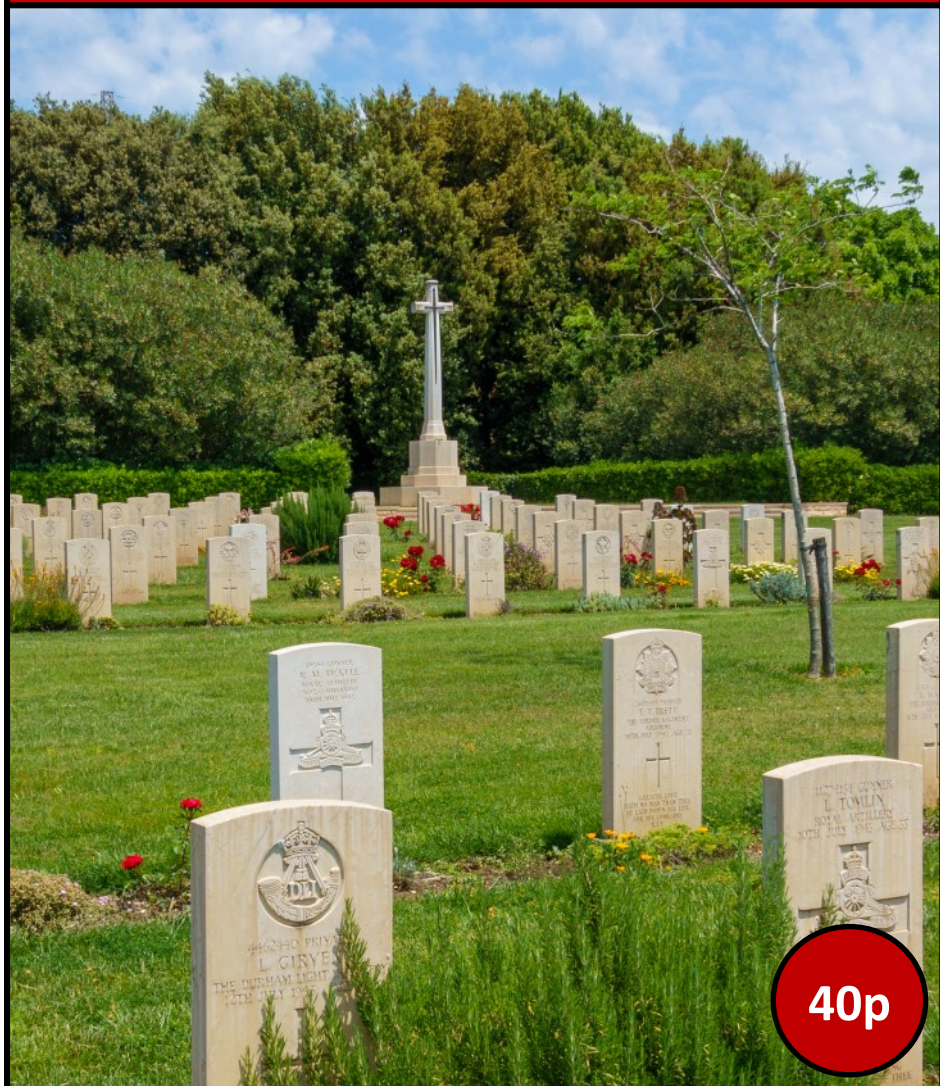


Christ Church Magazine

November 2023



40p

PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on page 4.

THE PARISH TEAM

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

CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

Booking Secretary	Parish Office	811990
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CHURCH SCHOOLS

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

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

Christ Church Academy, Old Road

Principal: Mr C. Wright MAEd 01785 334900

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Christ Church Magazine



Please send your articles for the December magazine to us by 15th November

Cover Picture:
War graves in Siciliy

Magazine 40p each month or £4 each year. Money may be given to your magazine deliverer or handed in to the Church office

Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website	www.christchurchstone.org
Parish office email	office@christchurchstone.org
Magazine contributions	magazine@christchurchstone.org

November 2023

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
Wed	1st		
Thu	2nd		
Fri	3rd		
Sat	4th	8.30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast
Sun	5th	9.15 am 5.00 pm	Communion; Job 2 "Blessed be the name of the Lord" Christianity Explored course (5 of 7)
Mon	6th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	7th	10.30 am 12.30 pm	Communion; Matthew 13: 1-23 "Wheat" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	8th	9.00 am 3.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks
Thu	9th	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	10th		
Sat	11th	2.00 pm	Jam and Chutney Sale in Christ Church Centre
Sun	12th	9.15 am 5.00 pm	Morning Prayer (Remembrance); Psalm 2 "One Sovereign" Christianity Explored course (6 of 7)
Mon	13th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	14th	10.30 am 12.30 pm 2.00 pm	Communion; Matthew 13: 24-43 "Weeds" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy Autumn House service
Wed	15th	9.00 am 2.00 pm 3.30 pm 7.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Oulton Abbey Nursing Home service Trekks PCC Meeting

November 2023

	Date	Time	Events
Thu	16th	11.00 am 1.10 pm	St Mary's Home service Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	17th		
Sat	18th		
Sun	19th	9.15 am 5.00 pm	Communion; 2 Corinthians 4: 1-18 "Treasure in clay" Christianity Explored course (7 of 7)
Mon	20th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	21st	10.30 am 12.30 pm	Communion; Matthew 13: 44-52 "Wonder" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	22nd	9.00 am 3.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks
Thu	23rd	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	24th		
Sat	25th		
Sun	26th	9.15 am	All age service; Luke 1: 1-14 "How can I be sure?"
Mon	27th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	28th	10.30 am 12.30 pm	Communion; Matthew 28: 1-14 "Wandering" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	29th	9.00 am 3.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks
Thu	30th	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly

What a friend we have in Jesus!

There are many people who struggle with loneliness. The reasons range from pressure at work, distance from family or friends, a spiritual low, facing conflict, or struggling with relationships. Emotionally energy is sapped. But we can find help!

An old hymn runs *"What a friend we have in Jesus! All our sins and griefs to bear"* by **Joseph M. Scriven, 1855**, an Irish immigrant to Canada. His life was filled with grief and trials. Scriven often needed the solace of the Lord. He'd enrolled for military service, but ill health ended this ambition. Soon after his fiancée died in a drowning accident on the eve of their wedding. He became a schoolteacher. His second fiancée died after a short illness. He struggled after this time, rarely had a regular income but eventually married. He worked with the underprivileged and was a devout Christian helping the poor and disabled but often was depressed. Where could he find solace? In his Friend Jesus! The Bible spells this out:

'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' (Luke 7v34). What a friend: he accepts us, with all our faults!

'No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you' (John 15v15). What a friend: he is so open hearted towards us!

'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich' (2 Corinthians 8v9). What a friend: he is so generous to us!



'For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.' (Heb 4v15).

7 **What a friend we have in Jesus!... (cont)**

What a friend: he sympathises with our struggles and is uniquely able to help us.

'As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.' (Psalm 16v3). What a friend: he takes so much joy in us!

'Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end' (John 13v1). What a friend: we'll never find another who is as committed to us as Jesus.

'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends' (John 15v13). What. Friend: who loves us unreservedly!

Whatever our troubles, Jesus' refreshing friendship is given to us as we come with expectant faith. May He be the one we go to often and in whom we will find true solace.

Paul Kingman

A service for the bereaved

3pm on Sunday 12th November at Christ Church, Stone. We hold an annual service for those who have been bereaved. This is a service that any can attend, even though we make a point of specifically inviting those we have had contact with due to more recent bereavements.

For those relatives who attend we include a roll call of the names of those who have died and you should contact the office to let them know you are attending and which names to include, as we have an act of remembrance with flowers.

If you would like to know more then please contact me. Rev Paul Kingman.

Advent Windows



Please come along at 11.00 a.m. every day throughout December and support our local community with their preparations for Christmas. This year's theme is "The Greatest Story" and all windows will feature a story book. This is the list of windows creators:

Fri 1st	St Dominics Priory	Wed 13th	Christ Church 1st School
Sat 2nd	Hub Craft Group	Thur 14th	Elmhurst Day Nursery
Sun 3rd	Ebenezer/Sunday School	Fri 15th	St Michaels School
Mon 4th	Pirehill School	Sat 16th	Trinity Skills for Life
Tues 5th	Oaktree Farm Rural Project	Sun 17th	Mumbles Day Nursery
Wed 6th	St Dominics Primary	Mon 18th	Oulton 1st School
Thur 7th	Co-op Funeral Care 2	Tues 19th	Walton Priory
Fri 8th	Happy Cactus	Wed 20th	Manor Hill Nursery
Sat 9th	Dunoon	Thur 21st	Kids Planet Day Nursery
Sun 10th	Springfield OSC	Fri 22nd	Meaford Fields Day Nursery
Mon 11th	Christ Church Academy	Sat 23rd	Oulton Church
Tues 12th	Alleyes Academy	Sun 24th	Christ Church



Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16



WEEK ONE: Suffering Church Action and Awareness Week (SCAAW)

Mission Aviation Fellowship's focus for their Global Week of Prayer (29th Oct–5th Nov) is *The Simple Gospel*, based on John 3:16.

BarnabasAid's week of prayer (5th–12th Nov) is based on Lamentations 3:22 – '*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed*'.

Please pray for

- Christians who suffer discrimination; persecution; displacement; and even death because of their faith
- Better control of social media to protect people, especially children, from abuse or injury caused by other people who are indoctrinated by everything they read and hear
- Effective campaigning for justice and people's rights; protection and respect for God's Creation
- Christ's love, and our actions, to bring hope and peace to troubled communities.



WEEK TWO: Jigsaw Kids' Ministries – Tim & Kate Lee

In addition to the tragic news of the fire that swept through one of the slum areas where Jigsaw works, there are encouraging reports from Jigsaw's other ministries.

Please pray for

- God to open new channels of funding and support, so that the Health & Wellbeing workers can meet the needs of more people living in the slum areas of Manila.
- God's strength and guidance for Tim Lee and the Jigsaw staff as they continue to develop existing and new ministries, both person to person and online.

Please pray for...

- Building up of hope and faith in Jesus, through Children's and Youth clubs, Street children's ministry, Ladies empowerment through the sewing groups, Bible study and prayer; Jigsaw's education sponsorship program, Literacy and Numeracy school.



Week Three: Bible Society

When we read the Bible we find out more about God, more about ourselves and more about the world. The Bible Society's aims are to translate the Bible into as many local dialects and languages as possible, and to distribute Bibles to people throughout the world.

Please pray for

- People who speak Ganyi, a Southern Chinese language; that they will praise God for a Bible that took 16 years to translate into their own language.
- More people, capable of translating the Bible into their local dialect, to work with the Bible Society.
- People who use a mobile phone, or other device, to scan the internet to stop, listen and reflect, when they find God's Word on their screen.
- People like us, not to take the Bible for granted



Week Four: FEBA UK

Feba UK is a Christian mission agency focussed on the creative use of radio and other audio media, to inspire people to follow Jesus Christ. FEBA UK works with partners across Africa, Asia and the Middle East with a particular focus on 'closed' countries where it is difficult to be a Christian.

Please pray for

- Creative use of radio and other audio media to inspire more people to follow Jesus Christ,
- The production team and those presenting daily audio and text messages on social media channels.

- Hearts and minds be transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, particularly in young people living in poverty-stricken urban areas
- Expansion of FEBA's gospel ministry across Northeast Africa using appropriate audio-visual material for transmission on radio and social media.



Week Five Advent Windows

This is the 14th year of Advent Windows in Stone, organised by a small team of people from Christ Church and St. John's Church, Oulton. The theme this year is '*The Greatest Story*' with artistic displays in 24 shop and church windows. Each day in December there will be a reading based on Bible accounts of events leading up to, and including, Jesus' birth, together with a Christmas carol, as we 'open' the next window.

Please pray for:

- Impact – dramatic displays relaying the story of God's love and promises, fulfilled in the birth of Jesus
- Community spirit – businesses who allow us to use their window space to promote the Christmas story
- Creativity – schools, nurseries and organisations doing artwork and building the displays.
- Comfort and Joy – good weather, and good crowds at each window opening
- Commitment – people will come to know to Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, through '*The Greatest Story*' displays

The information provided and points for prayer are intended for use week by week during the month. These can be used by an individual, or a group of people meeting for prayer and fellowship.

12 **Reaching the unreached through the local church**

‘Now He who supplies seed to the Sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.’ **2 Corinthians 9:10**

In many communities around the world, local churches are supporting some of the poorest and most vulnerable people, in areas where most aid organisations struggle to gain access.

In countries blighted by poverty and suffering from drought, local church workers, supported by UK-based Mission Agencies, are transforming whole communities: training people in new methods of sustainable farming; setting up small loan schemes; teaching people how to support and encourage one another using advocacy and discipleship courses; and, at the same time, strengthening the local church. [Acts 2: 44-47]

For example, Tearfund’s Church and Communities Transformation (CCT) training scheme enabled one local church leader to help a widow, living in poverty-stricken Zimbabwe, who was single-handedly supporting her son and his family. She had struggled for years to look after her own children, doing menial jobs for other people whenever she could. Her own crops had failed and her animals had all died due to severe drought. Then this local church leader, trained and supported by Tearfund, invited her to join a self-help group. There she learned new sustainable farming methods, heard about the love of Christ, and was loaned money to buy seed, so she could start farming again. She soon had enough food for her family and some left over to sell at market. Her whole life changed: she joined the local church and now encourages others in her locality to do the same things. So began a process of transformation for the widow, the community, and the local church.

Praise God, we do not live in a war-torn area, or a drought-ridden, poverty-stricken country.

One way to show our gratitude to God, is to support Christian mission agencies who commit to supporting and witnessing to people in far-flung and 'closed' countries. The money we give will help local church leaders transform their community, and church, into a thriving and prosperous place to live, and worship.

Elizabeth

The Big Quiz

On 7th October a very enjoyable evening was had at Christchurch centre doing The Big Quiz in aid of Tearfund. Seven teams took part – Oulton Wanderers, Al's Angels, Magnificent 7, friends old & new, Dumbo's, Young 'n age & Colonel Sanders- who were the eventual winners.

Everyone scored highest in the food & drink round where 6 teams out of 7 got full marks- I wonder what that tells us!

Tearfund's quiz questions were supplemented by a couple of other rounds including one of John's about Stone, which was really about the canal, and I think we all learnt a bit more local history in the process.

We also saw a couple of short films about Tearfund's work which were very informative, reminding us that 'Poverty is not God's plan- You are'

Back on the food theme there was also a competition for the prettiest pie. Everyone voted by paper slip for their 1st, 2nd & 3rd choice. The winner was Pam Roberts, 2nd Wendy Taylor & 3rd Sue Kingman. All the entries looked great and were polished off as refreshments so all must have been as tasty as they looked.

Thanks to Helen & John Bowes for organising the evening and thanks to the coffee & teamakers, washers up & table/chair movers etc.

The Big Quiz Night & the Harvest Festival Service together raised £605.60 for Tearfund.

Wendy

The Leprosy Mission

On Wednesday, 27th of September we welcomed Gary Wilcox, the Community Partnerships Manager for Central England & N Wales. It was an evening event, with refreshments first, so we had an opportunity to chat to Guy before his presentation in church, This was also a service for The Leprosy Mission which began with the hymn 'For 'The Beauty of the Earth' reminding us of the perfect world God created for us in Genesis 1.

The Leprosy Mission was founded in 1874 by Wellesley & Alice Bailey. It is a global Christian organisation leading the fight against leprosy. It works with people of all faiths & none to defeat leprosy & transform the lives of people affected.

Where does it exist today? Everywhere where there's extreme poverty but most frequently in warm wet areas in the tropics & subtropics. There are no cases in the UK (It was endemic in the 14th & 15th centuries.) The Leprosy Mission works in 10 countries, 5 in Africa & Africa 5 in Asia. According to WHO a new case is diagnosed every 2 minutes & the same number undiagnosed. An app has been developed to diagnose cases in remote areas of Nepal.

What is the cause? It's a slow growing bacteria, which affects the skin, eyes & the lining of the nose. Although it takes 5 years to develop, it cannot be passed on by touch.

Is there a cure? Yes, it has been available since 1982. It involves multi drug treatment for 6 months – 2 years. More than 200,000 people are diagnosed annually. It should be eradicated. It is still associated with stigma & discrimination as it was in Biblical times. The healing of the leper is included in each of the synoptic gospels: Matt.8 1-4, Mark 2 40-42 & Luke 5 12-13.

Complications

If treated, it is unlikely to cause complications. If untreated, it will cause nerve damage, losing the ability feel pain in the hands & feet which can lead to injury & infections

The Leprosy Mission... (cont)

For Leprosy Mission Mission prayer pointers see Time to Pray, Week 4, in the October magazine, also see The Leprosy Mission Magazine / Prayer Diary (in the magazines box underneath the Mission Matters Notice Board. We have just sent our annual donation (£300 this year). One current project is uprooting leprosy from the beautiful tea gardens of Bangladesh, where medics discovered the highest rates seen in the countries where the charity works.

You may enjoy reading *The Island* by Veronica Hislop. The story focuses on Singalonga, a tiny island off the S coast of Crete. It was a leper colony from the beginning of the 20th Century until 1957. She wrote a sequel *One August Night* in 2020.

From running away from God to running with God

After many years of serving God as a local preacher across North Staffordshire, it still shames me to tell you that in 2004 I walked away from my faith.

The next 16 years saw me putting all my energies into my career, making money, holidays and self-centered living.

It was during this time that I started to run marathons.

Throughout my time away from God, I avoided church and especially Christians. I knew though, that God was still there in the background. I remember one occasion whilst running the Manchester Marathon, passing a Nazarene Church. The whole congregation was out cheering the runners. As we passed, I saw a young girl holding up a large painted sign that read: "What are you running away from?" I knew that God was speaking to me!

In 2014 I was asked to read a passage of Scripture at my Son's wedding. At the rehearsal I stood at the lectern and read the passage (1 Cor 13). The Vicar came over to me after and with urgency said, "We need to talk! You know something don't you?" I bravely went to see the Vicar who asked if he could pray for me. As he prayed he said that he saw me "running" but that

there was what looked like a thick elastic band attached to me pulling me back! Yet again, I knew that God was speaking to me!

I sensed I was being pursued!

Psalms 138 tells us that God's "goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life."

In 2018 I ran the Bremerhaven Marathon in Germany, only to be met by a couple holding up a sign in English asking the question "Why are you running?"

Then came the dark days of 2020 that saw me "locked down" with an open Bible and a realisation that I could not ever outrun God and his claim upon my life. I asked the Lord Jesus to forgive me for my futile attempts to find happiness and fulfilment outside of him.

He also enabled me to see that as part of my restoration I had to do right by those closest to me. I later asked the woman I'd fallen in love with to marry me, and for us to do life together with God. Thankfully she said yes!

I now run with God not away from him!

His "goodness and mercy" are still following me wherever I go and I know that by his grace alone "I will dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life."

October (God willing) will see me complete my 20th full marathon since 2010!

Isaiah 40:31 tells us that "...those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint."

Gary Williams

A confidence boost

As I consider restarting Volunteering at hospital (probably on October 17th after a 6 month break) I was reminded when chatting with a member of Christ Church recently, of an incident which occurred quite a long time ago...

When I was visiting a patient, unbeknown to me, in the next bed behind drawn curtains was this person from church able to hear all the conversation that took place.

Much later on I was told that while 'listening in' the friend thought that it was good to hear the way the patient was enabled to talk about their circumstances and be encouraged by the visit.

This happened when I was much less experienced as a Chaplaincy Volunteer and the 'fly on the wall' feedback helped my confidence considerably when engaging with patients who are almost always strangers to me, and recalling it will certainly boost my confidence as I start up again. Whatever we are engaged in for the LORD we all benefit from positive feedback and a confidence boost*.

Another reminder for you...

We will be carol singing around the wards again at Royal Stoke on the evening of Monday 11th December. Put it in your diary now if you'd like to join us.

* *'Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God'.*

2 Corinthians 3:4

Dave Rowlands

St. Catherine's Day

November 25th is St Catherine's Day

St. Catherine of Alexandria one of the most intelligent and beautiful women of her day was put to death on a wheel and was martyred in 310 AD. Catherine wheel fireworks and the Catherine or Rose Window was named after her. She became patron saint of spinners and lacemakers and their emblem is wheel. In Tudor times lacemakers celebrated her day with Cattern cakes and this has since been revived.

St Catherine was taken up as the protector of young unmarried girls and it was believed that maidens in need of a husband could crown her statue with a wreath of greenery on this day for their prayers to be answered.

Extract from, Cattern Cakes and Lace by Julia Jones and Barbara Deer

Preparing for Christmas

St John's church, Oulton invite you to an afternoon of poems, carols, tea and cake. On Saturday 2nd December from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. in Christ Church Centre. Tickets are £5, available from the office or pay on the door. Raising funds for St. John's church.

Please come to a **HOMEMADE**
Jam and Chutney sale
 WITH TEA, COFFEE AND CAKES

at Christ Church Centre,
 Christ Church Way, Stone, ST15 8ZB

on Saturday 11th November 2023

2 – 4 pm

Payment can
 be by card as
 well as cash



All proceeds will go to the
 benefice Youth Fund

☎ Sue 01785 812669



The story starts on March 3rd 1960 when I was called up for National Service in the Royal Signal Regiment at Catterick Camp. (This was fortunate because it was a 30 min bus ride from home and my girlfriend Margaret in Darlington.)



When I began technical trade training after a month I became close friends with men from all over the UK who came from all backgrounds, however the majority of them had worked for, what was then known as the Post Office and at that time included Post Office Telephones, whose main training centre was in Yarnfield. The thing that all these lads had in common was a love of Stone and they talked a lot about long training spells in Stone (never Yarnfield)

In 1978 when my employer moved us from Dundee to Stoke we were allowed two house viewing visit, one of three days, and one of two days. We had at that time two children aged 14 and 12 years, so our priority was schooling for our 14 year old son Stephen and so having taken advice from our friends who knew the area we visited schools in the area. We met with headmasters from Alsager, Newcastle under Lyme and finally Alan Woods from Aleyes in Stone who impressed and became a good friend through his attendance at Christ Church.

On our final visit, on the last day we walked into yet another Estate Agents and saw an architects drawing which had just been pinned to the wall , visited a muddy piece of ground in Oulton Rd and Nine months or so later, at Whitsun 1979 we moved into our new home.

Barry Hutchinson

Deanery Synod Reps	Helen Bowes, Dave Rowlands
P.C.C. Members	Pete Kelly, Estella Woodhead, Jacqueline Abrahams, Shirley Hallam, Gary Williams Marylyn Hillman, Diane Aspey, Liz Mason Phil Tunstall, Andy Stone, Shelagh Sanders Lynne Bakker-Collier
Secretary	Shelagh Sanders
Treasurer	Pete Kelly
Envelopes, Gift Aid	Steve Taylor

FLOWER ROTA

5th November:
 12th November: Remembrance Sunday
 19th November:
 26th November: Valerie Ledward

SIDESPERSONS

Pete Kelly
 Jeanette Rowlands
 Jacqueline Abrahams
 Pam Roberts

ROADS FOR PRAYER

5th November	12th November
Navigation Loop	Bentley Close
Rangeley View	Rendel Grove
Barnton Edge	Brindley Close
Anderton Way/View	Rudyard Close

19th November	26th November
Cressy Close	Saltersford Rise
Joules Drive	Rolt Close
Cauldon Way	Millenium Way
Harecastle Bank	Cameron Wharf

