

Christ Church Magazine

September 2026



40p

PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on page 5/6.

THE PARISH TEAM

Vicar	Paul Kingman	812669
	The Vicarage, Bromfield Court	
Children & Families Worker	<i>position vacant</i>	
Electoral Roll Officer	Parish Office	811990
Parish Office	Christ Church Centre, Christ Church Way, Stone, Staffs ST15 8ZB	811990
	Email office@christchurchstone.org	

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: Mrs Tara Thorn 01785 334900

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**Committed to following
Jesus. Commissioned to
make Disciples**



Front Cover –
Stonefield Park by
Jeanette Rowlands

Please send your articles
for the October
magazine to us by the
15th September

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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

From the Editor

Hello there,

I am writing this from my holiday house in Scarborough, North Yorkshire where John and I are on holiday for a few days with 3 grandchildren (not sure that constitutes a holiday!!). I guess everyone's summer holiday has been warm and sunny this year – it has been an incredible summer. Hope you have managed to get some well earned rest.

You can see from the Church diary pages that in September everything gets going again, this term will be full of action I am sure.

Thanks for all your contributions – can any of you guess who the Chutney Junkie is? John found it fascinating to research Eccleshall Castle – he does love local history. Thanks to Monica for write ups on two very interesting events. Please do keep sending in your stories and articles – all make the magazine more interesting!

Enjoy reading,

Helen.

From the Vicarage.....

Times of refreshing

The summer heat has at times been intense! Our gardens are not just left parched but are gasping! Our nearby Rowan tree seems to have shifted into survival mode - having produced its berries early its leaves are in slow down (if not shut down) for the autumn. Having just got through what felt like the hottest day and night of August, it was a welcome sight to see that a small amount of rain had fallen overnight. Too little rain to really do much. But possibly indicative of what is to come. We can but hope! We long for the refreshment that rain brings and the relief of things being restored to life.

I'm struck by how the idea of 'refreshment' is used as a spiritual lesson in the Bible. In one of the occasions that the Apostle Peter preached in public he called on those who had gathered to consider their lives: *¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that **times of refreshing** may come from the Lord, ²⁰ and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you – even Jesus. ²¹ Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets (Acts 3v19-21).*

Peter was inviting his listeners to turn back to the Lord God instead of continuing along the pathway of turning away from him. They had thus far rejected Jesus as the Christ (Messiah), but he now calls them to have a turn-around in their thoughts. The shorthand word for this is to 'repent'. If they did this then three consequences would result: (a) they would be forgiven their wrongdoing; (b) they would experience 'times of refreshing' as people would be refreshed in their spirits when the Holy Spirit came to empower their lives; and lastly (c) 'that he may send the Christ' is a forward looking reference to the return of Jesus (just as he promised to do one day) to restore all things and establish his Kingdom.

Whether or not we have had many good things to enjoy during the last months, one common reality is that we will be restless until we come to know God personally. I invite you to come and find out more on Sundays and take opportunities [like the discipleship discovery course called 'Christianity Explored' coming soon] that we provide to discover the refreshment that only Jesus can give.

Paul Kingman
September 2026



Church Diary September 2026

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
Tue	1st	10.30 am	Communion; 1 Peter 2: 4-17 "Chosen to be a royal priesthood"
Wed	2nd		
Thu	3rd		
Fri	4th		
Sat	5th	8.30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast
Sun	6th	9.15 am	Communion; Ezra 7: 8-28 "Ezra the leader"
Mon	7th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	8th	9.15 am 10.30 am 12.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Communion; 1 Peter 2: 18-25 "Chosen to follow Christ's example" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	9th	2.30 pm 3.30 pm 7.30 pm	Oulton Abbey — Church at Home service Trekks Standing Committee of the PCC meeting in the centre
Thu	10th	1.15 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	11th		
Sat	12th		
Sun	13th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer; Ezra 8: 15-32 "Under the hand of God"
Mon	14th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	15th	9.15 am 10.30 am 12.30 pm 2.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Communion; 1 Peter 3: 1-12 "Chosen to bless others" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy Autumn House — Church at Home service
Wed	16th	11.00 am	St. Mary's Home — Church at Home service

Church Diary September 2026

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
		3.30 pm	Trekkers
Thu	17th	1.15 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	18th		
Sat	19th		
Sun	20th	9.15 am	Communion; Ezra 9: 1-15 "The fragile remnant"
Mon	21st	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	22nd	9.15 am 10.30 am 12.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Communion; 1 Peter 3: 13- 4:6 "Chosen to suffer for Christ" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	23rd	2.00 pm 3.30 pm 7.30 pm	Christ Church Academy Year 5 welcome service Trekkers PCC meeting in the centre
Thu	24th	1.15 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	25th		
Sat	26th		
Sun	27th	9.15 am 5.00 pm	HARVEST - All Age service; John 7: 37-39 "Living water" Christianity Explored study course (session 1) at the Vicarage
Mon	28th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	29th	9.15 am 10.30 am 12.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Communion; 1 Peter 4: 7-19 "Chosen to serve" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	30th	3.30 pm	Trekkers
Thu	31st	1.15 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly

Take Time to Pray

Mission Prayer Diary 6th to 12th September

Tearfund

Tearfund is a Christian charity working in more than 50 countries to tackle extreme poverty and injustice.

Praying about the climate crisis:

Throughout scripture, we see God's love for this world. 'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it...' declares Psalm 24:1.

But with record-breaking storms, severe droughts and rising temperatures, we're seeing creation being knocked off balance – and people being pushed back into poverty as a result. If we are to truly love our global neighbours, we have to tackle the climate crisis.

- Pray that the church globally continues to support communities experiencing the worst effects of the climate crisis – transforming communities and tackling inequities
- Pray for world leaders as they act on climate change together – that they work hard to find solutions and take urgent action.
- Pray for countries with the highest emissions to be ambitious in their commitments and actions, and to prioritise justice and fairness.
- Give thanks for Tearfund's staff and partners, and the communities they work with who are finding sustainable, innovative ways to work in harmony with the changing climate to sustain their families and create more reliable livelihoods.

Take Time to Pray

Mission Prayer Diary 13th to 19th September

Open Doors

Every day, millions of Christians risk their lives to follow Jesus. In more than 70 countries, Open Doors supports them by supplying Bibles, providing emergency relief and helping persecuted believers stand strong for the long-term. In the UK and Ireland, Open Doors helps the church to pray, give and speak out for those who share our faith but not our freedom.

Praying for Iran and the Middle East:

As violence and fear continue in Iran, there have been some recent glimpses of hope. After a prolonged time of total communication blackout, some Iranians are now managing to speak with their relatives and friends.

- Please pray that God would provide the needs, protect them from harm and allow the church to continue being a refuge for many.
- Pray for the children of Iran. God's Word tells us that 'Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.' (Psalm 127:3) Pray for protection from violence, from fear and from being used in any way that puts them in harm's path.
- Pray for protection over Christians in detention, especially in places like Evin Prison and other facilities where conditions are worsening. Ask God to protect them physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- Pray for healing for the nation, for an end to violence and for lasting peace.

Take Time to Pray

The Leprosy Mission

Mission Prayer Diary 20th to 26th September

The Leprosy Mission Great Britain is a global Christian organisation leading the fight against leprosy.

Following Jesus Christ, they seek to bring about transformation; breaking the chains of leprosy and empowering people to attain healing, dignity and life in all its fullness.

Just 0.5% of Bangladesh's population is Christian. Although the constitution guarantees religious freedom, many believers still face harassment and exclusion.

- Please pray that the Leprosy Mission team here will keep Jesus at the centre of all they do. Pray too that Christians across the country will stay strong in the faith, and know they are not alone.

Many people in Ethiopia are Christian. However, tensions between denominations have led to communities and churches being attacked.

- Please pray that the Prince of Peace will bring reconciliation and unity to divided communities. Give thanks that our small team in Ethiopia continue to faithfully answer Jesus' call to serve people affected by leprosy.

Since 2017, violence from Islamist extremists in northern Mozambique has killed thousands and displaced millions. Christians have faced particular persecution.

- Ask that God will shield the communities you support from all danger. Praise Jesus that despite the conflict, your kindness is curing leprosy and changing lives!

Take Time to Pray

Mission Prayer Diary 27th September to 3rd October

Church Mission Society India

Within the UK and overseas, CMS is called to mission at the margins and cultural fringes, where Jesus is not often followed and which are often overlooked or written off. They believe God is already at work in these spaces and their task is to join in.

Asia-CMS ask our prayers for:

- safety and logistics for ministry travel and events – for leaders and trainers traveling long distances to training centres, especially given difficult or flooded road conditions.

In July, many of CMS's people in mission and staff members came together for their people in mission (PiM) conference at All Nations Christian College in Hertfordshire.

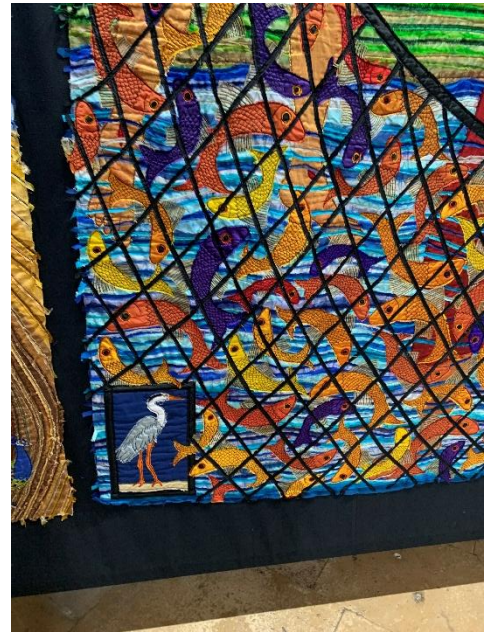
- Give thanks for a good time of fellowship and pray for people in mission particularly to come away built up and ready for the next season.

A residential camp was held during the summer for around 90 theological students at various levels. Three courses were taught: Christian Family Life, Asian Church History and a new course, Biblical Mission.

- Please pray that this was a time of great learning, fellowship and blessing for all who took part. Pray also for the 'Christian Education Curriculum for Teenagers' teacher training that took place; that more people may be equipped to help young people live out their Christian faith more effectively.

Threads Through the Cross

On a recent visit to Tewkesbury Abbey I came across an exhibition of needlework called Threads through the Cross. There were 18 large panels depicting key moments in the life of our Lord as recorded in the Bible, beautifully constructed of patchwork and embroidery by the artist Jacqui Parkinson.



This exhibition, rich in symbolism and colour, is designed to engage viewers in a profound narrative about faith and storytelling, in the words of the handout.

The details are very moving; the heavenly host appearing to the shepherds is depicted as tiny angels completely filling the sky as the shepherds' faces look up in awe; the Star is a comet blazing across a sky filled with smaller stars; the wonderful haul of fish is contained in a bulging net through which we can see all sorts and colours.

The exhibition seems to be moving around our cathedrals and abbeys so if you get the chance please don't miss the opportunity to see it. I was completely overwhelmed by the beauty and richness of the work and the powerfulness of its declaration of faith.

Monica Darlington



Threads through the Cross

A powerful large-scale textile exhibition by acclaimed artist Jacqui Parkinson. [Threads through the Cross - Tewkesbury Abbey](#)

Seeking the 100th Bishop of Lichfield

Saying goodbye

As you read this article, Bishop Michael's retirement on the feast day of St Michael and All Angels will either be imminent or recently past. It has been a long goodbye, sometimes sad but often filled with joy and happy memories. Many have said how much they will miss his wisdom, his kindness and his pastoral heart.

Taking a snapshot

It has been difficult for some to engage with the idea of seeking the 100th Bishop when the 99th has still been so present but in October the diocese will 'hand in its homework' to the national church – just like when there is a parish vacancy, we have to write our 'diocesan profile' (known as the Statement of Needs) for the Crown Nominations Committee (CNC), the small group who will work together to discern the potential candidates for #Lichfield100. The CNC group comprises fourteen people: two archbishops, six people appointed by General Synod and six people nominated by the diocese.

This group needs a clear brief from us: what is Lichfield like as a diocese, what are our joys and hopes, what are the challenges and who are we looking for to help us to become all that we can be. A group called the Vacancy in See Committee have been putting the Statement of Needs together on behalf of us all, asking those questions of various groups in June and July this year and collecting that wisdom together in one document.

Your voice matters – speak directly into the process

But the CNC also want to hear from the people of Lichfield directly. Between 5 and 15 October, the Archbishops' Secretary and the Prime Minister's Secretary for Appointments will be meeting with a number of invited groups looking for answers to similar questions.

And everyone will have a chance to speak directly into the process of discernment. There will be an **online meeting on the evening of 14 October, 6pm-7.30pm to which everyone is invited**. There will be more

information on how to join on the diocesan website or you can follow this link:

Your voice really does matter. So far the most frequent two words we've heard in our consultations for our 'diocesan profile' have been 'huge' and 'diverse'. We can't show people from outside just how big and diverse we are unless they hear lots of different voices from lots of different communities – rural Shropshire accents, Black Country accents, Stoke accents, accents with a touch of Caribbean sunshine or south-east Asian music, all joyfully putting in their two penn'orth. So come and have your say! Who knows, it might be your voice which makes all the difference in discerning the right person to be our next Bishop.

Sam Rushton is Diocesan Secretary and CEO of Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance, and secretary to the Vacancy in See committee



The Three Choirs Festival

This summer I treated myself to a weekend at the Three Choirs Festival. This is a week of music held at one of three cathedrals, Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester and this year it was the 298th celebration of the event, held at Gloucester. I travelled to Tewkesbury under my own steam and then met up with the rest of the group in the designated hotel. There were nearly 50 of us, mostly older ladies with a background in choral music.

The Saturday concert contained a symphony by Elgar and then William Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*. I had sung twice in this in the Proms when a young woman and was quite overwhelmed by the overall effect of up

to eight different vocal lines harmonising and blending. When you are singing one of the lines you can't really appreciate the full beauty and power of the piece.

The Israelites weep by the waters of Babylon. They are outraged by the sacred vessels being used as drinking cups by Belshazzar's concubines. The bass soloist tells of the Hand that wrote. There is a great cry of SLAIN. And then comes the ecstatic rejoicing. By the end the whole audience was exhausted by emotion.

The Sunday concert was just advertised as Vespers. I had googled it to no avail and had decided it was going to be a high church evening service. But no, it was music by Rachmaninov to take you through a night of prayer interspersed by bells. Years ago I had stood in a Greek Orthodox church in Odesa while a small group of singers had produced this wonderful sound. Poor Odesa – I wonder if that church is still standing.

This time the music was performed by a small choir called Ex Cathedra with two soloists and a named bell person. They sang in Russian and we had a handout with both Russian and English texts.

Come, let us worship. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. Alleluia. And so on right through Lord, now lettest thou thy servant and the Lesser Doxology to the Great Doxology and the triumph of To thee, the victorious leader of triumphant hosts.

It was indeed a triumph!

Monica Darlington

Save the Date!

Friday 2nd October for our Big Quiz Night in Christ Church Centre in aid of Tearfund.



Prayers by the Spoonful?

I am always thrilled when Sue Kingman announces that a new batch of her home-made jams, jellies and chutneys are for sale. All the proceeds go towards financing Christ Church's "Children and Families Worker Fund".

As a result, I have become a bit of a chutney addict, always finding myself wanting to add the taste of the chutney to my meals. I wonder how many other members of our congregation use Sue's preserves regularly?

When dipping into the jar for a spoonful of my "fix", I often think about the work that this tasty addition supports. The other day I realised that taking the preserve from the jar could be a good prompt to encourage a short silent prayer for the youth ministry at Christ Church. This is particularly important now as Peter moves on and we are praying his replacement.

Sue produces hundreds of jars of delicious preserves every year. Now that's a lot of spoonfuls! It could lead to lots of prayers for the continuing youth ministry in our parish. You could say it's "Prayers by the Spoonful". *Chutney-Junkie*



**"There was an Old Person of Putney,
Whose food was roast spiders and
chutney,
Which he took with his tea,
within sight of the sea,
That romantic Old Person of Putney."**

*Edward Lear, English artist,
writer; known for his 'literary
nonsense' & limericks (1812-
1888)*

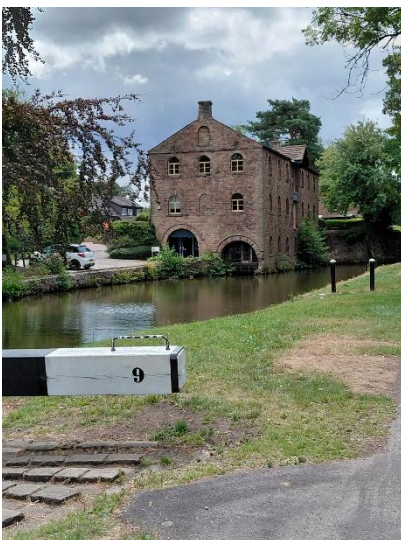
Tales from the Towpath

Hello Everyone,

This month I attended the St Michael's & St Wulfad's Family Fun Day at the church to wave the flag for Waterways Chaplaincy and to raise some funds for our charity. It was, of course a hot sunny day, and it was good to talk to a number of people about the work we do.



Towpath walks and meetings with probationary Chaplains in Penkridge and Great Haywood and a potential Chaplain have been good. This month I am going to do a talk at a URC Church in Longton and In September I am looking forward to delivering a talk about the work of Waterways Chaplaincy to the Longton Probus Group.



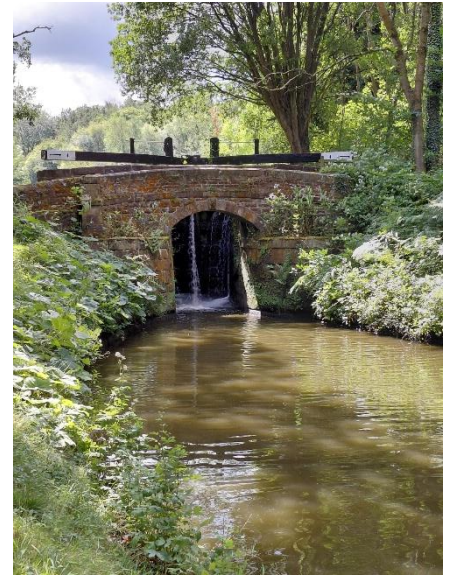
The drought is, of course, having an impact on the Waterways with boaters facing closures and restrictions in order to save water. Good organisation and planning is essential! John and I enjoyed exploring the Marple Lock flight a couple of weeks ago where, to my surprise, I met up with some boaters I knew from Stone who were now stuck there until the situation changes. Marple is well worth a visit if you have never been – where the Macclesfield

Canal and the Peak Forest Canal meet with a flight of 16 locks and a spectacular aqueduct over the River Goyt Valley.

Otherwise helping various boaters in Stone has been the order of the day,

Please do pray for all boaters and users of the canal network and towpaths, especially at this difficult time. God bless.

Helen 13/8/26



Safeguarding

The United Benefice is committed to Safeguarding and has adopted the National and Diocesan Safeguarding Policies for the welfare of everyone in our congregations. Anyone requiring any further information or raising concerns should contact the Safeguarding Coordinators: **Christ Church, Stone**: Andrew Stone on Safeguarding2@christchurchstone.org

Oulton with Moddershall; Mary Gale on Office@christchurchstone.org

Or contact the church office [01785 811990] to leave your details, and Andrew or Mary will ring you back.

The Vicar, Rev Paul Kingman can also be contacted on 01785 812669. If the matter is more urgent, or you feel uncomfortable contacting someone in our Benefice, you may contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team at Lichfield <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/safeguarding/>

Eccleshall Castle

Hidden by trees and rather difficult to access legally, Eccleshall Castle has an interesting history. Originally built in the 13th century, it has always been closely connected to the Lichfield diocese. In 1200, Bishop Geoffrey de Musehamp was granted a 'license to crenellate' a castle by King John. Situated as it was between the centres of the Lichfield Diocese in Chester, Lichfield and Coventry, it was an ideal location as a diocesan base. The original castle was replaced by a larger castle in 1305 by Bishop Walter Langton, Chancellor of England.

At the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses, Margaret of Anjou, Queen Consort of Henry VI, took refuge within the castle after the Battle of Blore Heath in 1459. Charles I also visited the castle on two occasions. In June 1643, the *castle* was besieged by Sir William Brereton and his parliamentary forces encamped around the church. Their guns caused much damage to the walls, but the castle held out until August when the walls were breached. Bishop Robert Wright was found within the castle having died of a heart attack – most of the defendants had retired to the various Eccleshall taverns to drown their sorrows. Although severely damaged, the castle remained as a prison for Royalist gentry.

Lichfield Diocese then bought the castle back again and built a house within the ruins to be occupied by various Bishops. Sir Walter Scott visited the castle on various occasions. Eventually the gatehouse was demolished and the moat drained. The Castle remains an impressive listed structure.

The Castle is now in private hands and closed to the public, except when the gardens are opened for charitable purposes. It has been the home of the Carter – Morley family for over 100 years. Apparently, the family have distant links with ex - American president Jimmy Carter.

John Bowes

Groups and Rotas

Deanery Synod reps	Gary Williams, Sue Kingman
PCC Members	Lynne Collier, Maxine Garrington-Miller. Marylyn Hillman, George Holden, Pete Kelly, Liz Mason, Sheelagh Saunders Andy Stone, Shirley Hallam
Secretary	Sheelagh Saunders
Treasurer	Pete Kelly
Envelopes.Gift Aid	Lynda Marengi

FLOWER ROTA		WELCOMER	
Sept 6th		Sept 6 th	Pete Kelly
Sept 13 th	Doris Pickles	Sept 13 th	Eloise Kingman
Sept 20 th		Sept 20 th	Marilyn Overall
Sept 27 th	Angela Brandon	Sept 27 th	Lorraine Price
CHURCH REGISTERS	BAPTISMS		
	WEDDINGS		
	FUNERALS		

ROADS FOR PRAYER	
Sept. 7th	Sept. 21st
Rendel Grove	The Avenue
Rolt Close	The Crescent
Rudyard Close	Trent Court
Saltersfoot Rise	Trent Road
Sept.14th	Sept. 28th
Sawyer Way	Trinity Drive
Station Road	Tunley Street
Stonefield Court	Victor Street
Stonefield Square	Victoria Street

