

Christ Church and People

40p



February 2020

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Christ Church



and People

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

Cover Picture

Granville Terrace

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

February 2020

Sat	1	8:30 am 9:30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast Vision Day meeting
Sun	2	9:15 am 6:00 pm	Communion; John 2:12-25 “Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days” Mystery of the Trinity
Mon	3	9:30 am 12:30 pm	Toddler group Trekking at Christ Church First School
Tue	4	10:00 am 12:30 pm	Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30 Pursuit Club
Wed	5	9:00 am 1:20 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Assembly at Alleyne's High School
Thu	6	10:30 am 1:20 pm 1:20 pm	Open prayer time in church Christ Church Academy assembly Assembly at Alleyne's High School
Fri	7	10:00 am	Bible Study group
Sat	8		
Sun	9	9:15 am 6:00 pm	Morning Prayer; John 3:1-21 “You must be born again” Mystery of the Trinity
Mon	10	9:30 am 12:30 pm	Toddler group Trekking at Christ Church First School
Tue	11	10:00 am 12:30 pm 3:00 pm	Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30 Pursuit Club Autumn House
Wed	12	9:00 am	Christ Church First School assembly
Thu	13	10:30 am 11:00 am 1:20 pm	Open prayer time in church St Mary's Home Communion Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	14	10:00 am	Bible study group

Sat	15		
Sun	16	9:15 am	Communion; John 4:1-26 “I who speak to you am he”
Mon	17		
Tue	18	10:00 am	Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30
Wed	19		
Thu	20	10:30 am	Open prayer time in church
Fri	21	10:00 am	Bible study group
Sat	22		
Sun	23	9:15 am	Family service John 4:43-54 “The official’s son healed”
Mon	24	9:30 am 12:30 pm	Toddler group Trekksers at Christ Church First School
Tue	25	10:00 am 12:30 pm	Coffee before midweek service; service at 10:30 Pursuit Club
Wed	26	9:00 am 6:30 pm 7:45 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Ash Wednesday service Lent course
Thu	27	10:30 am 1:20 pm	Open prayer time in church Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	28	10:00 am	Bible study group
Sat	29		

There will be a Fair Trade Goods stall after the service on February 23rd

An awkward prayer

Did you keep your New Year resolution? A decision to get faster, slimmer, fitter, gain a skill, lose a habit, take up a hobby, visit, clear out rubbish, read more. The decisions are firm. The progress may prove wobbly.

Did anyone resolve to know God better? Perhaps you've met a blockage in the past? A difficult encounter with a church person? A distracting event? A tragic episode that crushed you? Or maybe more of a gradual drifting out to sea and struggling to return to shore?

A time for a spiritual health check is built into the church's year. Lent is traditionally a time to take stock: six weeks before the Easter celebrations. How can we test the state of our souls? Let me ask: Are you passionate about God? Do you want to get closer to God? Honest answers might show how we go in short spurts, or bump along the bottom, or tend to be unresponsive or even lack spiritual life at all! The first step is to ask for God's mercy as we humbly read the Bible to discover His way and His will for our lives.

There are spiritual passion killers to avoid. One big one is named and shamed in the book of Proverbs: "Two things I ask of you, Lord; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God" (Proverbs 30v7-9). We are neither to grasp for more, or grab what others have! We are to learn to trust God to provide what we need. For if we pursue more wealth it will result in denying God. If we fall into poverty it may lead to immoral ways of trying to get what we want. Learning to be content spurs us on our walk with the Lord.

Jesus teaches us to pray: 'Give us this day our daily bread'. It's an awkward prayer because it rests on being committed to trust God. *(continued)*



An awkward prayer

But I hope you take up the challenge to live this way as you trust in our Father in heaven to provide what is needed. Join us as we learn together His way.

Paul Kingman

Thank you from Joe and Dilys

A heartfelt thank you to Paul our vicar and all our church family for your loving support, prayers, visits and cards during the last 5 months of 2019. We really appreciated it. May God richly bless you all in 2020.

Joe and Dilys

World Day of Prayer

Praying with Zimbabwe

Date - Friday 6th March

Venue - STONE SERVICE @ CHRIST CHURCH

TIME - 2PM

All are welcome.

Refreshments after the service Ann

Christingle 2019

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the Christingle Service so successful.

We made 65 oranges into Christingles, children remembering what the symbols represent. There were a lot of adults and children enjoying the crafts, it was lovely to see so many old faces. Then into church for the service, Peter gave a talk to us, we sang lots of songs and lit the candles whilst singing 'Away in a Manger'.

The Christingle candle collection raised £201.70 this year and has now been forwarded to 'The Children's Society' to help their work with vulnerable children in the UK.

Thank you all.

Sandra Morray

A course helping you explore the world's bestseller.

The Bible is a big and complicated book to read and for many it can be difficult to know where to start. Maybe you've been part of a Bible study group and want to build your confidence so you can study the Bible on your own, or maybe you need help connecting together the bits you've been reading. The Bible Course is a great resource, whether you are familiar with the Bible or just starting out.

More details to follow, but here are some highlights of the course:

- The Bible Course helps you see how the books of the Bible are part of one big story. Using a unique storyline, The Bible Course will show you how key events, books and characters fit together.
- The video teaching, course guide and daily readings will help you grow in confidence as you read the Bible for yourself.
- It acts as a great follow-on resource for those who have done introductory courses like Alpha and Christianity Explored, but also enables those who are established Christians to develop their understanding for reading the Bible for all its worth.

Reviews

Well put together, straightforward to lead, & very engaging. The Bible Course is a fantastic resource to the Church, which I wholeheartedly recommend to you!

Tom Rothwell, Senior Pastor, New Life Church, New Milton

The Bible Course is a brilliant and accessible way to understand the full Bible story. A brilliant way to kick-start your journey. *Amy, Surrey*

Course book—this is essential and costs £5 from Paul.

There are 8 sessions, beginning on

Wed 26th February 7:45 pm

Then Sundays at 6 pm or Wednesdays at 7:30 pm

Another year gone Wow!

It's that time again to let me have your house box for emptying, please.

If you could bring it to church and leave it in the Church Office, alternatively let me know and I will collect it from you!

Sandra Morray

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An unforgettable evening

Just after I had moved to Stafford, The Revd David Watson led a mission in the town. Twenty years earlier I had been greatly helped by reading David's books. He had also helped me personally to open my life to the power of the Holy Spirit.

I was able to hastily arrange a meeting for key members of our three parishes with one of the mission team that had come from Oxford. I think we were expecting a student, but our visitor was a tough, rather weather-beaten looking middle aged man with a pronounced cockney accent.

He started his talk by looking round at all of us, and then spreading out his hands he said quietly "There's blood on these 'ands". You could have heard a pin drop.

He went on to tell us that he had "done stuff" for the Kray brothers. He never said what he had done exactly - and we never asked! While serving a long prison sentence the Lord Jesus Christ had come into his life, and he explained how this experience had transformed him.

Then, just as he had begun, he held out his hands, looked round at us all and ended by slowly saying

"There's blood on these 'ands...it's the blood of Jesus... Thinking about it reminds me how much he loves me...that's why I serve him"

For our visitor this was a wonderful life sentence.

Roger M. Vaughan

After a few comparatively dry years rain re-established itself last year with 42 inches compared with 27 in 2018. After a very dry start to the year we had to wait till June (five and a half inches) for any month with more than 3 inches. Thereafter only August and December had less than 4inches and in October there were over 6 inches. This year has had a gentle start thus, far, with regard to both rain and temperature and backs up the claims of those who warn us of increasing temperature rise.

Brian Reeve
(Weather Watcher)

Some special days in February

1st	Baked Alaska Day Freedom Day (from slavery)
2nd	Candlemas
3rd	Carrot Cake Day Tinnitus Awareness Week begins
4th	Homemade Soup Day
5th	World Nutella Day
6th	Kite Flying Day
7th	Periodic Table Day Wear Red Day NSPCC Number Day
9th	Stop Bullying Day
10th	Umbrella Day
12th	Plum Pudding Day
14th	Valentine's Day
15th	49th Anniversary of decimal coinage
17th	Random Acts of Kindness Day
22nd	World Thinking Day
23rd	Dog Biscuit Day
26th	Ash Wednesday
28th	National Chocolate Souffle Day

	Mission Prayer Diary
	<i>Scripture Union are working with children and young people all over the UK and worldwide.</i>
1st	SU Finland is launching a new website with a wide variety of materials for use in youth work. Pray for a warm welcome and wide uptake of this free tool
2nd	Christians in Calderdale Schools have a concert today in Halifax, celebrating 20 years of SU partnership.
3rd	“The Higher” mission begins today in secondary schools across North Wales and runs until Friday
4th	As the SU Holiday brochure is sent out, pray that God will prompt young people to respond and sign up
	<i>CPAS work with churches throughout the UK</i>
5th	Pray that the new “Leading Well” initiative will help churches to resource better leadership throughout the year in simple and doable ways
6th	Bookings for 2020 CPAS Venture and Falcon holidays are now open. Pray that these holidays will be good fun and show what it is to be a Christian
7th	CPAS will soon publish a book “Understanding Christian Leadership”. Let’s pray that this will be a useful guidebook for those seeking to become ministers and church leaders.
8th	Rev Mike Duff came to speak to us on January 5th; pray that in his new position as Patronage Secretary, he will be able to guide clergy towards the churches that need them
	<i>Tear Fund works in many countries to support poor people and show God’s love in practical ways.</i>
9th	Pray for Feeding Centres in Burundi run by TearFund partner Fraternite Evangelistique du Christ en Afrique au Burundi. The project focuses on malnourished children and pregnant or lactating mothers.

10th	12 schools in Burundi were destroyed by flooding last September. Pray for good interim measures so that children will not miss out, and for new schools to be built.
11th	In Rwanda, Sentwali is a deacon in his church– he was recently released from prison after being involved in genocide actions. It was in prison that he met his new Lord Jesus, and now he tries to reach out to those who suffered and to those still in prison. Pray for those who are still in spiritual or physical bondage from the genocide in Rwanda
12th	Uwimana was one who suffered in the Rwanda genocide. Now she has joined a Bible Study group and is trying to forgive. Pray for continued provision and blessing for Uwimana and her family
	<i>Tim and Kate Lee helped to set up JigSaw Kids Ministries n Manila (Philippines). They are our CMS Link Missionaries</i>
13th	The Lees are now in Kuala Lumpur. Tim’s work is going well and Kate is happy at her new school job, but Grace is finding school in KL very difficult
14th	Thank you for your prayers for Jigsaw’s youth ministry and for Solid Rock and Agape youth clubs. Aaron the youth leader says there has been many opportunities to share Jesus with the many young people and they are following this up
15th	Please pray for Mrs Mae who has been paralysed down one side by a stroke: Jogie who is back at work after 3 months of illness, but she is still weak; Alfred awaiting an operation
16th	all 10 children in the ‘Accelerated Learning’ have against many odds passed their high school exams. Praise God.

	<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	That the Lord will give us new skins for the new wine in ministry. We believe the time has come to make the move to the other nations before retirement. We are trusting God to open doors into at least two new nations including Uganda as our retirement home.
18th	Those who have volunteered with us to see God’s hand in their vision to serve Him in Regions they coordinate and to see new leaders raised to replace them when they move on – hopefully to higher callings.
19th	Join us to thank God for you and your family for keeping us together in the mission field until the race is run, the journey is done and hopefully the crown is won!
20th	Pray for more committed volunteers, teachers and trainers to provide leadership to this movement that will help reach the 700,000 children with God’s Word by 2030.
	<i>Mission Aviation Fellowship fly medical personnel, supplies and missionaries to far-flung, often inaccessible settlements</i>
21st	MAF works with 60 schools in Bhola in Bangladesh. Each school is on an island on the Bay of Bengal, and MAF flies in doctors to treat illnesses, and engineers who are building bridges between the islands
22nd	Bhola healthcare includes treatment for cleft palates and physiotherapy. Engineering projects include construction of rainwater catchment tanks
23rd	MAF’s first flights in Angola began in 1989 during an horrific civil war. 18,000 flights have carried 84,000 passengers and 3,000 tonnes of cargo for MAF partners
24th	Pray for MAF partners undertaking medical safaris and landmine clearance

	<i>The Bible Society's Bible-a-month club is delivering Bibles in Albania</i>
25th	Pray that 20,000 copies of a new interdenominational translation of the whole Bible into Albanian, will strengthen churches in Albania
26th	With the full and authorised participation of all churches in Albania, pray that this book will bring churches of different denominations closer together
	<i>Ralph and Dagmar Baron help to run the Murree Christian School in Northern Pakistan. They sent prayer requests</i>
27th	Please pray particularly for the 5 girls in our graduating class as they work towards A Levels and apply to universities in the UK, Canada, Australia and Korea. They are all trusting the Lord will lead them to places where they can continue to grow and become further equipped to serve Christ's purposes in and through their lives.
28th	Please pray that more qualified teachers will apply to work in the school
29th	In terms of praise and prayer, we are thankful that our student numbers have started to grow; children of national Christian full-time workers are increasingly joining our school.

14 **Carolling at the Royal Stoke University Hospital**

On 16th December, 2019, a group of us from Christ Church went to sing carols at two different hospitals: County Hospital Stafford and the Royal Stoke University Hospital. I was amongst the group that visited the Royal Stoke University Hospital (as pictured), and what a joyful experience it was! We had Dave Rowlands leading us on his concertina, which was very amusing amongst other things, and were led around by one of the hospital chaplains, Leo Varquez. We brought the instrument box from church and handed out maracas, jingle bells and shakers to anyone who was willing in the group – we made quite a racket!



The first wards we visited were in the critical care section of the hospital, so our percussion was silenced momentarily whilst we sang some gentle carols such as 'Away in a manger'. Although not many of the patients were visibly conscious or could see us performing, this was still one of my favourite parts of the experience. *(continued)*

The patients that could see and hear us were smiling and wishing us a Merry Christmas as we left, which was a particularly heart-warming gesture.

The second section we visited was Cardiology, and these wards were also quite quiet. However, we sang much more lively carols here, so we could finally use our percussion instruments! I made full use of my jingle bells, especially in the instrumental for 'White Christmas', and we even had a man who was dancing along in his chair! Seeing them smiling and enjoying the carolling made it all worthwhile.

The final wards we visited were more general, and the patients weren't quite as unwell. We took full advantage of this and handed out maracas to everyone so they could shake along too. We sang a couple of traditional carols, but then we took requests, which very quickly had us singing song such as 'Jingle Bell Rock' and 'Rudolph the red nose reindeer'. Naturally, these songs were a hit with the patients, and the joy in the ward was incredible. Their smiles and joy I think made all of us smile and feel even more joyful. What a wonderful thing it is that an event like Christmas can bring joy to even the most hopeless situations.

Verity

Arthur's Quiz Night



Saturday March 7th at 7pm in the
centre.

Usual guessing games
Plants for sale



Confirmation Service 12th January

On January 12th, we welcomed two members into the church at the Confirmation service with Bishop Michael (Lichfield). Diane and Lisa have been kind enough to write down their testimonies and these are reproduced here.



Life has been difficult for me since the day I was born and I have made many, many, wrong choices. And mistakes, but I have always been aware of God's existence and that of His precious son Jesus. The world and everything in it were obviously created including humans. I was brought up in Devon and attended the local Baptist Chapel and Sunday school. I have looked at different religions and studied with the Jehovah's Witnesses for a while. I have been praying and reading the Bible alone for years. My brother, who is a Free Church Minister, urged me to find a church to get some fellowship. Christ Church Christians have been both welcoming and friendly. I feel that I have finally found my place for worship and I wish to be baptised and confirmed as part of my ongoing spiritual journey. I fully understand that the forgiveness of sins is an undeserved gift from God through the death and resurrection of His perfect Son Jesus Christ who died for me and I look forward to Jesus Christ's return in glory and the hope of everlasting life. *Diane*

Confirmation Service 12th January

As a young teenager, I was lucky to have my best friend - a devout Christian - and her parents introduce me to Pathfinders. Something I attended quite frequently and was involved with until my college days, where sadly that change in direction, as well as my best friend moving away found me attending Church and Pathfinders less and less - have to say though my beliefs never changed and always remained strong.

Jump ahead many years later to 2018 – I am now married to a wonderful man and between us we have a beautiful daughter - that day, for me an amazing thing happened. A close friend, whom I had met through my daughter's primary school moved here to Stone - my lovely friend Claire. Visiting her new home in September 18, over a catch up and coffee, my life changed. From that day forward I was to restart my journey back into faith, following the Lord - the bonus was, along with Claire. That day it became apparent that Claire was also a Christian.

It was apparent to us that we had both had had a fairly turbulent and rocky year - a year I myself spent looking closer at 'me' as a person - assessing life in general - friendships especially. I'd been suffering with some anxiety and a born worrier didn't help! I was feeling my life was on a rollercoaster journey. Claire was feeling very much the same and amazingly it came up in conversation that we were both Christians and both yearned to go back to Church. After an hour of chatting over coffee we both agreed that we felt we were ready to work on our faith, return to Church and rekindle our connection with the Lord - this was a calling from God, he brought us together that day and gave us some of the peace we were yearning for. That was the day we hugged, cried and chose Christ Church as our new Christian home - a place of peace and love to start our new journey to become closer to God.

(continued)

That day I will be forever grateful for - we have certainly not looked back since - have become the closest of friends and are now building on our friendships with our new home here at Christ Church - we even took ourselves out of comfort zones by hosting one of the Advent windows back in December - our found strength all came from God that day, we couldn't have done it without him.

All these changes made me realise how amazing God is. He sent his only son to die for us that we may all be forgiven - and forgive us all he sure does. For all the times over these past years I chose to step back in the shadows, always believing but avoiding - the Lord always stood by me - he never let me down. He never walked away from me. Was forever there, watching, waiting - waiting for me to step back into his light - ready for me to feel his peace, his presence- to reconcile with him. I stepped away, he never did...

This is now my time to step back into his light, I believe he sent me that message through Claire. The person who at my times of deep worry or anxiousness reminds me to turn those negatives into prayer and faith.

I am very thankful to the Lord for bringing Claire and myself together - she is one of the truest of friends - someone I can chat to about anything - someone with such a kind heart, a warm and loving person - but best of all a fellow Christian whom we can talk about all things Christian and Godly. Together we take this journey - a journey that I pray will help us both to grow and establish and strengthen our faith in the Lord. For me to be confirmed is such a special milestone to reach, in this my 50th year - a step onwards and upwards, I pray the Lord will guide me and bring me closer to him.

I am so lucky to have made new friends here at Christ Church - friends whom for me have become my Church family I want to thank them all for making us feel so welcome from day one. And very grateful to Paul for helping me to reach this day, the day I confirm my Christian beliefs to our most gracious Lord.

Lisa

Best wishes for the New Year beloved. Praying you have had a year that you can look back on and say Ebenezer – thus far has the Lord brought us. May this coming year be that dream year. We pray the season covered in Joel 2:19 - 32 is indeed your portion even by faith. He indeed is able to restore to us what was eaten by locusts. However there is no greater hope than knowing that when all is over, heaven will be waiting. I have repeated the soul winning tip in the margin since you may still have to keep living by it. This is at the heart of our partnership.

Twenty years ago last May Robinah took the biggest risk of her adult life to marry a missionary. Maybe the second biggest. Because she was in love she took two months to ask "How do we get school fees for the children?" The answer was simply 'Look up!' and she did but saw nothing. She told me later, she had thought she had married the craziest man alive. When she sobered up she asked God for three things: A roof over her head, fees for the kids and food on the table. We love you and greatly appreciate your continued love, financial and prayer support that answered this prayer for twenty years. Thank you again and be blessed.

MINISTRY NEWS AND PROGRAMMES

We remain fascinated by God's sense of humour even when the speed with which we get openings remains slow for the 70,000 children and youth books that need to be in their hands every year. The materials that he has provided for the ministry would change any nation if somebody with authority believed this was God at work. The Sunday School books and cards do not only help children age 3 – 12 years and teachers to know Seventeen Bible Stories and memory verses of God's Big Salvation plan in context, but it also helps to bring God to their parents community and churches.

With global warming Foundations for Farming programme promises a better future for most nations. In addition to teaching Farming God's Way (and conservation farming), it addresses issues of character and farming as source of food, employment and wealth creation for primary, secondary students, and farmers. *(continued)*

Journey to Hope is the newest programme in our quiver. With so much happening around us, many children are going through many emotionally issues that do not allow them to concentrate on making the future they deserve with God's help. Somebody is telling them they are adults and should live that way. There is a movement that cannot be resisted by ordinary leaders, who encourage the teaching to children of all ages in schools to discover their sexuality and potential to be any gender and use it with anyone and anything if it feels good. Already, one major crisis for adults is how to deal with those memories manifesting in family breakups and irresponsible parenting. Journey to Hope programme is run in normal class setting for ages 12 – 19 years. The outcome is to help give a godly mindset to both the abused and the abuser and assure the innocent that Jesus saves, keeps and satisfies. The power of forgiveness for self and the other persons and the ability to start again even with tears gives the teenagers a new lease on life - HOPE. Pray for open doors.

SCRIPTURE UNION BOTSWANA

For the last twenty-four years we have been working on a strategic partnership with SU Botswana where over 90% of our targeted children and youth can be reached – schools.

CHURCH NEWS

The Open Baptist Church continues to be our special anchor in Ministry. All the 70,000 books we receive for training and distribution per year are kept there. They also offer the venues for most of the training we offer church leaders.

The Church participated in an International Consumer Fair in August – only to preach Christ. While we could not afford a stall, we partnered with the Church to share Christ and gospel literature with the international business community. While this was going on, a group of missionary youth was in the field reaching out to schools in some unreached groups in our nation. Being part of these activities opened our eyes to the needs of people who will not on their own respond to the invisible invitations on our Church buildings – “Come in ye sinners and be ye saved.”

Jonathan and Robinah Beesigomwe

21 **Christ Church 87 years ago—Hard Times**

Pastoral letter, January 1933

My dear friends,

Our country has weathered the storm of the past year in a remarkable way. In spite of the industrial depression and the general crippling of material resources, Britain has remained calm and confident. We thank God for this, and even though most of our great international problems are still bristling with difficulties we can face the New Year with courage and hope. Of course, the Church must feel the strain of this financial crisis, but already we may see one encouraging sign emerging from the present conditions, and that is an increasing sense of responsibility among the general rank and file of Church people in the matter of giving. Some of them are beginning to realize in a new way that even their little gifts, amounting, perhaps, to less than 1/- a week, when given regularly and methodically, may go a long way towards keeping the normal work of the Church free from debt. It is to this spirit of loyal co-operation that I attribute the fact that we in Christ Church have been able to balance our budget for 1932 and to finish the year in a better position than we could ever have dared to expect 12 months ago.

The Unemployed

Negotiations are still in progress with a view to providing a permanent home for the "Welcome Club" for local unemployed. It is hoped that some definite decision will be reached soon. Lectures are being arranged fortnightly on various subjects, a gymnasium has been opened three times a week in the Christ Church Institute under the capable instruction of Mr. Sims—this is greatly appreciated by some of the younger men—and a canteen will be opened and other activities started as soon as satisfactory premises are secured, allowing room for development.

The Organ

Some excitement was caused by the failure of the Organ on Sunday night, December 4th, when considerable damage was caused in the Blowing Chamber by a short circuit in the dynamo. The accident appears to have been one for which no blame can be attached to anyone and the whole expense will probably be met by the Insurance which covers such contingencies.