

## *December 2012 / January 2013*

As I write this, Advent is nearly upon us, and our Bible readings tell of a coming dramatic event, God the Father breaking into human history through the witness and message of His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Our Bible readings often occur within the context of trial and unrest, yet there is hope and an assured future, Jesus the promised Messiah is coming.

Today, we find ourselves surrounded by trials and unrest, so much has gone on in the last 12 months in the world and our own country, and these tribulations don't seem to have an end in sight. If we only had ourselves to look to, then we would be a people without hope, yet as those who follow and trust Jesus, we do have a secure and certain hope, Jesus is our Lord and Savior, the one who overcame death to rescue us and promise us a certain and eternal future.

I am sure for many families this Christmas time, it'll be one of uncertainty, yet we as the Church within this wonderful community, have an amazing message to share, a gospel of truth that can carry people through, and a promise that is not empty, Jesus Christ is 'Immanuel', God with us.

I pray during this Advent and Christmas season, in the midst of all our services and activities, we will be blessed with opportunities to share the glorious news that is Jesus Christ, the greatest gift given to the world.

We have a great deal going on between now and Christmas, please look through the list of services and invite friends, family and neighbours, to share in our celebrations at this joyful Christmas time.

Every rich and wonderful blessing in Christ.

*Rev. David*

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## *February 2013 Magazine*

Could all entries for the above magazine be given to me by Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. Publication will be the following Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup>. *Jane R.*

# *Parish Registers*

## *Baptisms*

November 25<sup>th</sup>

Charlie Ray Sinclair  
Reece Trevor Francis Collings

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## *Collections*

|                  | <b>Open Plate</b> | <b>Env/Gift Aid</b> | <b>Env. (NTP)</b> |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>October :</b> | £394.46           | £1544.50            | £146.05           |

Parish Share 2012 has been paid in full: £22900. My sincere thanks go to everyone who has given so freely of their wealth to make Christ Church a financial success in 2012.

Parish Share 2013 has been notified as £23485 which is a 2.5% increase on 2012.

*Gail.*

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## *200 Club*

Draw result for November,

1<sup>st</sup>: No.65, 2<sup>nd</sup>: No. 58

The December and January draws will take place on Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> during the Day Centre meetings.

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## *Children's Society*

Could everyone who has a collection box for the above please bring it back to church so the money can be counted and sent off to the Society.

Many thanks,

*Linda Pattison.*

## *Electoral Roll*

In January and February 2013 all members of Christ Church who are on the Electoral Roll are requested to renew their membership. Any new members of our congregation who wish to become a member of Christ Church are welcome to apply.

Please contact me on 01780 751789 if you have any questions.

*Peter Wise. Christ Church Electoral Roll Officer.*

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## *Christmas Flowers*

If you would like to donate towards the Christmas flowers in memory of a loved one please give your donation to Dawn as soon as possible. If the money could be placed in an envelope that would be much appreciated.

The flower ladies and gents will be arranging the flowers in readiness for Christmas on **Saturday, 22nd December at 9.30am**. If anyone is able to help please pop along at that time - remember the saying "many hands make light work".

It has also been suggested that as the cost of fresh flowers at this time of the year gets increasingly expensive we should purchase silk flowers to intersperse with the fresh ones. We hope you will agree this is a sound idea and will allow the silk blooms to be reused many times!

And a last request! We are in need of new ladies and gentlemen to join the flower Rota. If you are interested in joining, please, have a word with me at church or on Stamford 753645.

*Dawn Field.*

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## *Fundraising*

What a wonderful bazaar we had on Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>. The weather wasn't too bad so a goodly number of you braved the (possibility) of wind and rain to come along and spend your money. The bazaar raised £656.35 (including the cakes sold on the Sunday) so our thanks go to everyone who supported us. We also sold some of our Anniversary mugs

and tea-towels. (*These make wonderful gifts so think about buying some as Christmas presents. You'll find them in the entrance hall at £1 per mug and £5 for two gift wrapped tea-towels – such bargains!!*)

The Grand Autumn Draw also took place on the day and this made £408.50. Our thanks go to all the shops, businesses and church folk who kindly donated the wonderful prizes. So altogether a grand total of £1064.85 was raised for church funds. Brilliant!!

And what a lovely atmosphere there was in the building! So much fun, friendship and laughter – it was brilliant to be a part of it. We must thank all those friends who worked tirelessly beforehand and manned stalls or worked in the kitchen on the day. We know it was a very long day; feet and legs must have needed a good rest by the end! but we wouldn't have been so successful without you all! And to those who donated items to sell, again thank you.

And so we move towards our **Festive Fun Afternoon** which is **Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> from 2-4pm**. Roger Ing and Betty Lamb will be providing the entertainment, which is always enjoyable, there'll be festive afternoon tea and a raffle. Cost is £2 per person. If you want transport to get you there please speak to Dawn (753645) or Jane R (752492) as soon as possible. We do hope you'll all come along to our final fundraising occasion this year and make it extra special!

The C.C. Christmas Card is inside this magazine – we hope you like it! With all the donations given it has raised £180 for church funds. Thank you to all who have contributed.

And lastly may we thank everybody who has supported us over the past year. It's hard work sorting out and arranging all the events, encouraging people (otherwise known as twisting one's arm!) to help out etc but worthwhile when we realize how much has been raised. So thank you all once again!

May we wish you a peaceful, happy Christmas and a joyful New Year. Let's hope for a better 2013 financially for everyone (although with '13' in the year maybe not!!)

*Fundraising Committee.*



## *The Tale of a Church Warden.....*

*Where to begin? In God's house of course.*

*Last April, Dawn and I took over the reins as Church wardens, taking over from Bill and Chris. This has proved to be a tough act to follow, but we are puddling through.*

*This was under the helm of the newly appointed Rev David (who was as green as we were!) With hard work and infectious enthusiasm, he has smiled and laughed his way through, selflessly serving the community. Industrious Jane Calderin, Bill and Chris, true to their word, are still in the background, helping out and advising- thanks guys.*

*Dawn is brilliant to work with, never a cross word and usually 2 steps ahead of me with the 'things to do list.'*

*In order to keep the cogs turning, we have constantly had to play our trump card, deputy warden, Jane Richardson.*

*We have seen Mike Mills weave his magic with the successful new building project completion, supported by the PCC and fund raising team. Awesome!!*

*So how did this all happen? We all know really and rightly give thanks and praise. **Yeshua Adonai.***

*It has been a demanding but enjoyable and rewarding year at Christ Church. One lesson I have learned is that despite the ups, downs and mini fallout, there exists the unseen and priceless treasure of the 'hotch potch' Christ Church family. Loving, caring and looking out for each other. Thanks for being there.*

*One last thing. It is difficult to balance the gas, electric and water bills against peoples comfort. I do not enjoy playing the part of Scrooge, but please let's try to watch the pennies!*

*Compliments of the season.*

*Brian.*

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# *Santa Fun Run at Burghley Park*

*Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December*

*(with apologies to teddy bears and their picnic party!).*

*If you go down to the park today, you're sure of a fun surprise,  
If you go down to the park today, you're better in red disguise,  
For every Santa that ever there was, will gather there for certain  
Because today's the day the Santas all finance our projects.*

*Running chance for volunteers,  
The little Santas are having a lovely day today,  
Support them, help them, get involved,  
and watch them celebrate their record times.*

*See them gaily jog around;  
They love to prance about, raise money for charity.  
At 12 o'clock their sponsors and friends will take them home to bed  
'Cause they're tired happy volunteers.*

(There is a Sponsorship form in the entrance hall if you would like to help the 'little Santas' raise funds.)



## *Love in a Box*

Gill, Jane R and I would like to extend our very grateful thanks to everyone who helped make this year's 'Love in a Box' another huge success. On the afternoon we filled 54 shoeboxes with hand knitted hats, gloves and scarves; toiletries, toys, pens, pencils, notepads and sweets, amongst other things - AND we had enough money to include £2.50 p&p in each box (a first!)

Along with our 54 boxes, we also received 25 completed boxes plus 7 from the Free Church who used us as a collection point. It's great that we are able to support others in their efforts! All in all a total of 86 boxes were collected from Christ Church.

Thanks also go to Phil, who, behind the scenes, patiently wrapped the boxes in Christmas paper in preparation, 'lugged' the stuff about *and* made us all a cup of tea on the afternoon - a blessing to us all - thank you Phil x.

We have already been given donations for next year, so if you see any BOGOF offers, think of these children who get nothing expect our Love in a Box.

A very happy Christmas to one and all!

*Gail, (Gill, Phil and Jane R.)*

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### *Street Pastors*

On behalf of Stamford Street Pastors may I say, a big thank you to members of both congregations who, on Sunday November 4<sup>th</sup>, helped to raise £145 by the purchasing of refreshments. This was truly wonderful.



If you would like to find out more about the 'Street Pastor' scheme please read on to find out how you can become involved.

*Nigel Garwood.*

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*The majority of people seem to have understood that we are there in a non-judgmental, voluntary capacity to bring worth to people. When they see us in action with drunk, frightened, beaten up people, they quickly cotton on to what we are about. We have people of all ages thanking us for being here".*

*Street Pastor, Plymouth\**

Stamford Street Pastors have been patrolling the streets of Stamford every Saturday night for over 18 months and the above statement could easily be from one of our own Street Pastors. The respect and good nature that we encounter every week on the streets is heartening and so we need to recruit some additional Street and Prayer Pastors to continue our work effectively. The aim is to recruit our second generation of Pastors and start training in the New Year, so that by Easter we will have a more flexible and stronger team to enable us to serve the Stamford community through the summer months.

The Management Committee of Stamford Street Pastors would like to invite any church members to come along to an Informal Information Evening on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 7.30pm at the URC Hall, Broad Street, Stamford and find out how to be part of the excellent team of volunteers that care, listen and help people every week by being a Street or Prayer Pastor.

During the evening there will be a short DVD about Street Pastors, some stories from existing Street and Prayer Pastors and also time to ask any questions about the training or the role of a Street Pastor. There will also be an opportunity to sign up for an Observation Night with the Street Pastors and find out first-hand what they do.

Drinks and refreshments will be served as part of the evening and we expect to be finished by 9pm.

We do appreciate all the support received locally and look forward to hearing from anyone interested in becoming part of this ministry in Stamford. Please contact:

Neat Gordon, Coordinator  
Stamford Street Pastors Initiative  
Tel: 07779 596573  
Or email [Stamford@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:Stamford@streetpastors.org.uk)

*\*quoted from the book Street Pastors by Les Isaac ISBN 978-1-8291-419-9*

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## *Befrienders*

As Christmas approaches we look forward to our celebrations and activities. We will have our Christmas lunch on Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Before that, on three Thursdays, we have Christmas Craft sessions and on three Fridays we have cooking sessions with Ken on Christmas Fayre. We are also making crackers for the Christmas Day lunch for those who live alone and have no close family or friends.

We hope and pray all who are able will join us at our different Christmas services to celebrate our Lord's birth!

Season's greetings to all. Love and peace,

## *Befriender's.*

Our new term starts on Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup> when we look forward to new activities!

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## *Community Transport Scheme*

*Hi Everyone*

*I think it's probably 6 months since I last wrote to you all and a lot has happened during that time.*



*In July my lovely Deputy Manager and dear friend, Geraldine, moved to pastures new and became the manager of StartaFresh. She was with the Transport Scheme for about 2 years and was a great asset during that time. We have welcomed her replacement, Ian Collis, who I'm sure many of you will know. It must be quite difficult for him as the only male in an office full of women, and I think at times when there is a lot of banter, he surrenders in desperation and waves the white flag so we leave him alone! He takes all the "insults" with good humour and it is good to have him in our team. Like Geraldine before him, Ian is in charge of the minibus and although he has still got his "L" plates on, I am sure once he is fully settled in; we will hopefully see a substantial rise in the minibus bookings.*

*Ian will be concentrating on promoting our minibus and alerting people within the community that it is available for anyone to hire. It is a 16 seater minibus with facilities for disabled passengers and wheelchairs and prices start at £7.50 return for a local journey around town. All of our minibus drivers have been thoroughly trained and CRB checked and we would be glad to quote for any journey if you fancy having a day out with family and friends, or perhaps at this time of year, a trip to the panto.*

*We recently reached our 26,000<sup>th</sup> milestone car journey and that is return trips so we have completed over 52,000 journeys since the scheme began in 2004! This is thanks as always to our wonderful volunteers, both in the office and drivers, who devote so much of their time to helping the*

*scheme. We receive so many letters of gratitude from our passengers, some bring a lump to our throat and that's what makes it so rewarding. If you already use the scheme please tell your friends about us because word of mouth is always the best way to advertise and we know there are many people out there who still don't know we exist. If you don't use the scheme and are struggling to get to appointments, please remember we are here to help you so please make that quick phone call to our office to register as a member. It's only £12 to join for the year and we provide reliable local journeys with door to door service and assistance by our drivers for only £5 return. We can take you wherever you would like to go and any distance is considered.*

*Now for my usual plea..... We are very short of drivers in Stamford at the moment, so if you have a few hours to spare and would like to help the scheme either as a driver (car or minibus) or as an office coordinator, please give me a call on the car scheme number – Stamford **482380**. Thank you very much.*

*Please note the Transport Scheme office will be closed for the Christmas break from 1pm on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2012 and will reopen again on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2013.*

*All that remains for me now is to say on behalf of everyone at the Christ Church Community Transport Scheme we would like to wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful 2013.*

*Sandy x. Manager*

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## *Day Centre*

We were saddened to hear that Win Dawtry, a long standing Day Centre Member, passed away during November. Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband, Phil at this very sad time.

On December 5<sup>th</sup> we look forward to Betty Lamb and Roger Ing coming to entertain us and the children from Bluecoat School will be singing after our Christmas Lunch on December 12<sup>th</sup>. In January we hope to welcome singer, Jeremy Hilliard on the 9<sup>th</sup> and will be holding a Painting Competition on the 23<sup>rd</sup> for Members.

Andrea, our hairdresser will be visiting in January but the date is still to be arranged and the Foot Health Professional will be with us on January 16<sup>th</sup>.

The next Day Centre Communion will take place on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 11.15am before the Christmas Lunch and again on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Day Centre will close on December 12<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas and New Year break and we re-open on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

We would like to wish everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

## *Amy and Carolyn.*

We are desperate for more volunteers to help with the laundering of the Day Centre tablecloths. This would be on a monthly rota but, obviously, the more volunteers we have the longer period of time between 'turns'. Please contact me at Day Centre if you can help. *Carolyn.*

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## *Mothers Union*

The next MU Holy Communion Service, followed by the meeting, will be held here at Christ Church on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> and the January service will be at All Saint's Church on January 3<sup>rd</sup> both at the usual time of 10.00am. All are welcome.

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## *StartaFresh*

StartaFresh has had a wonderful autumn programme. There have been lots of activities for the members to enjoy including courses on cooking, hobbies and budgeting money. Group sessions continue to meet on a Monday, Thursday and Friday afternoon from 1pm to 3pm. We have welcomed some new members and a couple of volunteers to the group this term and we are delighted they have decided to join us.

The group has enjoyed trips to Peterborough Museum, the garden centre and Peterborough Cathedral over the past couple of months, all trips well attended and thoroughly enjoyed.

In November some new and existing volunteers were trained to provide individual one to one mentoring to help us expand the service we offer our members. *(More details of this can be found later in this magazine. Ed.)*

If you know of anyone who you think would benefit from StartaFresh please contact me on 01780 766446

*Geraldine Crowley.*

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## *Teenzone*

Teenzone has been slowly easing back into the swing of term time activities after an incredible successful summer holiday programme which featured trips, activity days and sports camps each week throughout the Summer. In addition to the usual summer programme, we held a festival for young people in Stamford on the Recreation Ground, which reached out to those who have issues surrounding them during their teenage years, by providing them with workers from many different organisations including New College Stamford, Addaction, Alternatives and Apprenticships.

We have had successful numbers throughout this first term at Teenzone. Whilst it has taken a few weeks for numbers to reach 30 during café sessions, our sports sessions have been thriving with energy and we have attracted all ages from 9-19 for these sessions. At sports last week we had a total of 56 young people in, in addition to any further attending just the café session.

This Christmas, Christ Church will once again play host to the Stamford Children's Christmas Party, however this time run through Teenzone. We have taken over ownership of the event and are working very hard to provide the young people chosen to attend, a party which will be just as successful as those in the past.

I fully believe that Teenzone has gradually become an integral part of the community in Stamford, and will continue to do so. As time goes on, the recognition and knowledge of this programme grows, and we can see this through the increasing numbers. Throughout the past three years, we

have seen the total attendance in June increase year-on-year by 100%, tripling our numbers compared to June 2009.

With winter being traditionally the most popular time of year for young people to attend youth centres, we hope for the next few months to be a hive of activity (and we are very excited about it!)

*Ali.*

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## *Toddlers*

Like all youngsters our toddlers are looking forward to Christmas. Their party is on Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup> complete with Father Christmas, fairies, goodies and games to excite and bring joy. They will join in making the Christingles and learn about their meaning.

We hope many of our toddler families will join us at our Christingle and Crib Services.

We break for Christmas on December 20<sup>th</sup> and restart on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>.

Enjoy a very happy Christmas. Love and peace to you all

*Toddler Gang.*

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## *What a difference a year makes!*

*This time last year I attended a Churches Together AGM at which they agreed to support the setting up of a Foodbank in Stamford.*



*Whilst I was very pleased to have their backing I did approach the setting up with some degree of trepidation! Conversations*

*with God followed along the lines of “If You really want me to do it then You will have to bring all the necessary people on board who have the skills as I don’t!”*

*I have been privileged to have so many amazing people sharing my roller coaster journey over the last year.*

*“Lows” include losing our base in the CLC building and waiting 3 months to secure our present base in All Saints and St Johns Church Centre; being 2 months away from our opening date and still having very little money! But God, as always, does everything in His time. We’ve had all the money we’ve needed as we needed it!*

*The highs are too many to record but include:-*

*\* seeing our base grow before our eyes, knowing how many people had given so much time, energy and enthusiasm, not to mention money, so that it could all become a reality!*

*\*Being on the receiving end of such an amazing amount of food from so many people from when we first asked to this harvest.*

*\* Having just the right number of volunteers we needed when we opened*

*\*All our clients leaving our base their lives transformed!*

*Most important of all though is knowing that God has been and still is with us every step of the way. He brought others on board to help set up and run Foodbank and to help me through the “dark times”:- what if I failed God? Does God really want a Foodbank in Stamford? Why me? I cant do this! Eventually I accepted that I would do whatever I had to do as it was all part of God’s plan. A statement that was easier to make than live with at times!!!*

*As I write we’ve been operating for just three and a half months and have fed 141 people. We have passed onto these people well over a tonne of your food. 30 groups of people work with us and distribute vouchers to their clients so they can come to us for food. We have a wonderful group of over 50 volunteers who willingly give up their time, are always smiling and have made such a difference to so many people who’ve had the misfortune to be without food or money to buy it.*

*The next stage of our journey is to go for our own charity status. If any of you would like to help in any way from support to being a trustee please contact me either by phone or by email.*

*We also need more volunteers in all areas, someone to cover admin and a deputy for me!*

*We know God has a plan .....*

*Blessings*

## ***Nicola Dunkin***

*Project Manager, Stamford Foodbank  
[info@stamford.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@stamford.foodbank.org.uk) 07570 583799*

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### ***Gardens Update***

As the gardening year draws to a close I thought I should give readers an indication of what I have been up to!

There have been the usual routine maintenance jobs as well as the on - going tasks like cutting the grass. I have needed to cut the grass well into November but it should not need many more cuts! The trees around the garage have provided lots of leaves for the Leaf Pile in the Wild Life Garden, next year I must try and arrange it so the trees drop their leaves directly into the Leaf Pile! Luckily I have a very large leaf rake and a collapsible wheelbarrow to ferry them from the garage to their destination. According to the experts you should remove them off the grass to prevent fungal spores developing etc. but I read recently that some leaves should be swept under bushes so that birds can forage for insects and insect larvae in the leaf litter. Of course decomposed leaves also improve the condition of the soil though this might take some time. Therefore it made sense to sweep some of the leaves off the lawn in the Garden Of Dreams (past the garage) and under some of the bushes!

I have trimmed the large Lime Tree at the southern corner of the car park not only removing suckers that grow over the pavement but I also removed some very high branches with the aid of a long ladder and my trusty pruning saw mounted on a broom handle. They were forming a

canopy preventing rain reaching the shrubs underneath. Hopefully this should help!

The Eucalyptus tree on the left as you enter the car park lost a branch in the high wind so I had to cut the trunk down and took the opportunity to remove some of the branches that had grown too tall.

Another week was devoted to clearing the garden south of the car park of most of the wild black berries that were turning it into a jungle! They were originally allowed to grow to provide food for the wild life around the church gardens, as were the several shrubs that I planted.

Speaking of planting I planted 5 different Penstemons, which seem to have taken. Three went into the triangular bed at the bottom of the ramp (Phase 1C) after I had cleared and extended this bed with some winter flowering pansies at the front. Unfortunately the pansies have since been covered with leaves but I hope they will benefit from this in the long run!

Past this bed the long strip down to the back of the church has been kept mown but right at the end I have created a small wild flower garden using the wild blackberries Kath gave me, some sedum, a hebe, several teasels (for the Goldcrests) some Achimella and other plants. Some of the turf I removed was used in the Garden of Dreams where the overhang of the garage had stunted grass growth. The wet weather has helped the new grass to knit into the old.

By this new bed the buddleia, purple clematis and roses growing up the metal fencing with the Wild Life Garden provide a link for Wild Life right round the church. I hope to add a purging Buckthorn to attract Brimstone butterflies but at present I am not sure about creating a native hedgerow down this stretch.

I forget to mention that the shrubs in Phase 1B around the Pergola by the ramp received a major haircut in October which was long overdue. I have tried my best to keep the weeds at bay and to dead head the roses etc. but I am sure I have not always got it right! However I recently emptied the compost bins and used as much as I could but I did collect rather a lot (20+) of those flower oasis used for flower arranging. Unfortunately they do not compost down, so please when you throw flowers away only put the flowers on the compost heap and put the oasis for landfill collection.

Many thanks to Brian and Denise Stephens who have helped with the gardens at various times weeding, clearing the gutters and picking up litter. This is a major problem at times with the wind blowing litter into the

gardens. Not to mention the various cans, bottles and other debris that seems to find its way onto the gardens. If you do see some litter please pick it up, and if anybody would like to wage war on litter there is a special stick hanging in the garage which can be used!

Here are a few Garden Definitions that might make you chuckle:

**Knee** - A device for finding rocks in your garden.

**Green Fingers** - Something everyone else has plenty of.

**Perennial** - This year, possibly; next year, unlikely.

**Seed catalogue** - A work of fiction with fantasy photos.

**Spade** - Highly efficient back-pain generator

I will leave you with a few words about the weather

*Whether the weather be cold  
Or whether the weather be hot  
Whatever the weather  
We'll weather the weather  
Whether we like it or not!*

Remember God made rainy days so that gardeners could get the housework done!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

*Chris.*

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## *Cat's Tales*

Hi Family!

Wind and rain in abundance!! The wind took my roof off but Mummy Ruth has reinforced it – with a brick! I'm keeping warm and dry fortunately. Christmas is coming and the turkey is getting fat so I've been promised a Christmas dinner. Yummy!

Have a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year. See you all after the holidays.

Lovs you all. **M.D.**

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## *Bishop of Lincoln's Letter*

*During my first year as the Bishop of Lincoln, I have probably clocked up more miles in my car than in the previous five years put together. I have been travelling around the Diocese, spending time with people in churches in all the corners of the diocese. That opportunity to spend time with people is precious. It's a chance to listen, to hear first-hand about the things which matter in different places, to share in the joys and sometimes in the sorrows of life in our congregations. It's a chance to get alongside and become part of the lives of our churches, even if only for a brief spell.*

*I'm all too aware that when the Bishop is coming to a service, people often make a special effort to spruce up the church. The brasses get an extra rub, the altar linens are washed and starched, and the biscuits and the cakes are always especially delicious. And yet, as we approach the season of Christmas and begin to prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, it's worth remembering that in that first Christmas, God didn't wait until everything was absolutely perfect and ready before sending his Son into the world. Instead, God came to us in the birth of Jesus in that stable in Bethlehem, into a world which neither expected him nor was ready for him.*

*In the mystery of the incarnation, God becomes one of us. He enters our world in Jesus, revealing himself to us. In Jesus, God shows us his very being, and in him we have the perfect model of discipleship, of how God wants each one of us to live our lives.*

*So in the midst of all the busyness of getting ready, remember that this is the great joy of Christmas: that in the greatest act of love, God became one of us in the incarnation of Jesus, whose birth tells us that there is a new Kingdom of God at work – a Kingdom for us all, a Kingdom whose name is Love.*

*Christopher Lincoln:*

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# YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE !

## Volunteering Opportunity

Why not get involved?

**Become a Mentor**



We are seeking enthusiastic, caring people to join our StartaFresh team at Christ Church supporting the needs of local and vulnerable people in Stamford

'StartaFresh' Mentors help individuals to identify hurdles and barriers which hold them back. We provide ongoing support, guidance and 'sign posting' when further professional help is needed so they can begin to move on in their lives.

**We provide training so no previous experience is needed, just the right qualities**

For further information please contact  
Geraldine Crowley  
Christ Church, Green Lane, Stamford PE9 1HE - 01780 766446

**'Working together for the benefit of the Community'**

# Calendar

## December

<b>Advent Sunday</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10.00</b> <b>4.00</b> <b>6.30</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> <b>CC@4</b> <b>Advent Service of Hymns</b> <b>and 9 Readings</b>
Monday	3	1-3 8.00	Befrienders Bible Study Home Group
Tuesday	4	6.30	Spanish Lesson
Wednesday	5	9-3 7.30	Day Centre Gospel Choir
Thursday	6	9.30 1-3 7.30 7.30	Toddlers Twinklets Prayer Meeting Horticultural Society
Friday	7	1-3	Befrienders
Saturday	8	2-4	Christmas Social
<b>Sunday</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> in Advent</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10.00</b> <b>4.00</b> <b>6.30</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> <b>CC@4</b> <b>Evensong</b>
Monday	10	1-3 8.00	Befrienders Bible Study Home Group
Tuesday	11	6.30	Spanish Lesson
Wednesday	12	9-3 11.15 7.30 7.30	Day Centre Christmas Party DC Communion Gospel Choir PCC
Thursday	13	9.30 1-3 7.30	Toddlers Twinklets Prayer Meeting
Friday	14	1-3	Befrienders
Saturday	15	All Day	Children's Christmas Party
<b>Sunday</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> in Advent</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10.00</b> 11.00 <b>4.00</b> <b>6.00</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b> Santa Fun Run <b>CC@4</b> <b>Family Christingle.</b>

Monday	17	1-3	Befrienders
Wednesday	19	7.30	Gospel Choir
Thursday	20	9.30	Toddlers Christingle and Christmas Party
		1-3	Twinklets
		7.30	Prayer Meeting
Friday	21	1-3	Befrienders
Saturday	22	9.30	Christmas Flower Decoration of church.
<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> in Advent</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10.00 4.00 6.30</b>	<b>Holy Communion CC@4 Christmas Party Carols by Candlelight</b>
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4.00 11.30</b>	<b>Carols and Crib Service Midnight Mass by Candlelight</b>
<b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>Christmas Day Family Communion</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>No services at all at Christ Church today 10.30</b>	<b>United Service at St. Georges Church.</b>

## *January 2013*

## *Happy New Year!*

Thursday	3	7.30 7.30	Informal Prayer Meeting Horticultural Society
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10.00 6.30</b>	<b>Holy Communion Evensong</b>
Monday	7	1-3	Befrienders
Wednesday	9	9-3 11.15 7.30 7.30	Day Centre DC Communion Gospel Choir PCC
Thursday	10	9.30 1-3 7.30	Toddlers Twinklets Prayer Meeting
Friday	11	1-3	Befrienders

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10.00</b> <b>4.00</b> <b>6.30</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> <b>CC@4</b> <b>Evensong</b>
Monday	14	1-3 8.00	Befrienders Bible Study Home Group
Wednesday	16	9-3 7.30	Day Centre Gospel Choir
Thursday	17	9.30 1-3 7.30	Toddlers Twinklets Prayer Meeting
Friday	18	1-3	Befrienders
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10.00</b> <b>4.00</b> <b>6.30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b> <b>CC@4</b> <b>Holy Communion</b>
Monday	21	1-3 8.00	Befrienders Bible Study Home Group
Wednesday	23	9-3 7.30	Day Centre Gospel Choir
Thursday	24	9.30 1-3 7.30	Toddlers Twinklets Prayer Meeting
Friday	25	1-3	Befrienders
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10.00</b> <b>4.00</b> <b>6.30</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> <b>CC@4</b> <b>Evensong</b>
Monday	28	1-3 8.00	Befrienders Bible Study Home Group
Wednesday	30	9-3 7.30	Day Centre Gospel Choir
Thursday	31	9.30 1-3 7.30	Toddlers Twinklets Prayer Meeting

See weekly notice sheets for full details of all events.

Girl Guiding UK have units meeting each week here at Christ Church throughout term-time. For more information contact 01780 784091.

## Regular term time Programme for the Basement

Monday	3-7	Teenzone
	7-9.30	Teenzone sports @ QE
Wednesday	3-7	Teenzone
	7-8.30	Teenzone
Thursday	1-3	Befrienders
	3-4	Teenzone (Careers Session)
	4-7	Teenzone

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## *Christmas Myths and Legends*

*Christmas Day was first celebrated on December 25th in the 4thC. AD.*

*Christmas-time was once so cold, frost fairs were held on the River Thames.*

*Before turkeys arrived on our shores - it was traditional to roast a Boar's head for Christmas dinner.*

*Never, never cut a mince pie with a knife! You are said to be courting bad luck if you do! Soothsayers in the past used to advise eating a mince pie on each of the 12 days of Christmas and to eat them in silence! This apparently, should guarantee a happy year to come!*

*Fruit trees - it pays to look after your fruit trees on Christmas Eve to ensure a plentiful crop in the coming year. One way to do this is to tie a stone to a branch of each tree or wrap wet straw round each tree trunk!*

*Mistletoe - is one of the most mysterious plants because of all the myths and legends that surround it. Once it was believed to protect houses from fires and lightning strikes. A Christmas bough, made from mistletoe, was often kept in the house all year, only being replaced on the following Christmas Eve. In some parts of England this tradition was practiced on New Year's Eve, and not Christmas Eve, and the old bough was taken out and burnt at once.*

*Farming - Christmas Eve is such a Holy Day that any seed sown will germinate even if the ground is water-logged or frozen hard!*

*Straw - For some farming people there was a strong connection between the Manger in which the infant Christ was laid and the manger from which their own cattle fed. It was considered lucky to give each of your cattle a strand of straw at Christmas!*

## *Ready for Christmas*

*"Ready for Christmas", she said with a sigh  
As she gave a last touch to the gifts piled high  
Then wearily sat for a moment and read,  
'til, very soon, she was nodding her head.*



*Then quietly spoke a voice in her dream,  
"Ready for Christmas what do you mean?  
Ready for Christmas when only last week  
You wouldn't acknowledge your friend on the street.*

*Ready for Christmas while holding a grudge?  
Perhaps you had better let God be the judge.  
Why, how can the Christ child come and abide  
In the heart that is selfish and filled with pride?*



*Ready for Christmas when only today  
A beggar lad came and you turned him away  
Without even a smile to show that you cared?  
The little he asked, it could have been spared.*

*Ready for Christmas, You've worked it is true  
But just doing the things you wanted to do.  
Ready for Christmas? Your circles too small  
Why, you're not ready for Christmas at all!"*

*She awoke with a start and a cry of despair,  
"There's so little time and I've still to prepare,  
O Father, forgive me, I see what you mean,  
To be ready means more than a house swept clean,*

*Yes, more than the giving of gifts and a tree,  
It's the heart swept clean that He wants to see;  
A heart that is free from bitterness and sin  
**Ready for Christmas.....and ready for Him."***

