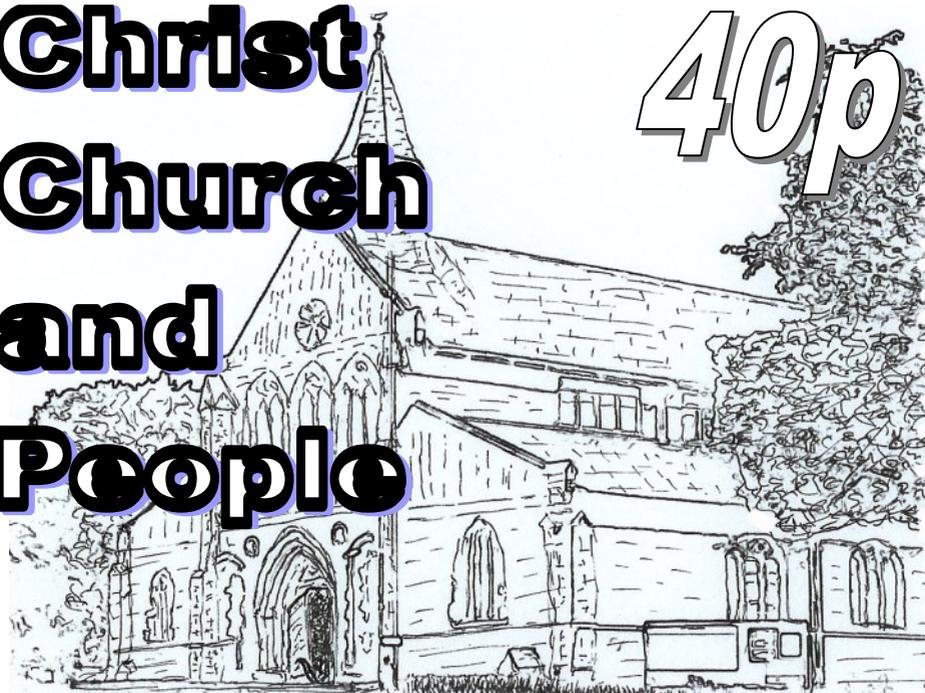


Christ Church and People

40p



March 2023

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



and People

Please send your articles for the April magazine to us by 15th March

Cover Picture
Mount Avenue

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

March 2023

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
Wed	1st	9:00 am 3:30 pm 7:30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks Youth & Children's meeting
Thu	2nd	1:10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	3rd		
Sat	4th	8:30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast
Sun	5th	9:15 am 5:00 pm	Communion; John 18:15-27 "By the charcoal fire" Lent course
Mon	6th	9:30 am 7:30 pm	Toddler group Standing Committee
Tue	7th	10:30 am 12:30 pm 7:30 pm	Communion Isaiah 53:4-6 & Luke 13:31-35 "Whole" Pursuit Club Lent course
Wed	8th	9:00 am 3:30 pm 7:30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks Youth & Children's meeting
Thu	9th	1:10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	10th		
Sat	11th		
Sun	12th	9:15 am 5:00 pm	Morning Prayer; John 18:28-40 "My kingdom is not of this world" Lent course
Mon	13th	9:30 am	Toddler group
Tue	14th	10:30 am 12:30 pm 2:00 pm 7:30 pm	Communion; Isaiah 53:7-9 & Luke 13:1-9 "Silence" Pursuit Club Autumn House service Lent course
Wed	15th	9:00 am 3:30 pm 7:30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks Youth & Children's meeting

March 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; John 19:1-6a "I find no basis for a charge against him" Lent course
Mon	20th	9:30 am 7:30 pm	Toddler group PCC meeting
Tue	21st	10:30 am 12:30 pm 7:30 pm	Communion; 2 Cor 1:3-7 & Luke 2:33-35 Pursuit Club Lent course
Wed	22nd	9:00 am 3:30 pm 7:30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks Youth & Children's meeting
Thu	23rd	1:10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	24th		
Sat	25th		
Sun	26th	9.15 am 5.00 pm	All age service; John 19:16b-27 "The King and his royal robe" Lent Course
Mon	27th	9:30 am	Toddler group
Tue	28th	10:30 am 7:30 pm	Communion; Isaiah 53:10-12 & John 11:1-44 "New life" Lent course
Wed	29th		
Thu	30th	9:30 am	Christ Church First School Easter service
Fri	31st	10:45 am	Christ Church Academy Easter service

Mission accomplished!

Jesus' life has spawned many books! It is in John's Gospel that the writer concludes: *'Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written'* (John 21v25).

We live at a time when people are interested in the bottom line, a summary or bullet point statement, rather than wading through lots of information and having to sift out what is important. But we must be wary of such an approach as we might get the summary but fail to understand the substance! So, if you wanted briefly to sum up what Jesus came to do, how would you complete this sentence: He came to.....? Was it to show love? To turn the world upside down? To lead a human rights revolution? To bring peace? To call out injustice? To be a great liberator of the oppressed?

For this time of Lent (the preparation for Easter), many of us are reading a daily devotional called 'The Radical Reconciler'. Each day it reflects on major themes of the Bible which all ultimately converge on the cross of Christ. For at the cross Jesus completed the plan of redemption for the whole of creation. His key work was as a reconciler: to reconcile us to God, so that we can be restored to fellowship with Him; but also, to reconcile us to one another, bringing together estranged individuals, irrespective of the group or nation they belong to.



This will be a spiritually nourishing read, to inform our minds and move our hearts.

(continued)

Mission accomplished (cont)

In describing the huge impact of Jesus' reconciling work the apostle Paul wrote: *'But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ...His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility'* (Ephesians 2v13, 15-16).

Do join us in reading this book. Do join our Easter celebrations which will be all richer for having taken time to meditate on what Jesus has done for us.
Paul Kingman

PCC news

The PCC held a meeting on 18th January 2023. During the meeting the following matters were discussed:

- There was a tremendous turnout for the Advent windows this Christmas, especially considering the cold weather. There has been good feedback with some new premises wishing to take part this year. Paul Kingman expressed thanks on behalf of all present to Helen Bowes and all involved.
- Rev Kingman expressed thanks, on behalf of the PCC, for all the centre cleaning work carried out by Enid, Sandra and Chris who have stood in while Lindy was off.
- More people are badly needed for church cleaning.
- The Annual Children's Holiday club is back to it's regular Easter spot this year. Running from Tuesday 11th April until Friday 14th April and Sunday Service 16th April.
- Discussions have begun into how we can celebrate the Coronation including a suggestion that we watch the event and have a bring and share lunch.
- It was agreed to return the Acoustic drum kit, in church, to it's owner and replace it with an electric kit. This will mean the drum sound is more adjustable and flexible to blend in the church services.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Monday 20th March at 7.30pm.

Letter from Bishop Michael

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I welcome the decision made by General Synod today which followed hours of discussion and debate this week and several years of the Living in Love and Faith process.

At the same time, I recognise that this will be a sad and painful decision for many. They are in my prayers and I assure them that I and my brother and sister bishops stand ready to hear their concerns.

Synod's decision will mean in due course that ministers can pray with and bless LGBT+ people in permanent, faithful and loving relationships in Church of England churches. There will be no requirement on ministers to do this and we are committed to respecting our ministers' consciences and finding the best ways to support them in their ministry.

The proposals make no change to the Church of England's doctrine of Holy Matrimony. I recognise that this does not go far enough for many in the LGBT+ community and beyond, and that for others it goes too far.

I pray for patience and unity as the proposed Prayers of Love and Faith are refined and the new Pastoral Guidance is drawn up, and as we embark on this new journey together.

+Michael

(Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave)

Magazine email

The new address for the magazine is
magazine@christchurchstone.org

The old Yahoo address will no longer be used

Mission Prayer Diary	
	<i>Church Mission Society</i>
1st	St Peter's Church in Jaffa, Israel, has been closed for over 70 years. Mission partners Jennifer and Kevin Cable are preparing to re-open the church building. Give thanks for 4 new members who now read Scripture in services, attend Bible studies and one is preparing for baptism
2nd	M and H, based in North Africa, focus on leading trekking groups, discipling local Christians, teaching healthcare and first aid and sharing God's love in everyday contexts. Pray for M as he integrates spiritual retreat and time in nature
3rd	Pray for continued wisdom and strength as I lead the teams in Uganda and for the churches to embrace the discipleship programmes, writes Judith Murungi, CMS-Africa coordinator for Uganda
4th	Mission partners Alf and Hilary Cooper, based in Chile, write that they are still running the Marriage Encounter course online, but have recently run the course as a retreat, which was well received. Pray for the course to continue to be fruitful
	<i>Stephen and Tabita Bell are planting churches in Croatia</i>
5th	Easter provides an opportunity and theme for outreach and concerts, pray that street events will go well and draw people into regular church activities
6th	Pray for the new church at Novi Marof and for the expansion of the church at Varazdin. It is important to have local churches for people to attend
7th	Croatian and Albanian churches have depended for many years upon financial support from western Europe but now have many local pastors who have completed training. Pray that congregations will be able to support their local ministers financially and in church activities
8th	Give thanks for Adriatik and Bledi who joined the reborn Albanian church in the 1990's after the fall of communism, and are now church leaders in Vienna and Patos

	<i>TearFund works with many poor communities across the world. They especially work through local churches and agencies</i>
9th	An armed group was making its way to the city of Goma. They were forcing many people to flee as they seized more territory. Praise God that they have been pushed back from the city and the government has been able to take back some control. Continue to pray with us for peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
10th	our local partners had to temporarily suspend their work in Peshawar, Pakistan, because of security concerns. This was due to a bombing in the area. Praise God that we will be able to safely resume our work from the 21 February.
11th	In the Central African Republic, 3.4 million people require assistance, such as food and water. Tearfund is distributing food and helping communities access clean water. We are also working with people to create and strengthen small businesses, such as selling homemade clothing, so they can become self-sufficient. Pray for the success of this work and that people will be able to lift themselves and their families out of poverty for good.
12th	In Aleppo, Syria Tearfund is working through the Syrian Orthodox church, which is responding to the earthquake tragedy and sharing the love of Christ to all who are in need.
	<i>Our CMS Link Missionaries Tim and Kate Lee helped to set up JigSaw Kids Ministries in Manila (Philippines). Please pray-</i>
13th	The new van is in action! Pray about all the collections of food, deliveries of weekly bags to street families, and all the other activities that are van-dependent
14th	“Jigsaw at home” has enabled many of Jigsaw’s ministries to continue through the pandemic by weekly distribution of weekly packs, doorstep visits and online support
15th	100 children have received education through sponsorship
16th	IT equipment (tablets etc) is being provided so that poor families can access Bible passages and children can learn while unable to attend schools

	<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	Although supplies of Bible portions are plentiful, the workers are few and J&R have a large territory to cover from the south where they live, to the north of Botswana close to Zimbabwe. Pray for safe travel
18th	J&R hope to be able to retire in 2023 but this is now looking difficult due to lack of funds to pay for somewhere to live. Pray that a house can be built cheaply and quickly on the plot of land they have bought in Uganda
19th	J&R are looking for other mission workers to continue the work that they are doing in schools and colleges.. Pray that this will be picked up by colleagues
20th	Pray for the work in schools and churches among young people and families, promoting marriage and living God’s way
	<i>Mission Aviation Fellowship fly medical personnel, supplies and missionaries to far-flung, often inaccessible settlements.</i>
21st	In Bangladesh MAF has flown many flights since 2003 between islands cut off by water from each other, saving many lives and carrying supplies. One city served was Barguna. Now, a 4 mile causeway has been built linking Barguna to central regions, MAF has decided to cease flights in this area. Give thanks for what MAF has done, and for the improvements the road has brought
22nd	Floods in Suriname isolated many villages so that the only way in was on foot. MAF cam to the rescue, flying food aid in and medical cases out
23rd	In Tanzania, a MAF flight was about to take off when they were asked to fly a seriously ill child to hospital. The only other way out was on foot, a journey the child would not have survived. In just 10 minutes the child was landed near the hospital
24th	MAF has been flying in Kenya since 1959, supporting clinics in remote areas, Christian schools and churches, and sometimes flying food aid to disaster areas

	<i>The Bible Society is working in the “Bible lands” of Israel, West Bank and Gaza Strip</i>
25th	Just under 100 Palestinian women have set up a weekly Bible study group called “Living Stones”. The group helps women to talk through the difficulties they face, as well as studying the Bible
26th	In Nazareth the “Magdalena Project” helps build up the faith of Arab-Israeli women, who are among the most disadvantaged in the area. There are high rates of domestic abuse and even honour killings
27th	Through the Magdalena Project Bible classes, women learn how to live the life of faith not only by attending church, but also inside their homes and in the community
28th	Nashat Filmon leads the Bible Society serving Palestinians, working in some of the toughest places to be a Christian: Gaza and the West Bank.
29th	Thanks to the Bible-a-month club, generations of servant leaders are being prepared to bring hope and encouragement in the West Bank through the Jericho Leadership Academy. The club also provides tens of thousands of Bibles and Scripture portions
30th	The Israeli Bible Society works with Messianic Jews and reaches into the secular Jewish context with God’s word
31st	Pray for leaders taking courses at the Jericho Leadership Academy, that like King David they would have integrity of heart and lead with skill

Fairtrade Update

Traidcraft plc went into administration in January , after struggling for several years. This was the company which supplied our fair-trade goods. It began trading in 1979 & was one of the pioneers of justice in trade. It supported the fairtrade charity, Traidcraft Exchange since it's set up in 1986.

The charity changed its name to Transform Trade in September 2022. This was to reinforce the aims for all trade to be just, fair & people centred.

- Transfer Trade's vision of people centred trade:
- Using sustainable resources
- Transparent supply chains (producers & consumers)
- Rewards shared by everybody
- Equal dignity, opportunity & power for women
- Businesses accountable & rights respected.
- Ownership shared widely.

The Charity will concentrate on the 3 areas of work in which they've been involved with since the start.

- Fashion
- Tea
- Farming

They are now planning to continue & expand on Traidcraft's excellent work with small producer groups of artisans & farmers - helping them to find a route to market. Transform Trade are also continuing their advocacy work. In 2023 their campaign focuses on fast fashion e.g. 93% of brands do not pay their workers enough to earn a living wage.

A Coffee Morning is being held at Oulton Village Hall on Monday, 27th February from 9.30 -11.30a.m. This is also the 1st day of Fairtrade Fortnight. The money raised will be sent to Transform Trade. Please support the event if you can.

The website is transform-trade.org if you would like to know more about the charity.

Sheila

I expect you all know the phrases... "Every cloud has a silver lining" and... "One man's meat is another man's poison" and some years ago 'Tear Fund' had the theme for Harvest that "One man's rubbish is another man's harvest".

Well these are about seeing things from a **changed perspective**.

Now during most of my life I've experienced a feeling of excitement when hearing or seeing a helicopter flying low and close. However, when I see that now, my feeling has **changed** to sadness because, when I do, it is one landing at or taking off from RSUH and signals a serious medical emergency. The other week there were 3 such arrivals during my time at the hospital (one even coming from North Wales) and naturally I thought of the individuals and so many others affected by the need for that flight.

Recently I saw a patient sitting in the chair at their bedside apparently quite happy and well. I only realised all was not quite as it looked when an observant and caring nurse came up and said "that oxygen line won't help you when it's in your ear" as she removed it and fitted it carefully back into the nose of the patient. Once again my **perspective** on the situation **changed**.

Also, I met a distressed patient who said to me "I am in great need of help" and it transpired that all the anxiety was caused by an inability to contact a daughter. I was able to phone the number and pass over my mobile when, after a brief conversation, the anxiety was greatly reduced. Such a small action **changed** that person's **perspective**, and made such a big difference to someone who was feeling lonely and isolated!

(continued)

If you'd like to contribute towards **changing** people's **perspectives** about Chaplaincy work in the hospital why not come along to Royal Stoke on Tuesday 4th April or Wednesday 10th May and join in singing to staff, patients and visitors at lunchtime (noon until 2pm) in the Atrium. You might find that your own **perspective** is **changed** and you want to become more involved and make a difference, as happened to me a few years ago.

Dave Rowlands

What is a 'CU Events Week'?

Throughout England, Scotland and Wales, the University and College Christian Unions (CU) organise two major Events Weeks, usually spread over five days – one at the beginning of the first term, during Freshers' Week, and the other at the beginning of the Spring term.

The latter is the main opportunity for CU mission and outreach, with more than 100 universities taking part. This high-profile evangelistic Events Week, is a time when many students give their lives to Jesus, or start investigating Him, while others grow in faith and are encouraged to develop a heart for mission and evangelism.

These few comments reflect the thoughts of students attending Events Week meetings:

- "made me aware of how wonderful it is to know the Living God"
- "free food, a stimulating talk and plenty of time to ask questions"
- "keen to hear answers to questions like: Who is Jesus? Where can I find Hope?"

(continued)

What is a 'CU Events Week'?

Matthew Leung, Staff Worker for NW Midlands Universities and Colleges, writes: "I've had so many wonderful memories and great stories from Events Weeks in the past, both as a student and now [as] a Staff Worker... As part of my role, I get to work alongside the students in the CU to do this. It's certainly one of the best parts of my job!"

This year Matthew has been involved in three Events Weeks during February. Firstly, as a guest speaker at Portsmouth CU's Events Week evening meetings, on the theme of 'The Search'. Then, at Keele CU and Staffordshire CU at the end of the month. Keele's theme for this year was 'Found', focussing on Peace, Satisfaction, Love, Acceptance and Renewal. With the help of CU Staff & Relay workers from Birmingham University, talks and time for questions, together with free meals, took place at lunchtimes and in the evenings over five days. Harper Adams University will hold their first ever Mini (3-day) event on 16th, 20th & 23rd March, this year.

Please continue to hold Matthew, the CU committees, and students in your prayers.

For more information, see the Mission Matters noticeboard in the Church centre.

Elizabeth

Roger learns lessons thinking about his sat-nav

These days many people drive cars fitted with a sat-nav. When activated, a monotonous and mechanical voice directs you with comments like "In two hundred yards turn right into the High Street".

The prophet Isaiah writes in Chapter 30 verse 21 *Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."* Of course Isaiah knew nothing about sat-navs. The experience he is describing and encouraging others to experience is in our hearts and minds. It is intensely loving and personal.

In chapter 48 Isaiah says that God who is "*your redeemer and Holy One*" has sent him "with His Spirit" who speaks to him these words about the direction he should take. "*I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, and who directs you in the way you should go*". (Isaiah 48 16-17)

Jesus personalized this "direction finding" to an infinite level. When Thomas asks Jesus to show us the way He replied "*I am the way*" (John 14:6). On many occasions in the Gospels Jesus tells people to, "*follow me*". That two word instruction applies to us all.

Of course we have to play our own part in travelling our path through life in the way God wants.

Firstly we need to ask the Holy Spirit to guide us. Jesus explained to his disciples "*when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth*". (John 16:13)

Secondly we must learn how to listen for the instructions. They will not bombard us like the sat-nav. in fact as Elijah discovered they are often the merest hint or whisper. (I Kings 19:12)

Finally we need to obey. If I ignore the sat-nav and go straight on rather than turning right after two hundred yards (as the loud voice in the car told me), I will miss the High Street altogether!

Like most drivers my sat-nav is turned off for local runs. However I can see the value of these amazing gadgets, if I am on a long or unknown journey.

The trouble is that all too often we treat the guidance of Almighty God rather in the way we treat our sat-nav. Where we have big decisions to make like moving home, or changing our job we pray and earnestly try to seek God's will.

Unfortunately however, we take the day to day living of our lives for granted and "switch off" attending to the Lord's instructions. Because the Lord whispers to us we miss or ignore His directions which are so important if we are to go the way he intends for us. Simple words like "phone Jim" or "move the chairs back" come to mind but we do not act on them. It is the experience of many Christians that when we start to listen and obey these simple commands other things seem to "work out".

At some time in the future taking all those very simple and often obvious directions will lead us to the destination the Lord has planned for us as we "follow him". *Roger*

The Lantern

*"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine."*

Do you remember this chorus popular in the 1960's? During the first lockdown, we had many days which seemed very similar, some people went to work and some had Zoom or Teams meetings but our families and friends seemed so far away as day followed a very similar day. You can imagine our delight when one of our daughters sent us an unexpected present. It was a solar lantern of dark metal and cylindrical in shape. Around the curve was a cut-out shape of an owl sitting in some branches. That spring was a sunny spring and soon the lantern was up and running. During the day it sat on the windowsill in the conservatory absorbing the sunlight and at night I put it on the conservatory table where it cast a beautiful pattern across the tabletop. Truly a lovely reminder of love.

Matthew 5:16 *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Enid

Prepared to meet the King?

In October 2022 my daughter Jane, who works at '*Glasgow Life*', was asked to welcome King Charles 3rd to the re-opening of '*The Burrell Collection*', on Glasgow South Side, after a £65m refurbishment. She had spent 7 years working on the project and now the great day was in sight!

The King, on his first official visit to Scotland as monarch, was the icing on the cake and Jane looked after him for over three quarters of an hour showing him some of the highlights of the collection.

The final preparations for the King's visit, to ensure everything went smoothly, were detailed, long and arduous. Security was enormous and there was even a last minute panic when Jane left her position to attend to something almost immediately before his arrival! Finally, everything ran perfectly and it was a brilliant day.

How different it will be for each of us on the day we meet the King of the Universe, whether it be on His return or at our death. We can't prepare in advance the same way as Jane did by getting everything spot on. However much we try, we cannot do all the work needed by ourselves; we all fall way short.

The hard and essential preparation has already been DONE FOR US BY JESUS who left the glory of His heaven to be born as a man and willingly to accept our just deserts for falling short of God's standard, thus enabling us to be set right with God. Our preparation, our part, all we can do, is to acknowledge our shortcomings before God and turn to Him through Jesus putting our faith, our trust and our hope in Him for today and for eternity. So please, may each of us '*BE PREPARED to MEET the KING*'.

Dave Rowlands

Groups and Rotas

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 March	Lent
12th March	Lent
19th March	Lent
26th March	Lent

SIDESPERSIONS

Pam Roberts
Marilyn Overall
Jeanette Rowlands
Jacqueline Abrahams

ROADS FOR PRAYER

5th March
End Granville Terr
Millers Gate
Hartley Drive
Regent Street

19th March
Sawyer Way
Goodall Close
Candler Drive
Chandler's Way

12th March
Harding Grove
Oulton Grove
Elmhurst Way
Darwin Close

26th March
Albert Street
Arthur Street
Alexandra Street
Berkeley Street

