Christ Church Magazine

August 2024

40p

PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on page 4.

THE PARISH TEAM

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CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

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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 September magazine to us by 15th August

Cover Picture:
Floral display at wedding on 13th July

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

August 2024

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
Thu	1st		
Fri	2nd		
Sat	3rd	8.30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast
Sun	4th	9.15 am	Communion; Proverbs 2 & 8 "Silver—the value of wisdom"
Mon	5th		
Tue	6th	10.30 am	Communion; Luke 9: 1-17 "Travel light"
Wed	7th		
Thu	8th		
Fri	9th		
Sat	10th		
Sun	11th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer; II Kings 25: "Bronze shackles"
Mon	12th		
Tue	13th	10.30 am 2.00 pm	Communion; Luke 9: 18-36 "God's Son" Church at Home service at Autumn House
Wed	14th	2.00 pm	Church at Home service at Oulton Abbey
Thu	15th	11.00 am	Church at Home service at St. Mary's home
Fri	16th		

August 2024

	Date	Time	Events
Sat	17th		
Sun	18th	9.15 am	Communion; Psalm 2: “Iron of strength”
Mon	19th		
Tue	20th	10.30 am	Communion; Luke 9: 37-50 “For or against Jesus?”
Wed	21st		
Thu	22nd		
Fri	23rd		
Sat	24th		
Sun	25th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer; Ezekiel 22: 18-22 “Tin as impurity”
Mon	26th		
Tue	27th	10.30 am	Communion; Luke 10: 1-23 “Ambassadors”
Wed	28th		
Thu	29th		
Fri	30th		
Sat	31st		

Failure is not final

Just when you thought you couldn't watch any more sport on the telly here comes another huge event! The 2024 Olympic Games in Paris (officially the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad) runs from 26th July to 11th August. With over 200 countries competing in 400 events (when you add in the winter events) there will be a lot of medals presented before the concluding ceremony takes place and the equipment packed away.

For many athletes there will be great memories of personal bests, or even records broken. Their celebrations will be exuberant and the accolades will be strewn across social media like falling ticker tape celebrating their success. All the hard work and endless self-discipline to achieve outstanding levels of quality will be worthwhile. There can be nothing better than being presented with a medal and the applause of the stadium. Or so it may seem. It is hard to hide disappointment if you didn't achieve all that you'd hoped. What if they barely turn in a good performance in an early heat, but don't make it through to the next? What if they don't even complete their event, or must withdraw before even starting? Such failure hangs heavily around their necks, rather than the medal they'd aimed to win. As they search their souls over whether this is the time to throw in the towel, failure seems so final.

Failure is not final when it comes to Jesus! We know this from what happened when Jesus hung on the cross between two criminals being executed. Jesus had a brief, but highly important, conversation: *'One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.'"*(Luke 23v39-43).

Failure is not final... (cont)

It is deeply humbling to face up to our failures, even if we feel that all is lost since we've wrecked things. Yet, Jesus graciously provides forgiveness and a future for all who put their trust in his work on our behalf. None are beyond redemption. All are called to trust Jesus, receive a fresh start and embark on a new life that involves many changes to be more like him. Jesus' followers will feature at the awards ceremony to receive the crown of life!

Paul Kingman

Creating something new...

I wasn't quite sure what to expect in my new role as no one had 'gone before'. I have spent 33 years caring for, educating and sharing the love of Jesus with children, their families and staff. This has been in a variety of places including church, and now I find myself working for the Church of England in this diocese. I began this new role by having to 'create something new', which was a little daunting at first.

One of the things that I have most enjoyed while 'starting something new' is the ability to be creative and let God guide my thinking. Firstly, I didn't realise just how large and diverse the Diocese of Lichfield is, but this adds to the interest and excitement of my role. Being alone in my car most often with only Premier Praise radio and God for company, I realised, as I drove around the diocese, that being in relationship with others is crucial. This was just what Jesus spent a lot of his time doing too. I have spent the last eight months meeting with many colleagues of various ministries. It has been marvellous to meet new people. Hearing about both the challenges and successes of ministry has been a very humbling experience. There is so much to celebrate, despite some of the difficulties that people have shared with me. So many parishes and people both lay and ordained are doing such great things; it is a privilege to serve you all.

DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD

For now, God has blessed me with this ministry of helping others to grow in their ministries.

Creating something new... (cont)

What do you feel God is calling you to? Everyone is called by God at different times and for different purposes to minister to others, whether that is in church or out in the world. Ministry is sharing the good news, serving and helping others to be disciples (learners). Ministry is about giving of ourselves and our time, talents, and resources to bless and help others. This will look different for people. Everyone's ministry is important, and I am often reminded of this bible verse...**'There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body' (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)**. Such a powerful piece of scripture that reminds us that without the other we cannot be all that God intends for us to be. This is where my role will continue to take me... helping you to deepen your own faith and explore what God has for you regardless of who you are by providing training that matters to you.

I will be continuing to visit people, listening to what they need so that I can support you in living out the 1 Corinthians scripture. I am putting together training options in a digital brochure which will be launched at the end of August. If you would like to speak to me, I am always happy to come and meet you wherever you are. I will be praying for the life of our diocese over the coming months and for all the wonderful works that are happening because of you. If I haven't met you yet, I hope that I do in the future. Thank you for all you are doing in our diocese.

God bless,

Jules

Jules Smith is the diocese's Strategic Ministerial Development Officer, which means she works closely with both the Mission and Vocation & Training teams. You can contact her by email (jules.smith@lichfield.anglican.org) or phone: 07498 192669. Or explore some of our advice and information about vocation and ministry at www.lichfield.anglican.org/exploring-vocation/

Take Time to Pray

Romans 8 v 26

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

1. UCCF Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship

The Christian Unions are passionate about students reaching out to lots of new students to hear the good news of Jesus.

Please pray for:

- Their follow-up courses gaining more students, who are keen and ready to read and discuss Jesus and His spoken words.
- The many international students who will now be hearing the gospel for the first time and becoming interested to learn more for themselves.
- The CU Staff and Relay Workers as they continue to support and equip CU students to reach their friends with the gospel.

Give thanks to:

- Our Mission Partner Matthew Leung who is a UCCF Staff Worker in Keele university in Staffordshire and Harper Adams in Shropshire, who has successfully completed his 4th year. (See our prayers for him in No. 3)
- The various students within lots of different universities and colleges in this country who wish to share their prayers:

Eleanor at Chester 'To be humble and rely on Jesus not my own strength'.

Zoe in the North East 'For God to fill our hearts as we take on the new year and fill us with ideas of how to reach out to those who don't yet know Jesus'.

A Chinese student at Cambridge - 'How can I receive the forgiveness that Jesus offers'. Hopefully this student did feel Christ's forgiveness.

2. UCB **United Christian Broadcasters** is a Christian media charity, broadcasting within three radio stations, two nationally on DAB radio and also via a UCB Player.

How do we find them: As long as your TV has Freeview and it is connected to the internet and a digital aerial, you can select channel 277 (listed as UK Radio Portal) and click on the UCB1 or UCB2 logo to hear your station of choice. You can also, via your mobile, download the UCB App (which to me turned out to be the easiest way.)

UCB 1 plays popular contemporary Christian music alongside topical conversation about everyday life and faith

UCB 2 is a mix of praise and worship music together with Bible based encouragement

Please pray for :

- Everyone being able to find through their radio or mobile phone the UCB 1 and UCB 2 channels and enjoy listening to the music and the broadcasters conversations.
- This modern technology appealing to younger people and helping them to understand the importance of God's precious word and reaching their hearts at the right moment.

3. Matthew Leung **UCCF (Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship)**

Matthew is based at Keele University and Harper Adams and has been to Christ Church in the past and shared his news with us all. These are his wishes...

Please pray for :

- Harper Adam's new committee and their continuing plans to work out further details for the next academic year.

- The students to be more invested in personal evangelism, rather than just running events.
- The growing understanding by the students, when listening to their prayers, how aware they are of their own weaknesses and hopefully are starting to turn more to God for help and guidance.
- All the students who are heading home for the summer. Pray too that those on committee will manage to rest well while still finding time to finalise plans for Fresher's week.

4. The Midlands Ministry Training Course MMTC is the flagship ministry of the **Midlands Gospel Partnership.** Its purpose is to provide Christian believers in the Midlands area with Bible training and Bible teaching.

Please pray for:

- More churches to commit to studying and sharing the Gospel and gaining further experience and success in reaching out to the non-Christian world.
- More students to aspire to have some kind of formal Ministry position and deciding to join the training courses that run over 32 weeks.
- The students that took part in these courses would then like to return for a second year to build on what they learnt and also encourage their student friends to become involved.
- Those of us (who are not equipped and experienced people) becoming better at being able to chat about the word of God to others and also enjoying how to share a quiet word of encouragement with friends.

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.

Anne Smith

Tales from the Towpath (11)

June 2024

It is now a year since I became a Waterways Chaplain – first a probationer and then Commissioned and Licenced 6 months later in January – the year has flown by and it is such a joy and privilege to be part of this ministry. Now I am pleased to welcome Diane Aspey who has just been accepted as a Probationary Chaplain to join me on the towpath. It is great to have her alongside and I am sure you will hold Diane in your prayers as she embarks on this exciting ministry.

Since the last newsletter I have been over to Barton Marina and to Fradley Junction to do towpath walks with other probationary Chaplains as well as some local walks with Diane. John (as a Canals and River Trust volunteer) and I have done some mornings of lock-keeping together – it is good to help boaters at the locks but they are also a captive audience for talking! You have probably noticed the canal getting busier – holiday boats, leisure cruisers as well as liveaboards and it is always a joy to see the historic boats that come through Stone with their chugging engines!

You may have noticed the boat Marquis which is moored here in Stone. She is the oldest surviving iron motor narrowboat with an original stern. She can be seen at some of the historic boat festivals around the country. We saw an amazing combination travelling through Aston Lock a few days ago – an historic working boat also towing a second historic working boat – that was fun getting it through the locks.

I was also pleased to see recently a group of school children with their teacher assembled at Yard Lock learning all about locks and how they work and (I assume) water safety. They are dangerous places and yet fascinating and good fun.

Tales from the towpath… (cont)

Otherwise I have been honoured to be of service to some who needed a listening ear and some practical help – being Jesus's hands and feet as required. *"Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God."*

Please continue to pray for all those on the waterways – especially those isolated and struggling.

Many blessings – Helen

Workmates

Veterans from the armed forces often speak of the deep bonds that were established as they "looked out for one another". This can happen in many other areas of life, as I discovered working in the hot rolling mill of a steelworks near Sheffield. Our team provided companionship, protection, mutual reliance and trust. We were indeed workmates.

St Paul speaks of us having the same sort of relationship with God in 2 Corinthians 6 in just three words "*As God's co-workers".*

My attitude to faith and ministry changed when I began to realise that as a co-worker with God, there needed to be a mutual reliance. God needed my hands, but I needed his guidance, love, power and strength.

The first part, how we serve God, is powerfully put in the well-known prayer-poem attributed to St Teresa of Avila.

God has no hands but our hands to do his work today;
God has no feet but our feet to lead others in his way;
God has no voice but our voice to tell others how he died;
and God has no help but our help to lead them to his side.

However, we can't do it on our own, though our pride often makes us think we can. I was laid off work for three months because I tried to work for God rather than work with God. The Holy Spirit of God, guides us, corrects us and gives us His divine power to live our Christian lives fully. That why the tiny two-word description that Paul uses in 2 Corinthians - "God's co-workers" - carries such an important truth for us all. *Roger M. Vaughan*

Over the years I have found the variety of working in many different areas of the hospital, and especially so since the pandemic, to be engaging, challenging and rewarding in equal measure.

However at present I am spending all my time at RSUH visiting patients on the *'Cancer Centre Day Ward'* which is a relatively new initiative for Chaplaincy. Although this was quite strange to begin with I am now finding this to be one of the best things that I have done and have quickly settled in and become accepted by the staff as a regular presence on the ward.

I often see some of the same patients on a weekly or fortnightly basis depending on their treatment schedule and am told *"...I'll look forward to seeing you next week..."* as they enjoy spending some time chatting which can help, with what can be a long day pass more rapidly. It is very rewarding to be able to offer appropriate emotional and prayer support to folk who are sometimes on what can be quite a roller coaster of a journey.

On the other hand some patients are more than happy with a quick *"Hello"* and brief word which is also lovely and they are always pleased to take a Chaplaincy *'contact details card'* in case circumstances change and they might wish to talk in greater depth at some future time.

I do think that I have now found the place in the hospital where God wants me to be putting in my efforts, at least for the present time.

On a more personal note, I've had some very good news health-wise recently. Last August when my kidney function (Egfr) had stabilised at 22 I was told quite emphatically it would not improve any further and the long term aim was to maintain this functionality for as long as possible. However, at an appointment in June I was told by a delighted and surprised staff member that my Egfr was now 26 (an increase of 18% over where it had been). In general, the various medical professionals I see regularly are quite impressed that I feel so well considering the fact that I have so many co-morbidities! I thank and praise The LORD for such an *****amazing outcome and unexpected miracle*****, to HIM be all the glory. *Dave Rowlands*

*****Eph 3:20. 'He is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine'*****

Summer Term

The first half of the summer term was packed full of sporting opportunities for the children and they have had the opportunity to compete in cross country events, football matches, rugby taster sessions and we had a whole day of cricket run by Staffordshire Cricket which was great fun for all the children. Key Stage 2 pupils took part in the district athletics event at Rowley Park and we had a record winner in the ball throw. This term of sports culminated in our sports day and family picnic on 28th June at the Church at the Crossing. We were really lucky with weather which meant that we could hold all the races and have a family picnic at the end. It was such a nice opportunity to get the whole school community together.

In other areas, the children enjoyed a concert from Entrust's Music Service in April, which was on the theme of superheroes. A group of children from Year 3 and 4 joined pupils from Christ Church Academy for the Eccleshall Music Festival held at Holy Trinity Church. Our pupils played guitar or attended a percussion workshop and joined the group choir. On Saturday 13th July, our pupils performed at Stone Rocks. Our choir sang 3 lovely songs and our dancers performed the routine they did at the Gatehouse Theatre in Stafford.

Year 4 attended their transition events and 2 days at the middle school prior to joining them in September while we welcomed our new learners in Reception into school. The rest of the school spent mornings with the teachers they are having next year, working on their own transition activities.

We held our Chocolate Bingo PTFA fundraiser on the 26th April. This was really well attended and is raising much-needed funds for our Forest School project for next year. We have secured an area at Christ Church Academy which will become our dedicated Forest School outdoor classroom. Miss Bourne is training to deliver bushcraft activities on the last 2 days of the year!

Christ Church First School update...(cont)

Children have been out and about around the town. They have visited Stonefield Park and Crown Meadow as park as part of their science and geography topics. Year 1 have welcomed past pupils into school for their history project. These visitors were pupils at Christ Church First School quite a few years ago and have talked of the outside toilet blocks and even taught the children the Rose Queen dance. The children thoroughly enjoyed hearing all about the school in years gone by and we are always keen to hear from other past pupils who may wish to share their memories. They also ventured into town to look at how Stone has changed over the years.

We wish our year 4 pupils the very best of luck as they move onto pastures new and wish the rest of the school community a restful and enjoyable summer break.

Amy Graham, Executive Headteacher

P.C.C. News

The P.C.C. held a meeting on 22nd May 2024 and 1st July 2024. During the meeting the following matters were discussed:

- We hope to work to develop the garden in front of the church centre into a Dementia friendly area including adding seating with a bench dedicated to Cecilia Wilding
- Repairs to the damaged window at the front entrance is being investigated
- Mr A Stone has agreed to continue as our Safeguarding Officer and Mrs J Abrahams has been elected the Safer Recruitment Officer responsible for ensuring safeguarding checks are made on new staff and volunteers
- Work has been carried out to improve the state of the path form Bromfield Court to the back of the Church Centre

After the successful Tear Fund Harvest Quiz last year we will be holding another quiz this year on Friday 27th September at 6.30.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th September at 7.30

Gwen Corbett 90

Many thanks from Gwen Corbett. My sister has asked me to express her thanks to you all for the 90th birthday card and greetings from Christ Church. It certainly added to the pleasure of the day.

Gwen's daughter Alison, her husband John and Katie, their daughter came over from Australia, as did Michael her son, Miranda his wife and Miranda's dad, Peter. Dennis and I joined the party and also Emma, Dennis' daughter.

We shared the afternoon tea party at Wedgwood World. Hmmm…. Very posh, it's a good job I wore my best frock! Later in the day we all gathered with staff and residents to sing Happy birthday and to tuck into a large birthday cake. Autumn House also gave her a lovely vase of roses in mixed colours.

The family including grandchildren and great grandchildren had a large bouquet of mixed flowers delivered to her and the perfume filled her room. We thank God for this opportunity to celebrate with Gwen on this very special birthday. *Dilys Davies*

Thought Provoker

As a teacher at a large secondary school I was expected to deliver an assembly once a month. Finding something to engage the minds of 11 to 18 year olds at 9 am on Monday mornings was always a challenge, although the Oulton magazine was often a rich source of possibilities.

If I asked the students which assembly they remembered, they would always say the one about penguins! And perhaps more about that later. But the one that sticks with me is using Christian Aid statistics.

Imagine the world reduced to 100 people. If that were the case the following would be the true:

70 would be non white: 30 white
70 would be non Christian:30 Christian
50% of the world's wealth would be in the hands of 6 people
Those 6 people would live in the USA

70 would be unable to read
50 would suffer from malnutrition
80 would live in substandard housing
Only 1 would have a college or university education.

And a quote from a young woman from one of those disadvantaged groups. “I would have liked to have gone to school. I admire those children who do it. I would like someone to admire me. “ *Judith Kelt*

Birth announcement

Peter and Mel are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter Leia who was born at 1.59 p.m. on Sunday 14th July. We are very thankful for a successful birth but do pray for us as we adapt to being new parents!

Goodbye to the Swifts

Swifts are one of our most enigmatic birds, and if you live in an area where they are still nesting then the last three or four months may have been characterised by their breathtaking aerodynamics and their shrill screams.

Cuckoos and swifts are the earliest of our migrants to leave the UK but whilst cuckoos do not rear their young, swifts do so quickly, starting to breed in May, feeding young until they fledge in July or August, at which time adults and young head south!

By August most are en route for the warm south stopping to refuel in southern Europe and they will travel about 7,000 miles to Equatorial or even Southern Africa. Swifts are fantastic fliers, living entirely on the wing apart from when nesting. Swifts feed on tiny flying insects and spiders, often going to great heights to find them and bringing back a ball or *bolus* of food in a throat pouch for their young. They have been known to fly high and fast, travelling up to 70 mph and soaring over the Himalayas in Ladakh when on migration. They eat, sleep, bathe and mate on the wing and cannot take off from the ground as their legs are small and set far back on their bodies.

Goodbye to the swifts... (cont)

They eat, sleep, bathe and mate on the wing and cannot take off from the ground as their legs are small and set far back on their bodies. Instead, they launch from a high-up hole or ledge, swooping straight into flight. In nature they nest in holes in tall trees or cliffs and our buildings make a good alternative with churches and chapels particularly good for swifts as they are tall and have space around the building for the swift to launch in to. Swifts can nest on the top of the wall under the eaves or within the tower or spire, perhaps in a swift box behind the louvres of the tower windows or in a small hole or crevasse.

It is quite possible that swifts nest on your nearest church without anybody knowing, as unlike swallows and martins (with which they are often confused), they rarely visit their nests and leave no droppings below. Swifts will fly around screaming as the evening draws in and then quickly swoop into their nests in a split second and so sharp eyes and patience is required to spot them.

Swifts need our help, they have reduced in number by over 60% since 1995, in part due to improvements in our buildings, making them more weather-tight and better insulated. This good work can have the unfortunate effect of removing swift nesting sites so installing nest boxes is a great idea. If your church does not have swift boxes in the tower and you know that there are swifts in the area then perhaps you might try and arrange for a box to be installed over the autumn and winter, in time for next years epic migration. You'll find information on swift boxes on the Caring for God's Acre website and take a look at the website of Swift Conservation to learn more.

All the best, Harriet

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor,
harriet@cfga.org.uk,
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**

CARING FOR GOD'S ACRE

Groups and Rotas

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

REGISTERS

BAPTISM

WEDDINGS

13th July Ewan Depledge and Rhiannon Brace

FUNERALS

24th June William Edward Davies Aged 22

FLOWER ROTA

4th August:
11th August:
18th August: Brenda Boote
25th August:

SIDESPERSONS

Dave Rowlands
Jeanette Rowlands
Marilyn Overall
Pam Roberts

ROADS FOR PRAYER

4th August
Oulton Cross
Oulton Grove
Oulton Mews
Oulton Road

11th August
Prince's Street
Queen's Square
Radford Close
Radford Street

18th August
Rangeley View
Regent Street
Rendel Grove
Rolt Close

25th August
Rudyard Close
Saltersford Rise
Sawyer Way
Station Road