

# Christ Church and People



July 2021

# PARISH DIRECTORY

## SUNDAY SERVICES

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

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

## THE PARISH TEAM

<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	
<b>Electoral Roll Officer</b>	Parish Office	811990
<b>Parish Office</b>	Christ Church Centre, Christ Church Way, Stone, Staffs ST15 8ZB	
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## CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

<b>Booking Secretary</b>	Parish Office	811990
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## CHURCH SCHOOLS

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

Headteacher Mrs A. Graham BA(Hons) NPQH 01785 336545

Christ Church Academy, Old Road

Principal: Mr C. Wright MAEd 01785 334900

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## Christ Church



## and People

Please get your contributions for the August magazine to us by 15th July

Cover Picture  
Oulton Road

### Thoughts about God

Life must be understood backwards; but... it must be lived forward. **Soren Kierkegaard**

Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays. **Soren Kierkegaard**

This world is God's workshop for making men in. -- **Henry Ward Beecher**

The whole of creation, with all of its laws, is a revelation of God. -- **Dean William Ralph Inge**

All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen. -- **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

There is no emptiness of soul ever for those whose life is devoted to God. -- **William Lawson**

## **Church and Zoom Services July 2021**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity (sermon text same at all services each Sunday)</b>
3rd	9:00 am	Zoom prayer meeting
4th	9:00 am	Morning Prayer, All Saints Moddershall Philippians 3:12-4:1 "Our heavenly goal"
	9:15 am	Communion, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer, St John's Oulton
11th	9:00 am	Communion, All Saints Moddershall Philippians 4:2-9 "Conflict resolution"
	9:15 am	Morning Prayer, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Communion, St John's Oulton
18th	9:00 am	Morning Prayer, All Saints Moddershall Philippians 4:10-23 "Contentment"
	9:15 am	Communion, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer, St John's Oulton
27th	9:00 am	Morning Prayer, All Saints Moddershall
	9:15 am	Morning Prayer, Christ Church
	10:30 am	Zoom service
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer, St John's Oulton

### New Zoom housegroup

A new group is meeting on Tuesday evenings- please contact me if you would like to join. We are looking at "Dodgy Christians in the Bible". Dave Bell 01785 815775

## His world, our responsibility

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At the time of writing the G7 summit of world leaders is taking place. The chair of the G7 is our own PM Boris Johnson and so Carbis Bay in Cornwall was his choice of venue. Despite the massive amount of preparation and extensive security measures what is happening is highly important as they tackle concerns that require a concerted effort to resolve.

At the top of agenda for many is how to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. The need and responsibility to help provide vaccines and health provision is crucial. But the next big issue is the environment. Environmental activists continue to draw attention to this urgent issue.

The Bible has a strong theology of stewardship. We are introduced to this principle very early on. Having made the world and made both man and woman in the image of God a declaration follows: 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground' (Genesis 1v28). We are to be good stewards of the earth, rather than exploiters who strip out its resources. This idea continues as we read various laws e.g. rest for the land (leaving land fallow), provision for the poor (not harvesting to the borders of a field so that the poor can glean a crop), correct animal husbandry and so on.

The Psalmist reminds us: 'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters' (Psalm 24v1). This line is quoted in the New Testament when Paul applies Jesus' declaration that all foods are clean (he abolished outward practices of the holiness code but continued to teach the ethics of moral life): 'Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it" '(1 Cor 10v26). This combines freedom and responsibility, which is a vital combination.



*(continued)*

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Stewardship is something to put into practise in our own lives and community. We are also to pray for world leaders to do the same at the global level. The world rightly belongs to God who made everything. He has entrusted us with the task of stewardship: how we use water, energy, minerals, food, medicines, money, technology – these all come under His sovereign rule, as do we. We are answerable to God for how we steward the earth's resources.

*Paul Kingman*

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## **Good Question!**

Young children can be very persistent in asking their parents almost unanswerable questions like, "Mum, why are flames hot?" We do our best to answer the questions, but realize that our answers need to match our child's capacity to understand.

An academic fondly remembered his loving father's short answer to a question he had asked when he was four. "What makes aeroplanes fly Dad?" His dad replied "Well Son, the engines push them into the air" All those years ago it was a good answer but now it brought a smile to the face of the Professor of Aeronautics!

As we grow up, we hate to admit that we don't have all the answers! That is particularly true in matters of our faith. Jesus was well aware of this and so he often used parables in his teaching.

St. Mark tells us "Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable" (Mark 4:33-34). Parables stimulate our thinking, invite us to enter into mystery and point us to truths beyond our capability of understanding.

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Mark concludes this passage by telling us that when Jesus and His disciples could escape the crowds and spend quality time alone together, **he explained everything**. This is paraphrased by Eugene Peterson in The Message "*he went over everything, sorting out the tangles, untying the knots.*" When we are alone with the Lord in our prayer time do we dare to ask questions, not necessarily expecting a direct answer but possibly a new way of looking at things?

If you want good examples of the way questions and concerns can be raised in prayer you have only to look at the psalms. With the possible exception of Psalm 88 the candid expression of emotions and questions move the Psalmist on to positive ideas and actions. For example, a depressed self awareness rapidly leads the writer and singer to see life in a new positive way in the "chorus" in Psalms 42 and 43

***"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God"***

Dark and difficult times often precipitate matching questions. When we are alone with God we can be frank and ask those questions, and by doing so add reality to our piety. In his darkest moment Jesus uses the question from Psalm 22 ***"My God, My God why have you forsaken me"*** but Jesus isn't just quoting the Psalm this is a very real prayer.

If Jesus can ask this question in his prayer from the cross, can we dare to bring our "tangles and knots" to the Lord in difficult times?

I started by saying that little children often ask questions. Jesus says ***"Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven"*** As God's little children let's ask the questions. A simplified reply may come to our mind, or instruction that we can understand, or there may just be silence. In the silence God is still close to us whispering into our hearts..."One day you will understand, but for the time being just remember I am with you always and I love you".

*Roger M. Vaughan*

## Prayer partners

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Maybe you have heard that four of us are taking part in LEAD academy seminars for small town churches in our diocese. This course is to help us to plan for where we see our church heading in the future, focussing on growth. One thing we flagged up was prayer in the church and we are looking for ways to encourage people in their prayer lives.

Do you struggle to pray, whether alone or in a group? Maybe you are busy and forget to pray until you are just falling asleep. You could join one of the established prayer groups, maybe the one before the Sunday service or the monthly prayer breakfast. You don't need to say anything just be there. If you feel you do want to speak you could bring a prewritten prayer, one from the church magazine or maybe part of a psalm or hymn, to start with. There is never any pressure on anyone to speak out loud.

Perhaps the solution is a prayer partner. This could be a friend or another church member. A prayer partner is someone you can get together with, regularly, to spend some time in prayer. It should be somebody you can be comfortable with and who you know to be reliable and trustworthy.

Praying together builds on that trust and gives you support in difficult times. It will also build your confidence in praying aloud with other people. Having a prayer partner means there is always someone to pray for you. It keeps your prayers from becoming too self-focussed and helps with discernment. You will find you build a deeper and stronger relationship with God as you pray together.

If you are nervous start small, say the Lord's prayer together. Build up as your confidence grows. Who knows where this will lead you.

I suggest you pray about it and see where God guides you. He may surprise you, He often does.

*Estella*

<b>Mission Prayer Diary</b>	
	<i>Church Mission Society</i>
1st	TANZANIA “Please pray for our 5 deaf carpenters Godson, Rickson, Michael, Ahmeed and Justin”, write Ben and Katy Ray who provide training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. “They will be responsible for our new venture into lower-cost eucalyptus furniture”
2nd	NORTH AFRICA Pandemic restrictions have encouraged partners M and H to spend more time sitting outside with local women (H) and the men on their street (M). Pray for more opportunities to share the good news
3rd	CHILE Local partner Christian Donoso, making disciples and planting churches in Concepcion, write that 30 adults meet regularly to pray and worship. Pray for this church plant to flourish
4th	PARAGUAY Tim Curtis works with church leaders in the Chaco region, developing scripture study materials. He also works with Bible translators in Northern Enlhet. Pray for safety in travel, especially on the Trans-Chaco Highway
	<i>Stephen and Tabita Bell are planting churches in Croatia</i>
5th	Stephen, Tabita and Benjamin have now returned to Croatia after completing Bible courses at Capernwray College, Cumbria. They are looking for a house to rent from September while at their new church location.
6th	After a bad spike in virus infections in May, Croatia is now seeing figures decreasing. Pray that church work will be possible again.
7th	(Daughter) Sheona’s wedding plans are in disarray due to the pandemic. She and Jason had planned to marry in Calgary in August but that is now not possible so maybe they will have a church ceremony in Rijeka, Croatia. Not many guests will be able to join them for the service.
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	“MINE Youth” based in East Newcastle runs Friday night detached sessions in Walker Park. Young people can try DJ-ing, learn skills and reflect through music on who God is.
10th	There will be no residential activities this summer, but some will be replaced by online events. Pray for activity leaders and team members as they prepare against this background
11th	Pray for the Staffs Youth Net team Sam, Anji, Maddy, Alison, Cathy, Jo, Laura, Scott, Jay, Annie and Jon as they plane ahead for summer and autumn
12th	Ancora mission leader Maggie Barfield is looking forward to children’s clubs running again in schools, churches and communities. Pray for the release of new video resources to inspire Guardian of Ancora club leaders
	<i>Our CMS Link Missionaries Tim and Kate Lee helped to set up JigSaw Kids Ministries in Manila (Philippines)</i>
13th	The Lee family are returning to the UK. “Please pray that we will be able to sell our car– government offices are all closed so ownership cannot be transferred”
14th	That the situation in Malaysia improves and it does not go onto the UK red list which would involve a very costly period of quarantine in a hotel once we arrived..
15th	That our flights will go ahead as many seemed to get cancelled last minute and that our Covid tests before flying will come back negative.

16th	Please continue to pray for Jigsaw literacy ministry. For Judith who is the lead teacher for continued strength under so much work and for each child that they may know hope and new life as they begin to read and write for the very first time. Please pray for Bea too Jigsaw's teaching assistant who has recently had a beautiful baby girl and that God will raise up a temporary literacy assistant while Bea is on maternity leave. Thank you
	<i>Jonathan and Robinah Beesigomwe live in Gabarone, Botswana. Their organisation is "Bows and Arrows Ministry", and they work with older schoolchildren and young adults.</i>
17th	As churches in Botswana look to the future, 20 church workers have requested training in youth work. Pray that this can take place
18th	The state of emergency has been extended for a further 6 months as virus cases have increased. Pray that cases will go down
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	Jonathan and Robinah hope to visit family in Uganda in August, and to make preparations for building a house there, to which they will eventually retire. But all of this is not yet clear
	<i>Mission Aviation Fellowship fly medical personnel, supplies and missionaries to far-flung, often inaccessible settlements</i>
21st	MAF partner Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund has been helping to negotiate peace treaties between warring communities in South Sudan. Please spend some time praying in faith that God's forever love will bring peace to this embattled country
22nd	MAF partners with Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, DRC. Instead of walking for weeks to receive treatment for injuries caused by horrific sexual violence, MAF's safe travel corridor enables women to be seen much more quickly. Pray for atrocities to stop!

23rd	MAF is expanding into Guinea. Ask God to bless the work of Emil and Margrit Kuendig who've been setting up this programme from scratch during the pandemic
24th	MAF has assisted in the Covid vaccination programme in Kalimantan, Indonesia and is helping deliver vaccines in other places too.
	<i>The Bible Society's Bible-a-month club is delivering Bible resources in Laos, a majority Buddhist country</i>
25th	Pray for the continued health and strength of the translators and typesetters of the new Laos Study Bible
26th	Pray for the promotion of the Laos Study Bible to the local churches.
27th	Praise God that Christianity is blossoming in Laos, and ask that this will continue
	<i>Matthew Leung works with UCCF in local universities</i>
28th	Pray for the National Forum (UCCF's annual conference for CUs across the nation!), taking place in August
29th	Autumn term's programme will centre on "Meals with Jesus". Pray that plans will work out well
30th	Pray for the new CU student leaders, who have taken on their new roles. Pray God will give them wisdom in helping to plan events to welcome new students in September!
31st	Give thanks for the chances to once again meet students face to face again! Meeting in person has been a big blessing and joy this past month.

## Struggling to be holy

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Some years ago now a friend of mine, Judy Hirst, wrote an excellent book called 'Struggling to be Holy', a powerful and honest account of some of the challenges we face as Christians in trying to open and honest with God, and in allowing God to work in us and through us. This is a book I return to frequently as I find it an invaluable companion for the journey - a source of reassurance and encouragement, whilst not being an invitation to complacency.

In the book Judy is disarmingly honest about her feelings of inadequacy when faced with the prospect of writing about a subject that she, and possibly others, might feel her wholly unqualified to even consider. But she lays out her stall early:

*'Writing this book has made it very clear to me that holiness is much less about developing self-discipline than it is about learning to entrust yourself to the God who loves you. It is about taking the risk of allowing God to interact with the truth of ourselves, no strings attached... Holiness is about God being present and our being present to God...the problem is to be present ourselves. God is there, but where are we?'*

(Judy Hirst, Struggling to be Holy, DLT, 2006)

As Rowan Williams says so helpfully in his inspiring book 'Being Disciples':

*'Becoming holy is being so taken over by the extraordinariness of God that that is what you are really interested in, and it radiates from you to reflect on other people. There's the catch: if you want to be holy, stop thinking about it. If you want to be holy, look at God. If you want to be holy, enjoy God's world, enter into it as much as you can in love and service'*

(Rowan Williams, Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life, SPCK, 2016.)

+Sarah Bishop of Shrewsbury

## Hospital Notes 26

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“Business as usual (well almost)”

Yes, at last I’ve returned to Volunteering at UHNM visiting patients on the wards starting back on 24th May. I now see fewer patients because considerable time is taken sanitising and changing gloves and apron (and occasionally facemask) between each person.

I have been amazed at the cheerfulness and resilience of all the ward staff with whom I’ve talked. They’ve had it tough but remain positive and dedicated to the patients in their care. Indeed in the West building at Royal Stoke **“Daily Inspiration”** is now written up on a flip chart in the entrance (*see following page*). I have found patients to be even more thankful for visits than before. Access to visitors is now much more restricted. Only one visitor (the same person each day) is allowed for a limited period at a prearranged time. This is to limit the number of non-staff on the ward at any time. Consequently patients have less contact with the outside world and appreciate additional face to face conversation.

I have already visited on 5 wards at Royal Stoke and 4 at County Hospital and been welcomed back by staff as well as patients and find it all very rewarding.

Two initiatives have been taken by the SPaRC leadership. Firstly a buffet lunch was arranged in the Chapel at RS on 15th June to show appreciation for all volunteers – whether returning or retiring. Secondly, at County, on 22nd June a new “Home from Home Room” was opened by the Acting Chief Nurse in the Chapel area. This room was born out of a vision to provide a safe and inviting place for patients with dementia and those with hidden disabilities as they transition from hospital to home or a care setting. It will be available for use by patients, families, staff and other agencies.

Overall, I am so very pleased to be able to return and, like other activities, can say that I did not realise how much I have missed them until I have been able to start them up again!

*Dave Rowlands*



# DAILY INSPIRATION

Too often we  
underestimate the power of  
a touch, a smile, a kind word,  
a listening ear, a honest compliment,  
or the smallest act of caring.  
All of which have potential  
to make someone smile.

#THEWESTCARES

## The Joys of Meeting Face To Face

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*News from Matthew Leung, UCCF representative at local universities*

The past couple of weeks, has been a joy! It's felt refreshing to once again meet my students face to face (whether it's out in a coffee shop or sitting out in the sun)! For Keele CU, I've been able to meet the new committee to begin planning new and creative ways to engage with incoming students in September. It's been so encouraging to see how the new committee have been really vision-led and really thinking how to best utilise every part of CU life to equip CU students for mission! While most of the new committee are freshers who have never experienced a normal CU year, it's also meant that they have not been tied down by past "traditions" of KUCU. As such they have honestly brought a lot of fresh ideas to the table.

Additionally while the last prayer letter talked about Events Week, we've already started planning the Events Week next year! I've been able to have regular meetings with the new Events Week Coordinators, Matt and Faith, who have been such a joy and encouragement to work with. Not only do they have a heart for mission, they're also very organised as a pair! As such, we've already planned out the theme and outline of the week next year! Please pray for things to continue to proceed smoothly, and that the CU can be fully relying on God during each step of the planning process!

"... How do you pray to God?"

One of the big encouragements from Staffs CU is the addition of 2 French international students "Frank" & "Madeline", who joined the CU separately. "Frank" was a non-Christian who decided to explore Jesus for himself on his own, and came to faith! As a result, he actively sought for a church and a Christian community, as a result ended up in the CU! It's been a joy to be able to help disciple him.

*(continued)*

"... I'm hopeful for the CU!"

My smallest CU, Harper Adams, has provided a big source of surprises (in the best way possible!). The new committee of 2, has been so zealous for evangelism. In the past Harper has been very insular and not thought much about evangelism. But through the Evangelism training and my regular meetings with the two, they have been really excited for evangelism!

They have sat down and really thought through how to best reach their unique culture on campus. While we're still in the process of planning future events (especially to welcome Freshers), they are currently focussing on how to encourage the rest of the current CU members for evangelism. One of the key strategies will be bringing as many of the CU to come to Forum National (UCCF's annual conference for CUs across the nation!).

As such please pray for the two committee members, Bex & Sydney, as well as the rest of HACU, to both come to Forum and ultimately have their hearts excited for mission!

Meals With Jesus

This term I've had the pleasure of working with Staff Workers across the UK to go over and plan the Impact Group material for next semester. The focus of these new studies will be "Meals with Jesus", going through various moments where Jesus shows hospitality and care for those around Him in the gospel of Luke. It was so exciting to be a part of this, and I'm really excited to see new incoming students learn and be encouraged to also reflect Jesus in the way they care and offer hospitality to those around them!

Give Thanks

Give thanks for the chances to once again meet students face to face again! Meeting in person has been a big blessing and joy this past month.

Pray for

Pray for the new CU student leaders, who have taken on their new roles. Pray God will give them wisdom in helping to plan events to welcome new students in September!

Things in Malaysia are pretty tense at the moment with Covid cases tripling in just 3 weeks. The country is once again in a full national lockdown for at least two weeks. Tim continues to work tirelessly for Jigsaw Kids' Ministries and with Asia CMS. Almost daily he is informed of much suffering and death in the region of India and the surrounding nations.

The Covid pandemic has put great strain on the Lee family in many ways and, as a result of this, they will be returning to the UK on June 25th, hopefully before Malaysia is put on the 'Covid red list'.

Despite the restrictions, Grace was able to do her Maths IGCSE exams and James his Geography A-Level before the latest lockdown. Rebekah is continuing her studies at Norwich university and James is looking forward to starting his university course in September. Back in the UK, Tim will continue his vital role in Jigsaw with the support of CMS. Tim and Kate also feel that God may be guiding them to live in the South Lake District, to become part of a small but growing community of families connected to a church there. They are praying for God to open or 'shut this door' firmly.

Despite applying for more than 10 teaching jobs, Kate has not yet secured employment for September. Please pray that God will grant Kate the right job at the right time. Also pray for a suitable house for the family to rent, in the place God wants them to settle. Their house in the UK is currently rented out until January 2022.

Please pray for God's blessing, guidance, and protection for the Lee family, the Jigsaw Kids' Ministry team, CMS-Asia mission partners, and all those they support and witness to, over the coming months.

Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

## A meadow walk

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Like many people we often take a walk across the local meadows. One afternoon we saw, in the distance, a young family; the parents took the short path across the middle of the meadow and the children the river-side path. The children were small perhaps about seven and four but they were being trusted to walk a different path from their parents. The girl was in charge, how tightly she held her brother's hand as they walked along! I could see her pointing out something to the little boy and taking an interest in where they walked but never once did they loosen their hands or stray from the path.

Where the two paths rejoined the father was waiting for his children and, calling to them, the whole family continued on their walk. At this point our walk diverged from theirs but I remembered this little incident with delight.

What a reminder to us of God's love and trust in us.

*Psalm 128 - A song of ascents*

1

*Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways.*

2

*You will eat the fruit of your labour; blessings and prosperity will be yours.*

3

*Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table.*

4

*Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD.*

5

*May the LORD bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem,*

6

*and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel.*

## Groups and Activities

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<b>Deanery Synod Reps</b>	Helen Bowes, Dave Rowlands
<b>P.C.C. Members</b>	Pete Kelly, Estella Woodhead, Anne Smith, Marylyn Hillman, Diane Morris, Liz Mason Phil Tunstall, Andy Stone, Shelagh Sanders
<b>Secretary</b>	Shelagh Sanders
<b>Treasurer</b>	Pete Kelly
<b>Envelopes, Gift Aid</b>	Richard Latos

### FLOWER ROTA

4th July	Mrs D. Pickles
11th July	Mrs M. Jones
18th July	Mrs S. Morray
25th July	Mrs K. Thompson



### ROADS FOR PRAYER

<b>4th July</b>	<b>11th July</b>
Meaford Avenue	Mount Street
Mount Avenue	Old Road
Mount Crescent	Stonefield Court
Mount Road	Stonefield Square
<b>18th July</b>	<b>25th July</b>
Victor Street	Bromfield Court
Victoria Street	Dominic Court
Whitebridge Lane	King's Avenue
Alma Street	Longton Road



### 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>