same - Cake, craft, songs and Bible stories, starting @4pm done by 5pm and we would love to have more people joining us, whether or not you're already involved in one of the benefice churches! The dates up to Christmas will be:

December 2nd

December 16th

We look forward to seeing you! For more information contact Andy Cranston on 818983 or acranston.ccstone@gmail.com

Please note special arrangements for church services

Sun 30th Dec 2012: United Benefice service 11.00 a.m. at Oulton church.

Sun 6th Jan 2013: United Benefice service of Holy Communion 11.00 a.m. at Christ Church, Stone (guest preacher Pastor Paul Mallard) followed by a bring & share lunch [Christ Church savouries and Oulton with Moddershall desserts].

Twenty-four shops and organisations have each chosen a different carol and will open their windows on a different day in December – and all the slots have already been filled. It is a community project involving businesses, schools and local organisations and has been organised by Christ Church members David and Pam Pott.

David said: "We are absolutely delighted with the response and how quickly everyone has booked up for the Advent calendar this year. One thing we are doing differently this year is that we are asking shops and schools to choose someone to open their window. It could be a shop's best customer or a pupil, parent or teacher from a school."

This year six new shops and businesses are supporting the calendar – Stone Library, Lock Keepers salon, the Dezign Room, Swan Inn, John Burton solicitors and Costa Coffee.

Children from local schools will help some of the shops decorate their windows and the first to be opened on Saturday 1st December will be Stone Library, helped by pupils from Walton Priory School. Their carol is Joy To The World.

A different shop or business will reveal another window each day until the last one is opened on Monday 24th December at Christ Church. On Christmas Eve a group will tour each of the shops and businesses and sing each of the 24 carols

The full list is:

Saturday, December 1: Stone Library, Walton Priory Middle School, Joy To The World

Sunday, December 2: The Mill and Stone WI, White Christmas

Monday, December 3: Blue Room, Trinity Skills, Walking In The Air

Tuesday, December 4: Zeta, St Michael's First School, Mary's Boy Child

Wednesday, December 5: Lock Keeper's Salon and St Dominic's First School, Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Thursday, December 6: Crazy Daisies and Oak Tree Farm,

While Shepherds Watched

Friday, December 7: Katherine House and Hillbillies, We Three Kings of Orient are

(continued on next page)

Advent Windows (cont)

Saturday, December 8: Dunoon, Hark The Herald Angels Sing

Sunday, December 9: Royal Exchange, O Come All Ye Faithful

Monday, December 10: Baileys, Let It Snow

Tuesday, December 11: Footsteps shoe shop, Mumbles Day Nursery. Frosty the Snowman

Wednesday, December 12: Yarn Gathering, Christ Church First School, Deck The Halls

Thursday, December 13: Shear Genius, Oulton First School, I Saw Three Ships

Friday, December 14: Fleur's tea room and St Dominic's Priory, The Angel Gabriel

Saturday, December 15: Pour Les Pieds, See Amid The Winter's Snow Sunday, December 16: Swan Inn and Stone Town Band,

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Monday, December 17: John Burton solicitors and Pirehill First School, Oh Christmas Tree

Tuesday, December 18: Radford Gallery, Christ Church Academy, Le Divin Infant

Wednesday, December 19: Wikijum and Beaver/Scouts, We Wish You A Merry Christmas

Thursday, December 20: Home and Colour and Alleyne's High School, Once In Royal David's City

Friday, December 21: Hammersleys and Signpost Centre,

Do You See What I See?

Saturday, December 22: Birchill and Watson,

The Shepherd's Pipe Carol

Sunday, December 23: Costa Coffee, The First Noel

Monday, December 24: Christ Church, Heaven Invites You To A Party

If you are interested in helping in this year's Advent Windows please contact David and Pam Pott on 01785 286474 or 07932 790525.

Stone Advent Windows was invited to submit an entry for the Action for Market Towns Awards 2012 recently. There were 371 applications and Stone Advent Windows was one of 55 to receive an award, a Commendation in the Social and Community Projects Category.

George Holden has drawn all the buildings involved and his picture is on the back cover- do have a look.

Christmas Companions

Sunday, 23 Dec 2012 - 16:00 to Thursday, 27 Dec 2012 - 10:00

Join us for a traditional family Christmas as we share together a time of festive fun, worship, reflection and companionship at this special time of year.

Location: Shallowford House Leader: Simon and Alison Hudson

Duration: 4 nights Cost: £265 all inclusive

I AM MARY

I am the Mary of your Christmas cards. I listen calmly while the angel brings me news that will shake up my life beyond measure. I accept what has been ordained for me. I am young and dressed in blue.

I am the Mary of your Christmas card. Despite travelling almost 100 miles on a donkey across the desert and giving birth in a stable, I am still immaculately clean and tidy, cradling my infant son, unperturbed by my surroundings, I am still young and dressed in blue.

Do you have a picture of me 30 years on? Have I aged in your eyes? Am I still calm and dressed in blue? Do you see me at the wedding feast, recognising deep within that his time was coming and he would soon be no longer mine?

How I aged in those three years. But am I still young in your picture? Was I not grey-haired as I stood at the foot of the cross? Do you know what it takes to watch your son being crucified? Do you have a picture of me – in tears, distraught? Or am I still the Mary of your Christmas cards young and dressed in blue?

You know the end – the triumph of his resurrection, the kingdom without end – and knowing this affects your picture of me. I am always young, dressed in blue, calm, serene, humble and willing – never allowed to show fear, hurt, anger, pain and grief.

For many, I remain the Mary of the Christmas cards. If I am called to be blessed, please remember all I stand for. As you receive your cards this Christmas, please look at me and remember this is just the beginning.

- By Katie Baker, abridged version from Magnet magazine;, unabridged version printed in Hay and Stardust, a Wild Goose Publication for the Iona Community.

Sent in by Sally Vaughan

Pilot Tom Bolser recently flew MAF's floatplane to an area in Indonesia we have never been before. The amphibious Cessna Caravan carried the passengers and building supplies to Esrotnamba, a small village on a lake to the west of Nabire in Papua province.



(The marker on the map shows Nabire -Esrotnamba isn't marked on any maps)

The flight was requested by Jon Nap, pastor of the Effata church in Wamena, and the Baliem Missions Centre

An evangelist from

Nabire who has begun ministry in Esrotnamba normally has to hike for several weeks to reach the village. So Tom picked up Jon Nap, two doctors and some others from Wamena, and flew them to Nabire to pick up the evangelist. Dropping his passengers off at Esrotnamba, Tom said, "Landing on the lake was easy compared to landing on a river as there wasn't any current. The water was very clear, and docking wasn't a problem." It was the first time the plane had landed in this area and at first only the men, dressed in loincloths, were willing to approach the aircraft. Later, the women and children came closer.

The next day, Tom flew in three loads of building supplies so a more permanent home can be built for the evangelist and his family to live in. On his last flight he flew out the passengers from the day before as well as a young man and his wife from the village who want to go to a Bible school in Nabire.

We look forward to future interaction with people who have been isolated for so long.

S	R	M	O	S	H	G	Ι	E	L	S
Е	A	Α	J	L	L	M	T	R	Е	E
L	T	N	S	O	I	Е	A	I	T	S
В	S	G	T	R	S	Н	P	R	Н	G
A	T	Е	F	A	L	Е	Е	Е	Y	N
T	A	R	I	C	C	L	P	T	Е	I
S	N	O	G	N	L	Н	Y	Н	K	D
N	G	Е	I	Y	Е	T	L	W	R	D
N	Е	M	V	R	O	Е	L	N	U	U
I	L	Ι	D	D	N	В	0	O	T	P
F	S	S	D	R	A	C	Η	O	Ι	R

The 23 words have all been hidden in the diagram. They have been printed across (backwards or forwards), up or down or diagonally but always in a straight line. Letters can be used more than once. The unused letters reading from left to right and from top to bottom will spell out the first few words of a carol.

BETHLEHE	M SHEP	HERDS	JOSEPH	MARY
CHOIR	CAROLS	CARDS	STABLE	ADVENT
MANGER	STAR	NOEL	ANGELS	HOLLY
IVY MINC	CEPIES	SANTA	TURKEY	
SLEIGH	PUDDINGS	GIFTS	INN TREE	
			Antlan	14

Arınur

(Thanks to Arthur for the Christmas puzzle- check with him if you are stuck!)

(Two pages where we aid you in choosing presents for the person who already has everything. Maybe they won't want their house cluttered up with goats or a few extra toilets, but there are people in the world who would)

Present Aid explained

Present Aid is Christian Aid's charity gift shop.

When you purchase an ethical gift from Present Aid, you will be helping to fund Christian Aid's vital work to end poverty around the world. Now that's a gift worth giving!

How it works

A floating garden	Just £18
20 Rapid Diagnostic Malaria kits	Only £15
A goat (always popular)	£19
A bicycle	a mere £63
A village well	£327
Teacher's salary for 4 months	£172
A brick-built house!	£912
(to give just a few examples)	

2. Pick your gift card

3. Your loved one receives their card describing the gift Don't worry, they won't get the goat!

4. Your gift changes lives in a poor community somewhere

If you don't want to disappoint your friend or relative, who may have wanted the goat themselves, then why not buy the present for yourself instead?

www.presentaid.org

2.6 billion people – that's 40% of the world's population – don't have somewhere safe, clean and hygienic to go to the loo. The human impact of this scandalous statistic is enormous: nearly one in five child deaths each year is due to diarrhoea. The good news is you can help change this by twinning your toilet!

For people in poor communities, a hole in the ground is quite literally a life saver – protecting women from the risk of attack as they find somewhere private to squat, and shielding children from preventable diarrhoeal diseases. By twinning a toilet you'll be helping those who most need it access safe sanitation, clean water and hygiene education.

One month left to avoid giving a bog-standard gift this Christmas – twin a toilet and help flush away poverty this Christmas.

Q. Can I twin my friend's toilet and have the certificate sent directly to them? -(You may well be thinking this)

A. Yes – simply select a different delivery address when going through the checkout process online and enter your friend's details. If you are twinning a toilet via the post or on the phone, you can indicate on your order form or on the phone that you'd like the certificate to go to a different address

Give it as a present! Order up to 7pm on December 14th, and the certificate will be sent out to arrive before Christmas.

"I twinned my toilet because it's a fun and simple way to tackle the scandalous lack of decent loos and basic sanitation all over the world. Three children under the age of 5 die every minute because of poor sanitation and dirty water. So come on, let's help change the world one toilet at a time. Twin your toilet today and make a wee difference." *-Tamsin Greig.*

Read about other loominaries who are helping flush away poverty, at www.toilettwinning.org

Or telephone 0300 321 3217 to order a toilet!

¹⁴Have you ever wished you had read more of the Bible? Why not start in January?

I get the Explore (for your daily walk with God) bible notes by the Good Book company. One set lasts for 3 months and costs £3.50. You can try them out, you don't need to commit to the whole year, so you can see how you find them. You have a daily reading with small passage from the bible, followed by some questions and thoughts about the passage, finishing with prayer relating to what you've read. If you don't already, have you thought of starting the new year with reading the bible more regularly, with a view to bringing God's word into your life?

You can see more about these notes at www.thegoodbook.co.uk, or contact me if you would like me to get the notes for you.

Louise

The Bible is well-known to be most commonly owned book in Britain. However, it is among the least read. It has to be said that few of us will sit down to read 100 pages of the Bible in an evening, although in past years this was not uncommon. Why not read just a small section each day, together with a short explanation of what the passage is about, and how it can help you. Scripture Union produce several sets of dated notes (there is a page for each calendar date) and some undated notes (to be read any day you like). Among the most well-known are:-

"Daily Bread" This is the "standard" for adults

"Closer to God" If you find "Daily Bread" too lightweight

"Encounter with God" Meant to be more relevant to modern life

than "Daily Bread"

There are several other sets of notes from SU; some are available on-line (if you i-read or e-read). All available from the SU website or any Bible bookshop.

UCB publish "Word for Today" notes, which are free of charge (I think), although donations are welcomed. UCB will even email you a reading every day, so you won't even have to remember to get the notes! You will need a Bible! Get one from the church bookstall (or on-line).

If you are one of the many thousands of Christians who only read the Bible in church, why not make a small effort to do better. You will soon wish you had started earlier. Do it now.

*Dave Bell**

2nd December9th December16th DecemberCressey CloseSaltersford RiseThe CrescentJoules DriveRolt CloseEnd Granville TerrCauldon WayMillenium WayMillers GateHarecastle BankCameron WharfHartley Drive

23rd December Albert Street Alexandra Street Arthur Street Berkeley Street

30th DecemberChestnut Grove
Edward Street
Field Terrace
Field House Terrace



Church Family News

Happy Birthdays to everyone who had a birthday in November, in particular Sue who had a significant birthday!

Sue, Louise and Pete all raised money for good causes at their birthday parties (Church Youth Fund, Church Holiday Club and Jigsaw Ministries). The total amount raised was quite a lot, so the good times we had at their parties mean that other people also can benefit.

We said farewell to Camilla who has moved to Whitchurch and a big welcome to Benjamin Joshua Cranston born on the 7th of November.

Christmas Quiz (answers over page)

- 1. What is the biggest selling Christmas single?
- 2. Name the three reindeer whose names begin with "D"
- 3. In It's a Wonderful Life, what part of George's house is always broken?
- 4. Traditionally, does the oldest or youngest family member open the first present?
- 5. Which country started the tradition of exchanging gifts?
- 6. How many times is the name Santa Claus used in *The Night before Christmas*?
- 7. What popular Christmas toy is based upon a 1903 political caricature?
- 8. What did the Little Drummer Boy give to the Christ Child?
- 9. What gift did Caspar bring?
- 10. What Saturday Evening Post artist was known for his whimsical pictures of Santa Claus?

	AM		PM
2nd Dec	D. WilsonD. Pickles	P. Roberts A. West	P. Tunstall
9th Dec	V. Ledward G. Holden	G. Donaldson K. Thompson	D. Shemilt
16th Dec	D. Wilson C. Wilding	J. Abrahams D. Davies	P. Tunstall
23rd Dec	P. Hipkiss P. Roberts	J. Rowlands D. Pickles	D. Shemilt
24th Dec			P. Tunstall
(11pm)			D. Rowlands
25th Dec	A. West K. Thompson	T. Woodward K. Woodward	

FLOWER ROTA

2nd Dec Flower Guild
9th Dec Flower Guild
16th Dec Flower Guild
23rd Dec Flower Guild

10 Norman Rockwell	9. Муптһ	murb sid no gnos A .8
ear (after President Teddy Roosevelt)	7. The Teddy B	6. None
t child δ . Italy (the Romans)	4. The younges	3. The banister
eer, Donder (or Donner)	2. Dasher, Dane	 White Christmas
		Quiz answers

Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website www.christchurchstone.orgParish office email christchurch.centre1@btinternet.com

Magazine contributions christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk

Deanery Synod Reps P.C.C. Members Mrs S Hallam, Mr D. Rowlands, Mr R. Brandon Mrs I. Gassor, Mr D. Beauchamp, Mr G. Donaldson Mrs K. Latham, Mr P. Mason, Mrs D. Hazlehurst Mrs A. Burton, Mrs M. Hillman, Mrs C. Snaith Mrs L. Kelly, Mr K. Reynolds, Mrs E. Woodhead

Mrs S. Sanders

Secretary Shelagh Sanders

Treasurer Kevin Reynolds 851595

Envelopes, Gift Aid Richard Latos

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	Sandra Morray	286093
(Mon 9.30 – 11.15am)		
3rd Stone Brownies	Janet Smith	815939
(Mo 6:00-7:30pm, First School)	(

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!

