

# Christ Church and People



# March 2021

## IN THIS ISSUE

Church services March 2021	3
Grace upon grace	4, 5
Lent course	5
Marmalade for the Youth Fund	6
School and Children's Ministry update	7
Children's Society house boxes	8
PCC news	8
Tear Fund	9, 10
Mission Prayer Diary	11-14
Cranston family news	15
Christ Church helps support mission workers	16-20
Christ Church 103 years ago	21-23
The Sculptor	23
Rotas, Roads for prayer	24

## Christ Church



## and People

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

Cover Picture  
Trinity Drive

### Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website	<a href="http://www.christchurchstone.org">www.christchurchstone.org</a>
Parish office email	<a href="mailto:office@christchurchstone.org">office@christchurchstone.org</a>
Magazine contributions	<a href="mailto:christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk">christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk</a>

## **Zoom Services March 2021**

---

(usually at 10:30 am, but see notes below)

7th March

Mark 5:21-43

*No-one is beyond hope*

14th March

(Mothering Sunday)

Mark 8:22-38

*Partially sighted*

21st March

Mark 10:32-52

*Slave master*

28th March

(Palm Sunday)

Mark 11:1-19

*Twice into Jerusalem*

Lent Course: Sundays 5pm, Wednesdays 7:30pm (Zoom)

Prayer meeting: 9am, Saturday 6th March (Zoom)

If you would like to join in, wherever you live, contact the church office for a Zoom invitation. If conditions improve, there may also be services in the churches, but arrangements cannot yet be made. It is possible that actual church services will be joined up with Zoom, some trials of this have taken place, and maybe services will revert to the standard time of 9:15 am in Christ Church.

Please see website or contact other church members to find out latest news about what is happening.

Lichfield Diocese is posting sermons by the bishops on their website [www.lichfield.anglican.org](http://www.lichfield.anglican.org), including pdf and video download versions. Look under "Coronavirus Info" (!)

### **Christ Church on the Internet**

Parish website

[www.christchurchstone.org](http://www.christchurchstone.org)

Parish office email

[office@christchurchstone.org](mailto:office@christchurchstone.org)

Magazine contributions

[christchurch\\_mag@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk)

## Grace upon grace

---

We have felt burdened in many ways by the prolonged pandemic. But on reflection we can also give thanks for many things that are a result of the grace of God.

The sudden impact of the virus pandemic was a huge shock: the first lockdown brought most things to a shuddering halt. The physical, economic and social consequences have been extensive.

Many workers entered a furlough period. Initially some benefitted from not having a commute, but since then lived with great uncertainty as to when, or if, things will resume. Foodbanks help many to get through the week, so we are thankful for this initiative but saddened by the need to have them at all. We've have seen just how swift the virus spreads causing suffering and more deaths than we feared. Hospital staff and associated medical teams, health support and carers have worked very hard serving others at great personal cost. It reminds us that each and every person is precious in the eyes of God. The lack of social interaction has been difficult. We are communal beings. Yet how amazing that vaccines have been developed. How impressive the vaccination programme – a herculean effort! We long for the restrictions to be lifted. By God's grace we hope this will be soon: to resume our daily lives and in person services.

By God's grace the world is not as disorganised and loveless as it might otherwise be! God's grace sustains and blesses creation. He gives talents and skills to tackle the difficulties of life in this fallen world. But there is more grace to hand which is of eternal importance.



*(continued)*

## **Grace upon grace** *(cont)*

---

Jesus makes possible for us to be reconciled to God: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . . For from his fullness, we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1v15-16). The Law tells us we are guilty, while grace tells us how things can be fixed! This is what we reflect on during the time of Lent and will celebrate at Easter.

Our current sermon series in Mark's Gospel explores who Jesus is, why he came and what it means to be his disciple. Do join our online services (see webpage form to get the Zoom link) or follow our recorded services to encourage your faith in God at this time.

*Paul Kingman*

---

### **Lent Course**

Take the opportunity for spiritual refreshment, so that we emerge from lockdown in a spiritually healthier state.

**The Bible Course:** we have restarted "***The Bible Course***"

From 7.30 p.m. on Wednesdays (17th Feb to 24th March inclusive), repeated at 5.00 p.m. on Sundays (21st Feb to 28th March inclusive).

*Big, complex, old ... just some of the words people use to describe the Bible. Sound familiar? The Bible Course will increase your confidence, equip you to read the Bible better and help you to see its relevance to daily life. The course provides a birds-eye view of the world's bestselling book. Key features include:*

- *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.
- Video teaching, written guides, diagrams and readings will help you grow in confidence as you read the Bible for yourself.

Contact the church office for a Zoom invitation



## 7 **School and Children's Ministry Update**

---

Well, although the schools are all closed to most pupils, our work in them still goes on! We do not go in physically, but we are there virtually and in spirit!

Each week we still make Open the Book assemblies for both Oulton and Christ Church First School. These are made by all the team recording the audio of all the various parts, which I then edit together to make a consistent video! I also edit in images taken from a website with free Bible images. These videos have been fun to make, and the teachers tell me that the children enjoy them very much. We have been going through characters in the Old testament, and we will soon move on to Jesus life in preparation for Easter!

Also happening each week is the assemblies for the Academy. Last term we looked at faith in the Old Testament, and this term we have gone back to looking at Jesus' ministry in Mark's gospel. Feedback from the schoolteachers has also been positive, and these videos can be used with pupils who are either in school or at home.

Although it is sad to not be able to run all the clubs in the schools like we used to, we are thankful for these opportunities to still connect with them virtually. Do be praying for the schools and the assemblies – pray that the teachers would engage with the videos too, and that the children would keep wanting to know and hear more about stories from the Bible!

Aside from the schools' work, Ebenezer is continuing! We have done 68 episodes now, and we are still going strong! You can find them on our YouTube channel if you would like to see them or share them with others, and we have just got to the part of Luke's gospel where Jesus enters Jerusalem! Our Ebenezer extension episodes have continued too – these release at 9.30 on a Sunday along with a worksheet that is posted to Facebook, so do look out for them. Do pray that all these videos would be used to further show children about Jesus and his love for them! Pray that they would be a helpful resource to draw upon in the future as well as now!

*Peter*

## Children's Society House Boxes

---

Hello everyone, I pray that you are all keeping safe and well. I am collecting the house boxes in for emptying during March 2021. By then I hope many of us will have had the vaccine.

There is a plan to keep everyone safe.

Boxes can be taken to Christ Church office hours 9-30am to 11am Monday to Wednesday. Sue will keep them for 72 hours. I will collect them for emptying. The Society have given some rules to keep safe.

I hope you can be as generous as ever you are. This year we had no candle collections to send at Christingle time.

House boxes raise more than £1.4 million so you will be supporting and helping 1000s of children and young people, what will be for many a very difficult time in their young lives.

Last year the Society helped more than 11,000 children in the country find hope for the future. Also our campaigning made life better for more than 400,000 young people across the UK.

The pandemic is having a serious effect on so many young people; they will need our support and prayers. Once again thank you for your continued support.

*Sandra*

---

### PCC news

The PCC held a Zoom meeting on 3rd February 2021 and the following matters were discussed:

- The work on the flowerbeds is now complete and they are looking good.
- The Advent Windows displays were fabulous with good viewings of the openings on Facebook.
- Due to the current circumstances it was agreed to waive the magazine charges for this year.
- The next PCC meeting will focus on finance and action plans from Lead academy input.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Monday 22nd March 2021 via Zoom.

*Shelagh*

## Following Jesus where the need is greatest

### A World of Difference

The World of Difference 'flies' to different countries around the world where Tearfund works. The latest country where the 'plane has landed' is Lebanon, an ancient country mentioned 65 times in the Old Testament. It is not an Arab country unlike its neighbour Syria which is 5 times larger. Tearfund has been working there since 2013.

Beirut the capital has welcomed over 2 million Syrians who have left their homes, fleeing from the war in their own country. They make up a quarter of the population of Beirut, which has also many problems of its own. Tearfund has 3 local Christian partners in city, mainly supporting the refugee communities.

- The Tahiddi Centre has set up free medical care for hundreds of refugee patients at their Health Centre. Their social work team give them material support. They make home visits and provide the trauma counselling which many refugees need.
- Play for Peace is a youth football project which welcomes children from all backgrounds & communities to mix on and off the pitch. When Saif first arrived alone 6 years ago, he had to work but was encouraged to join the project. Looking back as an 18 year old, he says 'The football helped me to control my emotions and make a new life.'
- The Beirut Youth Project. Since the disastrous fire at Beirut Port in August 2020 the project has been supporting the many young people who have been affected by the disaster.

Since 2020, Tearfund has been helping all communities during the Pandemic and also after the disastrous fire at Beirut port in August (as mentioned above).

Please pray for the city at this time and the many problems it faces. Give thanks for Christian values of peace and love being shared among the refugee community. Pray that they will be able to return to Syria to help to rebuild their country.

*Which country will be visited next? – wait & see*

**Brazil** is the epicentre of the virus in S America with 16 million cases. Half the population have no sewage collection. In the city of Manaus, partners have delivered food & hygiene kits to 400 families living in urban slums. In remote rural areas, they have been giving advice to farmers to keep them going during the pandemic

**DRC** (Democratic Republic of Congo) In DRC it is difficult to access public health information. Tearfund have launched a campaign 'Nakata Coronavirus' ( I refuse Corona) to prevent the spread of the virus. So far prevention & prayer messages have been accessed by 200,000 people on social media & tens of thousands more on Whats App & radio. Church partners have also been spreading the message in their communities.

**South Sudan** has many problems – bitter conflict, flooding, water borne diseases, famine, & now Covid. 1.3 million children under 5 are suffering from malnutrition. Tearfund are the only aid agency running a feeding programme in 3 counties.

**Yemen** It is estimated that there are 1 million infections in the country. 24 million people need urgent aid – safe water, sanitation& food. They also need seed & tools to grow their own vegetables.

There are Emergency Appeals for Coronavirus, also South Sudan & Yemen.

### **Please Pray**

For all people around the world

- who are facing fear, illness or loss at this time.
- who are worrying about where their next meal is coming from & whether they will have enough to eat.
- to have good sanitation & the accurate information to help them stay safe.
- and for world leaders to increase their support to tackle the virus & save lives.
- Bless, encourage & protect all Tearfund partners & local churches at this time, as they work on the front line to help the most vulnerable

	<b>Mission Prayer Diary</b>
	<i>Church Mission Society</i>
1st	BRISTOL. Pioneer student Jenny Bourne coordinates the Ark Bus, a ministry that shares God's love in practical ways in the community. Jenny asks for prayer for the work of those on the fringes, finding God through the everyday. Pray for spaces to breathe and find peace in a world that is challenging and confusing.
2nd	STOKE-ON-TRENT Pioneer student Matt Richards, part of the chaplaincy team at YMCA North Staffordshire, asks for prayer to strengthen the community's spirit and for continued protection from Covid-19
3rd	BATH Kara Maylor, a second-year pioneer ordinand asks for prayer for her "Thank God it's Friday" women's group, a space for women to walk and chat together
4th	OXFORD Pray for CMS's Partnership for Missional Church (PMC) team as they adapt the PMC journey to new circumstances, including shorter, more frequent sessions and much teaching online.
	<i>Stephen and Tabita Bell are planting churches in Croatia</i>
5th	Pray for churches in Fier and Patos (Albania) and Dubrava and Sesvete (Croatia), that Stephen and Tabita have worked in over 30 years. Pray that these young churches will grow and bring in new Christians
6th	Stephen, Tabita and Benjamin are now at Capernwray Bible College (Lancashire). Due to lockdown, they have to attend lectures remotely from their rented house 2 miles from the college.
7th	Pray for other Capernwray students not allowed to return after Christmas. One student is stuck in her home town in USA and has to get up at 2am every day to attend 6 hours of lectures
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	In Papua New Guinea, SU are receiving a very positive response on social media to Scripture memory videos called “WORDoutLOUD”. Pray that more people will participate in these Scripture memory videos
10th	A number of schools have asked Mission Partner “Synergy” for pre-recorded assembly videos or live online assemblies. This year’s theme is “What is God like?”
11th	SU South Australia asks us to pray for the launch of “My Tribe” in churches as part of GENTS– “Grade Eight, Nine, Ten Students” helping men to become more involved
12th	Pray for “Tea, Toast and Toys” in Northamptonshire, Nova Street Team in Torbay, “Christian Initiative to Schools” in Letchworth, “Farne Churches Youth and Family Outreach” and many other groups adapting to social distancing rules.
	<i>Our CMS Link Missionaries Tim and Kate Lee helped to set up JigSaw Kids Ministries in Manila (Philippines)</i>
13th	As Jigsaw is now visiting hundreds of families where they live to deliver regular parcels containing Bible materials and sewing materials and activity packs for children, pray that God’s word will reach people even in lockdown
14th	Pray for the new ministry in Quezon City Manila, in a community of rubbish collectors. Many of these people cannot read and Jigsaw is organising literacy classes
15th	Disabled children are suffering more than normal during the pandemic, being unable to come to central groups. Pray that Jigsaw will be able to visit disabled children in their homes and take necessary materials and medicines to them

16th	Please continue to pray for all the funds required for Jigsaw’s ministry. Please pray for extra funds and resources to come from the Philippines, Asia and from the UK. Funds needed for, increased emergency response, medical supplies, health care, food and wellbeing, ongoing operational costs, IT resources and educational support
	<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	Some MAF staff have been unable to return to their home countries for many months and are have not seen close family members. Others have had to cancel furloughs. Pray about feelings of loneliness and anxiety
22nd	MAF Timor-Leste administration staff have been assembling “mama medevac” packs containing blankets, babygrows, snacks, toiletries and Christian booklets. Pray for mothers flown to hospital with their babies

23rd	Pray for the Adjumani Refugee Camp in northern Uganda, home to 200,000 refugees from South Sudan. Due to the pandemic, MAF stopped in-person visits. The previous two-week trauma care and mental health programme has been replaced by half-hour radio broadcasts every Thursday evening.
24th	The Kuron Peace Village in South Sudan has no Coronavirus and the local minister Bishop Paride Taban wants to keep it that way. No visitors at all are allowed. Bishop Paride has started a small secondary school underneath a tree, and MAF has flown in materials, food, cooking oil, fertiliser, face masks and buckets for sanitation, so that the isolated village can survive.
	<i>The Bible Society's Bible-a-month club is delivering Bible resources in Costa Rica, next to Panama in Central America</i>
25th	Give thanks for the success of the YouVersion Bible reading plans
26th	Costa Rica's economy depends upon tourism, severely impacted by the pandemic. Pray that the BS team can share hope in a time of high unemployment
27th	Praise God for progress on a New Testament translation into the Ngobere language for the Ngabe people. Pray that before the rains arrive in April, the US-based translation team can travel to this hilly jungle region to check the translation with local people.
	<i>Tear Fund works with local churches and organisations to show God's love in action</i>
28th	In DRC, TearFund has installed handwashing stations, rainwater harvesting and storage tanks in many healthcare centres. The Tippy Tap, built from local materials, helps maintain hygiene and minimise water use.
29th	In Nepal, incomes of construction workers have stopped due to the pandemic so Tear Fund has distributed hundreds of emergency food parcels– rice, lentils, cooking oil, potatoes and salt.
30th	In Nepal, new cooking stoves introduced by a Tear Fund partner have cut the use of firewood by half. Praise God that people now suffer less from damaged eyesight and asthma caused by smoke
31st	1.8 million poverty-stricken Venezuelan migrants have arrived in Columbia. Tear Fund partner Concilio Harmanos Unidos en Cristo has been providing daily meals to migrant children at risk of malnutrition

Dear Christ Church, St. John's and All Saints,

It was seven years ago that a conversation with Bishop Mark during a diocesan cricket match led to Oswestry School getting in touch and inviting me to take up the post of Chaplain. Since then Benji has started developing nicely into a capable batsman and spin bowler, Joanna has become a teenager and Phoebe has taken the role of chief baker. Lydia continues to keep us all in order and in May 2020 we were joined by Jemima who has just started crawling and discovering how fun it is to pull things off the shelves she can reach! Sadly, like many businesses, Oswestry School has felt the impact of Covid-19 on their finances and so it was that, along with several other members of staff, I was made redundant in the summer. Having loved my time as a School Chaplain, my hope is that I will be able secure another School Chaplaincy post for September, but in the meantime, I have just been appointed Part-time Interim Minister for Criftins with Dudleston and Welsh Frankton, a Benefice of three rural parishes on the outskirts of Ellesmere. Currently two of the three churches are closed due to Covid-19 and lockdown and so my first job has been to get to grips with setting up a YouTube channel and creating a Sunday Morning playlist complete with pre-filmed Sermon, readings, links and prayers.

This week sees me tackling three Zoom PCC meetings, which should give me more of a feel for the churches and the people who make them what they are.

As a family, we still have very fond memories of our time in Stone at Christ Church and Oulton with Moddershall and we trust that despite these challenging times you will continue to fix your eyes on Jesus, the one who looked beyond the pain and the anguish of the cross to the joy of bringing people like you and me into his Father's presence.

With our love and prayers

*Andy, Lydia and the family*

*Christ Church contributes to the support of several mission workers and missions. In 2021, due to reduced church income, contributions to these workers have been reduced. If you are able to add to their support by an extra contribution, please contact the church office.*

#### **RALPH & DAGMAR BARON**

Since 1980, Ralph and Dagmar have served with several different mission agencies, in Pakistan and India. Christ Church has partnered with them for nearly 40 years. Dagmar is the daughter of Drusilla and John, who were members of Christ Church, Stone in Rev. John Williams' day. Ralph & Dagmar have three grown-up children, and Dagmar's elderly mother, still living in the UK.

Ralph and Dagmar both teach children of other Mission workers, in a Christian boarding school, in NW Pakistan. Dagmar is also the School Principal and Ralph is responsible for the school intranet. Recruiting staff and obtaining visas and work permits for international employees at the school has always been difficult. A current lack of staff has meant that Ralph and Dagmar have to rely on the Internet for lessons and teach a variety of subjects themselves. Sadly, once the remaining final year students complete their studies in June, the school will close permanently. Ralph and Dagmar are seeking the Lord's guidance and praying for an opportunity to continue serving God, possibly working with refugees in the UK.

**JONATHAN & ROBINAH BEESIGOMWE** Jonathan, born into a Christian family in Uganda, committed his life to Christ in 1970. While working as a high school teacher, 1976 – 86, Jonathan started to reflect on his own experiences at school, when he was taught by Christian missionaries. At that time Dave and Chris Holton – CMS partners in Uganda, supported by Christ Church, Stone – were living next door to Jonathan and were influential in his decision to become a missionary. Christ Church has partnered with Jonathan, for 25 years. Jonathan and Robinah work with young people in schools and local churches, and also run a "Foundations for Farming" project growing Safflower plants. (*cont*)

JONATHAN & ROBINAH BEESIGOMWE

*Latest from Jonathan (12th February)*

Good morning Christ Church Partners. This is our ministry prayer point broken down. We need to mobilize 1000 partners who can reach 65 children and youth under the Theme "God's Word. Every Child." Or 500 who can reach 130 or 250 who can reach 260 by October 2021. A new program - Stopping Child Abuse" has been added. Thanks for Praying.

Training Program: Children and Youth 101 Training. It will be in two parts. Face to face training and practical training in your churches lasting four weeks. All Covid 19 protocol will be followed.

Sat. 20 Feb 2021

08:00 Registration

08:30 Session

10:30. Break

11:00 Session Two

13:00. Close

Followed by 4-5 weeks of supervised ministry to children and youth. Commissioning in 5 weeks.

From 8-26 March we shall have a Missions Outreach with a partner organisation in the North where there is Heightened Gender Based Violence BBV. Pray for resources, protection from increasing Covid 19 infections around the country. This Village is very strategic for our Farming program Foundations for Farming in partnership with the University of Agriculture and Natural Resources BUAN after the outreach.

TIM LEE

Tim is a Christian Mission Society (CMS) worker who first went, with his wife Kate and their young family, to the Philippines in 2004, to work with children living on the streets in Manila. Jigsaw Kids' Ministry UK was set up as a charity, and a team of local Filipino workers were brought together under the leadership of Tim. *(cont)*

TIM LEE

Today, Jigsaw's ministry to children living on the streets, and families in the slum areas of Manila, has expanded to include: Health and Wellbeing support services, an Education Sponsorship scheme, Literacy and Bible study classes, Sewing groups, an empowerment scheme for young people (YALE), and Children with Disabilities support groups. Local pastors, social workers, people with transferable skills and volunteers are all part of the ministry team.

The Jigsaw team have been through a very rough patch recently. On top of all the challenges they have faced during the pandemic, their wonderful Programs Coordinator, Beth, discovered, last October, that she had stage 4 ovarian cancer which had spread to other parts of her body. Beth was an amazing woman, loved by everyone she worked with. Sadly, Beth died and went to be with her Lord and Saviour, Jesus, last week. Everyone in the Jigsaw Kids' Ministry team is devastated, and all the children who knew her are struggling to come to terms with the loss of Beth.

On a more positive note they are now providing food parcels and educational activity packs to more than 2000 children and their families every week and still more children are asking for the Bible-based activity packs. Tim quoted Matthew 19: 14 Jesus said, *Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven*, and said that his team are determined not to turn away a single child, but they are entirely dependent on having sufficient funds to do so.

After many years living in Manila, some time spent back in the UK, and now based in Kuala Lumpur, Tim continues to work as Director and an advisor to the Kids' Ministry team as well as being part of the CMS-Asia mission development team.

**MIRCEA PESTEAN**

Our connection with Mircea began in 2012, when two young people from Christ Church went to Romania, as part of a team sponsored by the Ron Hellyer Foundation UK, to help Mircea run the first of many summer camps for Gypsy children from local villages. The children's clubs and summer camps, with their emphasis on Bible teaching and music continue to bring whole families into the church.

Mircea is Pastor to 3 churches in NW Romania, and leads a team of pastors and lay workers whose mission is to establish more churches and children's clubs in impoverished Gypsy communities. These Gypsy people rely on outmoded subsistence farming techniques to feed themselves and generate a meagre income. Mircea and his team often have to provide food and fuel to help them survive the harsh winter conditions. Mircea spends a lot of time teaching the Gypsy people better farming techniques and other skills, including how to read and write. Mircea's work has also been recognised by local Town Mayors who have seen significant improvements in the lives of so many people in their villages.

---

**Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowships (UCCF)**

These fellowships, based on university and college campuses, are led by students, resourced by Christian Union Staff Workers, and supported by local churches.

Matthew Leung is the current Staff Worker for the NW Midlands. He is responsible for the Christian fellowships at Keele, Manchester Metropolitan (Crewe), Staffordshire, and Harper Adams (Newport) universities. Matthew's role is to encourage members of UCCF to share God's love with fellow students through Impact group work and informal one-to-one Bible studies. He is also responsible for equipping students to lead fellowship meetings and outreach events on campus, as well as providing discipleship training for graduates who have elected to become Relay workers.

Part of Matthew's ministry is to gather a team of supporters who will pray for the work of UCCF, and give financially to support the long-term viability of the Staff Worker's role.

STEPHEN and TABITA BELL

Stephen and Tabita worked for several years planting churches in Albania. They have since then helped plant churches in the suburbs of Zagreb, Croatia. *Latest news—*

Dear All @ Christ Church Stone,  
We'd like to thank you for your fellowship, prayer and faithful giving towards us and the Lord's work. We hope you are all doing well, despite the Covid period.

Tabita, Stephen and our 20-year-old son Benjamin are thriving on our 9-month study leave at Capernwray Bible College near Lancaster. The College has 62 students, 40 of whom are onsite and the other 22 (including us!) are following online via ZOOM from our homes. We live just 2 miles away. Some are in Europe and America. However, we have 6 lectures per day. In fact, since lockdown on 4th January all students, even those living in, have lectures on zoom. We hope and pray that we can all be "on site" after Easter for the final term. It is a real joy for us to be able to feed on God's word from expert lecturers, feeding our souls and developing our relationship with Jesus.

We really appreciated use of the Christ Church lounge after the funeral of David's and my Dad, where we as a family could eat together on Christmas Eve, despite lockdown. That was God's gift to us, otherwise we would not have been able to be together.

In the Summer we return to Croatia to continue planting churches in the Varaždin area and working nationwide with the Lausanne Network, encouraging and enabling churches and pastors in the Great Commission.

Our eldest, Sheona is to marry Jason (from Canada) in August. We are planning it in Calgary, Canada, but if the Coronavirus situation dictates, we may hold it in Stuttgart, Germany. We are very happy for the couple and ask that you pray for them, their marriage and all the organisational details. Joshua continues his studies in Germany and Benjamin will join him to study after he completes his Capernwray studies.

So, much love from us all!

*Stephen and Tabita, Sheona and Jason, Joshua and Benjamin*

*Shirley has found some old magazine copies, so here is what was happening in August 1918. Note that schools were closed due to the Influenza outbreak (p23), which first reached Staffordshire in July 1918.*

THE VICARAGE,  
July 23rd, 1918

Dear Friends,

I have heard of only one distinction this month, but it is a very gratifying one, Major Swynfen Parker-Jervis has become Colonel.

There are still at least three months ahead of us, in which campaigning on a large scale will be possible on the Western Front, and our hearts are full of anxiety, for we do not know whose lot it will be to fall in battle. We shall not forget to pray at home for our men, and at the services on Wednesday afternoon, but I would ask you particularly to observe Sunday, August 4th. By universal consent it will be a Day of National Prayer. Of course, as the Archbishop of York says, there will be nothing magical about it. Its worth depends simply on whether it does really unite and concentrate the prayers which are continually day by day rising from the hearts of the citizens of the nation, whether it does really express a common desire and effort to live the national life in accordance with the will of God. Yet, remembering this, we do well on great occasions such as the Anniversary of the War, to gather up our constant prayers and efforts in a corporate act of acknowledgment of God and of allegiance to Him.

Let us make ourselves into recruiting officers for the services of that day, and bring with us, to God's House, those neighbours who have got out of the way of attending. Let us make ourselves into recruiting officers for the services of that day, and bring with us, to God's House, those neighbours who have got out of the way of attending. It will be a day of Repentance, Remembrance, Renewal.

*(continued)*

Thank God, we have no need to repent of our cause, but each one of us has plenty to repent of. May God give us true repentance.

Then we shall remember the king and his ministers, the commanders and the men who are fighting, the wounded, the nurses, the prisoners, the sorrow stricken in all nations, the women and girls and all who are bearing the heavy and incessant toil of national work.

This will move us to renew our faith and fortitude, and dedicate ourselves afresh to the duty of finishing the work we are in. There will also be much for which to thank God, perhaps many mercies, by August 4th, of which we don't know yet.

Our sympathy should go out to those whose relatives are prisoners. News comes very slowly. For their encouragement I print further extracts from Mr. Newman's letters.

I am,

Yours sincerely, C. E. COPE.

#### EXTRACTS FROM MR. NEWMAN'S LETTERS. '

*He is at present at a farm on the coast of Mecklenburg, Germany*

Whit Sunday. Another beautiful day— bright and hot with a gentle sea breeze. The sea looks beautiful, the hedges are a mass of bloom, and the woods look invitingly cool. Have just finished my usual Sunday morning's occupation— washing clothes and doing a little mending.

It has been very hot working out in the fields this week, and I am thankful to have such a healthy open air job. On Wednesday last I did my first morning's ploughing, and found it not an easy job. However, thanks to the fact that the three horses knew more about it than I, things went off remarkably well.

May 26th.

Glorious news this week. On Friday, I received seven food parcels and one parcel of underclothes. I told you our things would start to come through soon. Today I have had my first cup of tea since January, and all sorts of good things to eat.

Notes and Notices- THE SCHOOLS.

To our great regret Miss Margaret Masefield, who volunteered to help us in our time of need has been obliged to give up teaching. The strain on her voice was too sudden, and the doctor absolutely forbids her to go on with the work. Managers, Teachers and Scholars value the patriotic motive which brought her to our aid, and sincerely deplore Miss Masefield's enforced departure. We welcome Miss Dorothy Hazlehurst who has returned to the School on the completion of her college course. Owing to the Influenza epidemic the Schools have been closed.

Meaford Sunday School re-opens on August 11th. For the other Sunday Scholars there will be service in Church on August 11th, and following Sundays at two o'clock. Sunday School reopens on September 1st. The Day Schools reassemble on September 2nd.

---

## **The Sculptor**

I took a piece of simple clay  
 And idly fashioned it one day  
 And as my fingers pressed it still  
 It bent and yielded to my will  
 I came again when days were passed  
 The bit of clay was hard at last...  
 The form I gave it, still it bore,  
 But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay,  
 And gently formed it day by day;  
 I moulded with my power and art,  
 A young child's soft and yielding heart.  
 I came again when years were gone;  
 It was a man I looked upon;  
 He still that early impress bore,  
 And I could change it nevermore

(Author Unknown)

## Groups and Activities

---

### FUNERALS

22nd January	Tony Carroll	Age 83
27th January	Barbara Dickinson	Age 86

### FLOWER ROTA

7th March	Lent	14th March	Lent
21st March	Lent	28th March	Lent



### ROADS FOR PRAYER

<p><b>7th March</b>          Whitebridge Lane          Alma Street          Bromfield Court          Granville Terrace</p> <p><b>21st March</b>          Newcastle Street          Newcastle Road          Northesk Street          Radford Close</p>	<p><b>14th March</b>          Dominic Court          King's Avenue          Longton Road          Margaret Street</p> <p><b>28th March</b>          Radford Street          Station Road          The Avenue          Trent Road</p>
---	--



## PARISH DIRECTORY

### CHURCH SCHOOLS

Christ Church C.E.(Controlled) First School, Northesk Street.		
Headteacher Mrs A. Graham BA(Hons) NPQH		01785 336545
Christ Church Academy, Old Road		
Principal: Mr C. Wright MAEd		01785 334900
<b>Vicar</b>	Paul Kingman	812669
	The Vicarage, Bromfield Court	
<b>Children &amp; Families Worker</b>	Peter Cuthbert	07733 042205
	peter.j.cuthbert@btinternet.com	