



The Magazine

Christ Church Alsager

February - March 2019

www.christchurchalsager.uk



A Fresh Start



Spring is coming. This morning I saw snowdrops. Amazing that such a sight can make you stop for a moment. It was because I stopped that I noticed the birds singing in the trees and the morning sun shining brightly across the pale blue sky. I smiled to myself. Such moments are precious.

We often celebrate the opportunity for renewal at New Year, in the long nights of winter. Yet it is spring, a few months later, when the earth reminds us that renewal is possible, that from what is gone, new colour and life can bloom. Spring is the time when the world tells us fresh starts are possible.

As we enter this time of spring, whether you're reading this in February or March, it might be worth taking some time to think about something you would like a fresh start with. Perhaps you'd like a fresh start with a new year's resolution already broken and forgotten about, or you may want a fresh start with a habit you're trying to break, or even a habit you're trying to make. Maybe you'd like a fresh start with finances, or a relationship, or God. Whatever you'd like a fresh start with I'd encourage you to take some time to be quiet, reflect and to pray.

Jonathan Masters

Invites us to start afresh in 2019

This March Christ Church will be having a fresh start of its own, a new beginning.

As we welcome Daran and Aly to Christ Church we are excited to see what the future holds for us as a church.

Daran is going to be our new vicar. It would be great if you could come to welcome Daran and Aly at the special church service to welcome them on Friday 15th March at 7.30pm.

It will be a time to reflect and to pray, a time to worship and to celebrate, and it will be a time to welcome and share together. Whether you have been to Christ Church lots of times before, only once or twice, or never at all, we would love to have you with us to welcome our new vicar. Together, we can discover what it's like to have a fresh start.

Christ Church Families

Lots to do for children and families
All welcome!



Rachel Mason
Children and Families Leader
E: families@christchurchalsager.uk
Tel: 01270 872291



Christ Church
Alsager

FILM NIGHT

FOR ALL PRIMARY SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN

Enjoy watching a film, eating popcorn and hanging out with your friends.

FRIDAY 15th FEBRUARY
5-6:30pm
AT CHRIST CHURCH HALL

For more information contact: families@christchurchalsager.uk or 01270 872291

 Christ Church Families
www.christchurchalsager.uk

EASTER DETECTIVES

Good Friday 19th April 10am – 12.30pm

A free holiday club in the church hall, where there will be something for everyone to enjoy, including crafts, cooking and games. For all primary school aged children (younger children welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult).

To book a place please fill in a registration form, these will be available on our website from the end of February. For more information please contact us on families@christchurchalsager.uk or 01270 872291.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGULAR GROUPS

Our regular groups meet in the church hall during school term time.

Parent Chat with crèche: Mondays 10-11:30am

A group of parents who meet together to chat about life as parents, to support and encourage one another. All parents welcome to join us.

Cherubs Toddler Group: Mondays 1:30-3pm

A friendly and welcoming group of parents, grandparents and carers with their babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers. We have free play, creative activities, songs, story time and snack. £1 per child. You are very welcome to join us.

Radiate (5-9 yr olds): Fridays 6 – 7pm

Fun-filled time exploring faith and God through a range of activities including craft, games, food, songs and prayer. FREE to attend.

Integr8 (10-13 yr olds): Fridays 7 – 8:30pm

Time to hang out and have fun, play games, be creative and explore what God has to say on faith and life. FREE to attend. Tuck Shop Available.

Weekly Groups

(in term time)

PARENT CHAT with crèche

Mondays 10 – 11:30am

CHERUBS Toddler Group

Mondays 1:30 – 3pm

RADIATE

Ages 5-9

Fridays 6 – 7pm

INTEGR8

Ages 10-13

Fridays 7 – 8:30pm

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN EVERY SUNDAY at 11am

We have something for children at 11am every Sunday at Christ Church. Most weeks, after enjoying your drinks and doughnuts in the hall before the service, we start in church all together for a time of welcome and singing songs, then the children have the opportunity to go to the hall for activities to explore their faith and have fun! Sometimes we all stay together in church for a fun and interactive time with songs, activities and teaching. Roughly once a month we have Messy Church instead of our usual 11am children's activities, this is run in the church hall for families together, we have lots of fun doing activities, games, songs and share lunch together.

Do come and join us any Sunday, you are most welcome.



**Fun, faith and food for families!
Crafts, games, songs, lunch – for
families together.**

**11am-1pm
Christ Church Hall**

**Sunday 10th February
Ordinary to Extraordinary**

**Sunday 24th March
Hidden Treasure**

Springing Into Action

I know that strictly speaking it is still winter and to an extent we are still only just beginning to adjust to coming out of hibernation mode. I had a lovely time 'hibernating over the Christmas and New Year period. Time spent with family, including the newest member, my nephew Joshua born on Saturday 22nd December.

Being able to take time out, recharge our batteries and rest properly means that we are better prepared for the things to come.

We are already almost through January and there is lots to look forward to. Here is a short guide to all that will be happening for young people during 2019:

Sundays 11am – 12:15pm. Proteens (Years 5 – 9) meet to study the Bible in creative and accessible ways.

Tuesdays 6:20pm – 7:20pm. Youth Band practice in the church. No musical experience necessary as we will support you with learning.

7:30 – 9:30pm. YGG (Youth Growth Group for Years 9 - 13) meet in the Upper Room. This term we are following The Bible Course along with extra sessions looking at key characters in the Bible.

Thursdays 12:05pm – 1:05pm. C.O.R.E. lunchtime group in Alsager High School in partnership with Wesley Place Methodist and Alsager Community Church.

3:15 – 4:30pm. Downtime after school café. The number of pupils attending has gone up recently with up to 30 young people coming along for expertly baked cakes and hot drinks. It feels like there is a little community forming on Thursday afternoons.

Fridays 7pm – 8:30pm. Integr8 youth club (Years 6 – 9) – craft activities, games, quizzes, interactive talk, tuck shop and space to chill out.

8pm – 9:30pm. Revive youth club (youthie) (Years 7 – 13) – pool, table-tennis, table football, consoles, music, tuck shop, space to chill out.

The number attending on Friday evenings has steadily increased and we can get up to as many as 60 young people across both youth clubs. A number of our amazing team have stepped down after several years of commitment to Friday night clubs. We are so thank ful to them, and to those who have recently joined us. We are always looking for more help with this important work.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award season will be starting up again in March, initially with a Bronze level qualifying expedition then we will be training the 2019 participants and putting them through their paces. If you would be interested in helping to train and run expeditions this year please get in touch.



Matt Brown Youth Leader

Other developments:

Just before Christmas Jonny Newbould (Wesley Place) and I ran an after-hours session for a small group of young people at Costa Coffee in Alsager. We are in conversation with the manager about possible future use of Costa as a venue for some youth work to take place. Watch this space!

I met with some members of the Alsager Partnership Management group to discuss youth provision in the town. It was a very positive meeting and I expect a good working relationship to form in the coming year with a focus on support for the young people of Alsager and the local area.

Managing Difficult Behaviour - training

Jonathan Masters will be leading this training session on Mon 11 Feb at 7.30pm in the Hall. If you help with any of our groups where this training may be useful you are very welcome to come along. For more information please speak to Matt or Rachel. To book: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/managing-behaviour-inchurch-children-and-youth-groups-tickets-54751040837>

Help with Youth Work

Extra helpers are urgently needed on the youth team, for Revive on a Friday evening 7.55 - 9.45pm. Please speak to Matt, Dave or Janice for more info.



A scenic vista from DofE 2018.



Ready for downtime!



Friday night volleyball.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE DAY AT BRERETON HEATH

Date: 13th April 2019

Time: 10:45am - 3:30pm

The Diocesan Mission team invites children, young people and families to take part in a fun filled outdoor activity adventure day with the Oakhanger Project which will include; canoeing, kayaking, orienteering and outdoor games at the lovely Brereton Heath Nature Reserve, Davenport Lane, CW12 4SU.

The cost of the day is £10 per person, or £20 per family (up to seven people in the same family). The action packed day will begin at 11am and finish at 3.30pm. Please arrive by 10.45am for a briefing.

Please wear appropriate clothing and bring with you a packed lunch and a change of clothes in case you get wet!

We are so excited that children, young people and families will be able to share this experience with others from across the Diocese - we look forward to seeing you there!

If you have any queries please contact Jonny Masters or Anne Cody on 01928 718834 ext 263. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/outdoor-adventure-day-tickets-54524330741>



GIVING

PRAYER – TIME – MONEY

Our vision here at Christ Church is to love God, love one another and love our community. One of the ways we do this as individuals is by giving. People can give in many ways, including by prayer, time and money.

People pray

We believe in a God who does stuff, a God who is interested in us and our lives. So we pray for one another, we pray for the activities we run as a church, we pray for our community and we pray for our world.

People give their time

They volunteer to help run activities and events at Christ Church, such as our Children and Youth Groups, Big Breakfast, Messy Church and lots more.

We would like to say a thank you to all those who serve on our teams. Jean and Pam have helped to run Cherubs Toddler Group for many years; Jean for over 20 years! We are thankful for the time and energy they have given to the running of this group and will miss them.

If you would like to serve on one of our teams please speak to Rachel (children and families), Matt (youth) or Debbie. We are always in need of more team members, no experience required just a desire to help and be involved!

People give money

Our church, like all in the Church of England, has to finance itself and make a contribution to the cost of its clergy and the wider church. It costs over £4,000 per week to run Christ Church which includes our staff, youth and children's activities, maintaining, heating and cleaning our church and hall and the many community activities that we support. There are lots of ways you can give financially to support our work, if you'd like to find out more pick up a 'Giving for Growth' leaflet from the church porch or download one from the downloads page of our website www.christchurchalsager.uk.

Regular giving helps us plan and if you're a taxpayer gift aid can make your giving worth more to us - just fill in the form or contact Debbie if you want to know more.



Oakhanger Events for February and March

Note: All events are based at the Oakhanger Church and Community Centre unless stated otherwise.

Wednesday 6th February

Oakhanger Project Annual General Meeting
All welcome. 7.30pm.

Saturday 9th February

Soup and Rolls at Oakhanger from 12 noon.

Sunday 10th February

Kinder Hike - meet at Oakhanger at 8.30am
or contact the Oakhanger Project for details of
other meeting points.

Friday 15th February

At 7.30pm *500 mile challenge* - a talk by Brian
Stafford in aid of Duchennes Muscular
Dystrophy.

Wednesday 20th February

Kayak Family Fun at Sandbach School
Swimming Pool at 11am, followed by kayak
training at 12.30pm.

Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th March

We'll be at the Christian Resources Exhibition
at Event City, Manchester.

Thursday 4th April

7.30pm Oil Tanker in the Falklands War
Talk and slides by Peter Morris.

Contact:

Graham Bushill,
Oakhanger Project
E-mail: oakchallenge@aol.com
Mobile: 0799 993 2963



Find us on Facebook

Look for Oakhanger Church
and Community News

Oakhanger services

All services 6.30pm at the Oakhanger
Church and Community Centre,
Butterton Lane

3rd February Communion
17th February Café Style Church

3rd March Communion
17th March Café Style Church

My silent retreat

Rachel White

Last November I went on a silent retreat at St Beuno's, a Jesuit Spirituality Centre in North Wales .
See the website: pathwaystogod.org/org/st-beunos.

It offers long and short retreats. It is based on Catholic Jesuit teaching (summed up as 'Finding God in all things') and all are welcome. My aunt and uncle (also my godparents) have been on retreat there many times and St Beuno's is special to them. I went on a one day retreat at the Retreat House Chester two years ago on the topic, 'Life before Death - Flourishing' led by Fr Roger Dawson SJ, leader of St Beuno's.
See the website: retreathousechester.co.uk.

It was fascinating and I wanted to explore more. After losing my Mum last January and a difficult period dealing with the sale of her home and helping my step-father emigrate to Canada, I felt a great need to spend time quietly with God and with the assistance of one-to-one spiritual direction.

I was unsure how I would cope with silence and chose a midweek retreat from Monday evening to Friday morning. I arrived on Monday afternoon and settled in to a comfortable room in a cottage close to the main Victorian Gothic building. After the evening meal, tour and a short introductory meeting, we met our spiritual directors and the silence began. I switched off my mobile phone so I could focus on my retreat fully.

Each day had a structure. Breakfast, one-to-one 45 minute meeting with our spiritual director, coffee, lunch, tea and cake, Mass, evening meal, evening prayer – with plenty of time to read, walk in the gardens and beautiful countryside, sit in one of three chapels, use the library and art room. The silence was easy and wonderful. With no distractions, no need to think of what to say and how to listen to others, I found I could follow through trains of thought to their conclusion with no interruptions.

I had no obligations except to walk more closely with God and to make the most of this time. Mealtimes were difficult at first – music was played which helped and I learnt to enjoy my meals and feel more at ease. My spiritual director was wise and holy. I had a list of things I wanted to pray about and she helped me to do that with some specific methods. One was just to talk to God as I walked. It was helpful to hear my words out loud and heard his reply clearly and instantly.



Another was to place myself in a Gospel narrative – I used the miracle of the paralysed man lowered through the synagogue roof. I used felt tip pens of many colours to write out the poem 'Pied Beauty' by Gerard Manley Hopkins, chosen by my Mum for her memorial service. Hopkins had lived at St Beuno's – I didn't know this. I felt it as a blessed connection. I was able to put a big burden down – or rather, to learn that God carried it for me so I didn't need to.

It was a time of good discoveries – the fruits of silence and the liberation of solitude; finding refreshment in nature; listening to God and knowing when he speaks to me; learning to focus on God and filtering all else out – this I find I can do easier now since the retreat.

Three sentences from what I read stay with me – *Search for God and trust that God wants to be with us. God is always in our lives. The spiritual task is simply to recognise that. The purpose of prayer is not to make God conscious of us but to make us conscious of God.*

I will definitely be going back.

Did **YOU** catch the **VISION**?

Did **YOU** spend time in the 24 hour prayer space and experience **GOD**?

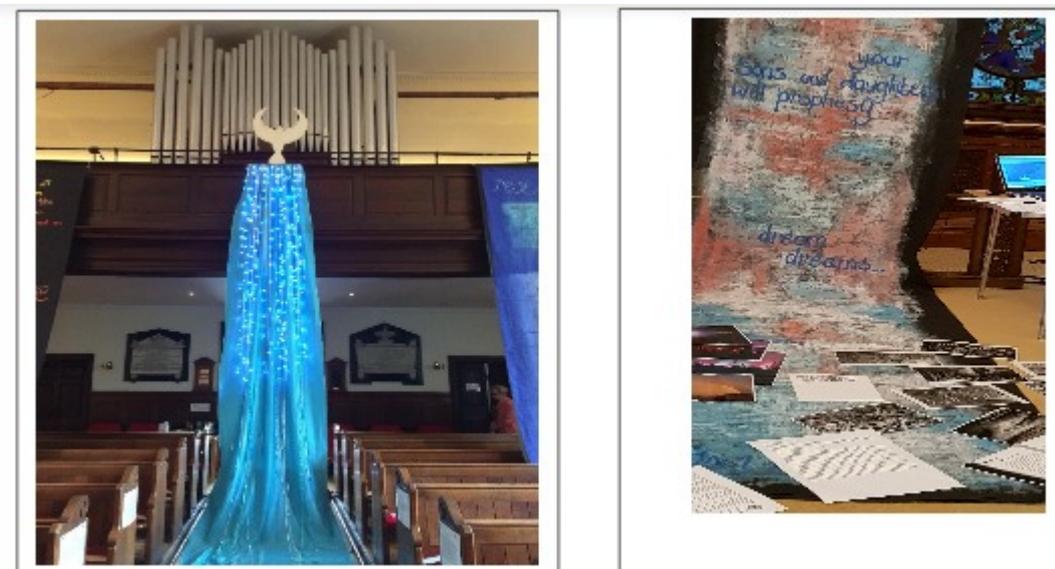
At Christ Church we will again be holding 24 hours of unbroken prayer.

It will take place from 1pm on Friday 8th March to 1pm on Saturday 9th March.

During this time our church will be turned into a creative and interactive prayer space for people to rest in the Holy Spirit, pray for our church, our community, our country and our world.

Andrea Chatterley

extends an invitation to 24 hours of prayer



We will start and end with an hour of worship. There will be times for dedicated led-prayer sessions for our church, our town, education and the persecuted church, for example.

The prayer space will provide a special time of prayer, reflection, peace, creativity and a place to rest in God's presence. Last time, people found it a positive experience with some being led to specific verses in the Bible such as: **Psalm 46:10: Be still and know that I am God** and Revelation 11:15-17, *I am the Alpha and the Omega and I am well pleased.*

Here are a few other comments written by people as they left..

‘Amazing’ ‘Serenity and peace’
 ‘Came for an hour and stayed for two and a half’

We hope that you feel inspired to join in and sign up. Keep praying!

What's on? Something for everyone at Christ Church



Call Debbie in the Church Office
01270 872291



Email: admin@christchurchalsager.uk



Twitter: Follow us on **chchalsager**



Facebook:

Christ Church Alsager and **Christ Church Families**
and like/follow/share with your friends.

EVENTS as advertised for all ages

BIG BREAKFAST

Mons 8am - 10am (term time)

Only £1.50 come along and enjoy a great breakfast

CRAFT GROUP

Tues 1pm - 3pm

Cardmaking, flower arranging etc.

Contact Dilys Daniels.

BOWLING GROUP

Tues 1.15pm - 3.15pm Indoor carpet bowls.

Contact Tony & Pauline Birchall Tel 874353.

SPACE Tues 1.15pm - 3pm

JOB CLUB

Help and advice for Job Seekers. 12pm - 2pm on first Thursday of each month.

GROWTH GROUPS

 Fortnightly (mostly)

For: Friendship, Bible study, Prayer, Socials

10 groups daytimes or evenings.

Contact church wardens to join.

Electoral Roll - (Our official membership list)

This has to be renewed every six years and ours is due now. If you consider yourself a member of Christ Church or Oakhanger and have regularly come to services over the last six months or live in the parish, please fill in a form. This doesn't commit you to anything, although you will be able to vote at annual meetings and you will be eligible to join the Parochial Church Council.

New forms are available from church, the Church Hall and online.

They must be returned to the office by 28th February to be included in this years roll.

All
Welcome

BB@C

Big Breakfast @ Church



Start each week over a hearty breakfast for just
£1.50 per person
Primary-aged children 50p
Pre-schoolers free

Served on
Mondays 8-10am
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Terms and conditions: 1. To celebrate our 130 year anniversary we are offering to make a charitable donation of £130 when a new Ecclesiastical Insurance plc Home Insurance policy (a "Policy") is purchased directly from us and your insurance cover commences on or before 30th September 2018, on the following terms and conditions: 2. One charitable donation will be made per Policy issued; 3. Charitable requests for a Policy must be made online or by telephone, quoting TRUST130. This charitable donation offer cannot be redeemed in any other way; 4. Underwriting terms and conditions apply and we reserve the right to not provide a quotation or offer to insure if the property that is the subject of the quotation does not meet our underwriting criteria; 5. The charitable donation is conditional on the named insured under the Policy notifying us of a church in the United Kingdom which is part of the Anglican Communion to receive the donation (the "Beneficiary Church"). Donations will be made by us directly to the Beneficiary Church, within 30 days of the Policy start date; 6. "We" and "us" in these terms and conditions refer to Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc.

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Church Services



Date	Theme	9am	11am
3rd February	The Greatest Story: Exile and Prophets, Jeremiah 25:1-11	Reflective service with hymns	Informal together service with baptism and activities for children and young people
10th February	Jesus & The Gospels John 1:1-14	Reflective service with communion	Informal service with Messy Church in Hall
17th February	Acts & The Church Acts 17:16-32	Reflective service with hymns	Informal communion service with activities for children and young people
24th February	Revelation & Review Rev: 21:1-7	Reflective service with communion	Informal service with activities for children and young people
3rd March	Education Sunday: Church around the world	Reflective service with hymns	Informal together service with schools attending
10th March	Giving it up? Giving up control Matt: 4:1-11	Reflective service with communion	Informal service with activities for children and young people
Friday 15th March	Induction service for Rev Daran Ward our new vicar at 7.30pm		
17th March	Giving up expectations John 3:1-17	Reflective service with hymns	Informal communion service with activities for children and young people
24th March	Giving up superiority John 4:5-42	Reflective service with communion	Informal service with Messy Church in Hall
31st March	Mothering Sunday Giving up enemies	Reflective service with hymns	Informal together service with baptism and activities for children and young people

PRAYER

Join us for:

Prayer @ 6

Sundays 6-7pm (weekly) in Church

Prayer @ 7.14

1st Monday of month at 7.14am in the hall.

(4thFeb, 4th March, 1st April)

Coffee & Communion

Thursdays at 10.30am in Church Hall

7th Feb and 7th March contact Pam if you need a lift 879165

21st Feb and 21st March contact Adrienne if you need a lift 857072



Dennis Round Court: 10.30am morning worship 12 February and 12th March.