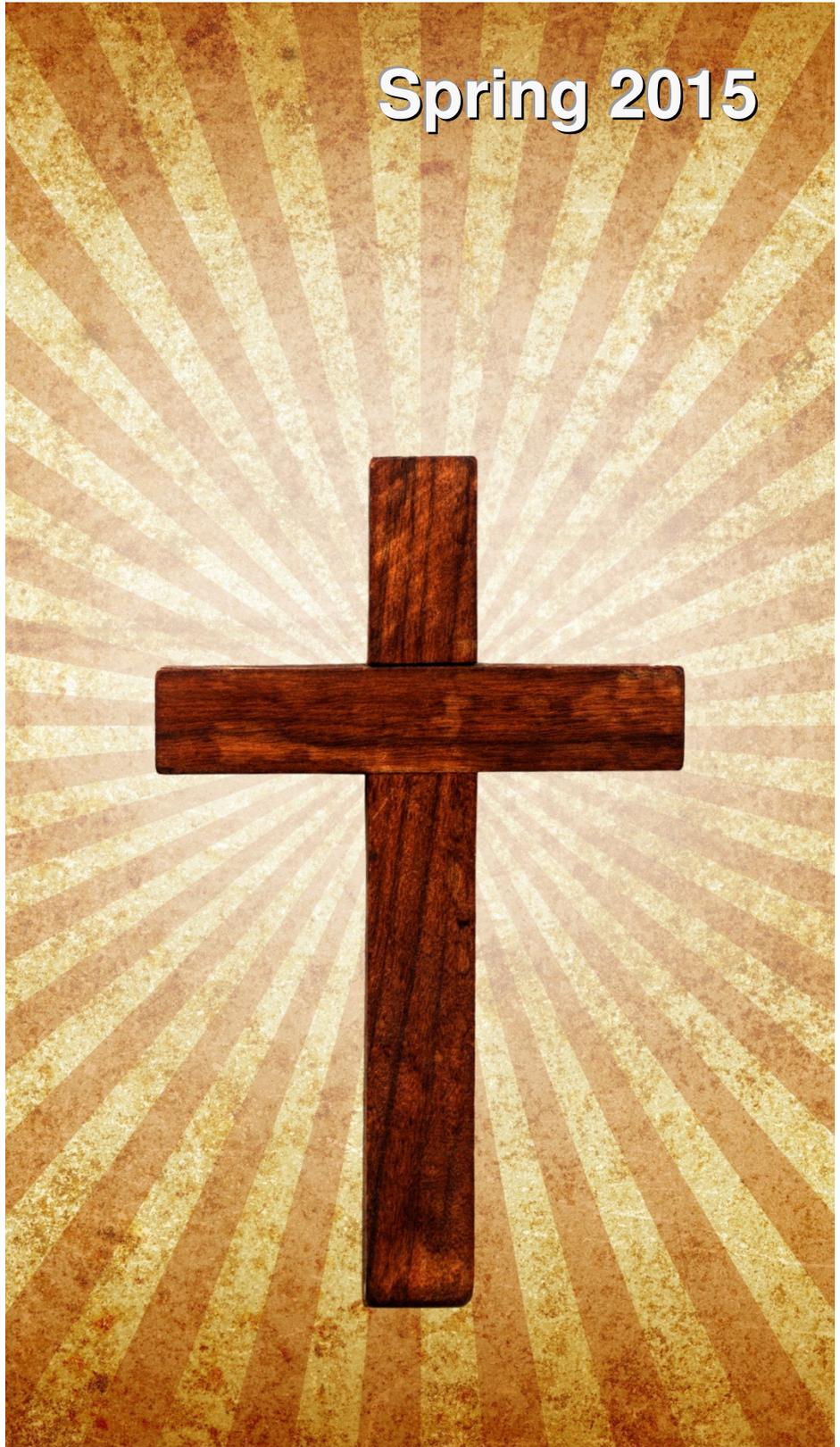


The Messenger



**Christ Church, Longridge "Living for Christ
at the heart of the community"**
www.christchurchlongridge.org.uk

Rev Ray Writes

By the time you read this article, the Christian season of Lent will have already started. Not for the first time in your life, you will have had pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and perhaps even attended a service of ashing on Ash Wednesday. But what is the real purpose of Lent?

The traditional emphasis has been on penitence, self-denial, confession and the testing of self-discipline. It is true that confession is a useful, cathartic activity, but it's not the whole picture. Lent is not just about looking back at our past failings, but looking forward to what God might want to do in our lives.

Mark's gospel tells us that Jesus was hurled into the desert by the Holy Spirit. I'm certain he had nothing to be penitent about, so what was he doing there for 40 days and nights? Jesus was hurled into the desert to remove him from all the distractions of everyday living. He was sent to think about his glorious baptism and ordination for the task of bringing the good news of the kingdom of God to the whole world - no small task. I only have to bring the good news to three churches and those that I meet, and that is hard enough I can tell you.

Whilst I'd like to experience a real desert for a week or so, I haven't had that privilege. But I have created a virtual desert each Lent since I came into ministry. On the first Sunday of Lent I shared some of my experiences in my virtual deserts of the last five years. I'm no expert, but here's a flavour of what I described.

Lent for me is about overcoming my propensity to keep myself busy so I don't have to face the whole of me. I like my good points but I don't much like my dark side and I'd rather pretend it isn't there. Part of my Lenten ritual; is to separate myself from people,

technology, entertainment, cleaning and working. I make periods of 30 minutes to an hour when I shun the world.

In my virtual desert I take time to slow down to a stop. This has to be done gradually because that nagging voice in my head keeps telling me I have a sermon to write, a meeting to prepare for, a house call to make, a hospital visit to do or whatever. It takes time to silence that voice but eventually it will give in and go away. Next, I take time to repent. I take time to come round to the idea that I'm going to let God have access to every part of me, even the dark side. I'm not sure I want to look at my dark side, to admit to it, to own it, to take responsibility for it. So Lent gives me the time I need to come round to the idea that I need God to show me parts of myself I'd rather ignore but which need to be dealt with.

After all the above, I might just be ready to "be still and know that [he] is God" (Ps 46.10). Only then can the wrestling with feelings, wills, spirits and God himself begin. It is here that we can talk with God, ask of God, listen to God, rail at God. It is here that our paths are made straight by God, that we come to hear his wise counsel. The journey into Lent will have done us good already, but here in the heart of it, God really works with us to bless us - even if the straightening process hurts for a while.

There are times when I don't want to leave the desert once I'm in the heart of it, but leave I must, for I have a calling to fulfil, as have you. Sooner or later we have to turn around and go back to the world, where the really hard bit awaits us. You see, it's in the world that the rubber of our cleansing and straightening hits the tarmac of life and where we are called to implement what was agreed in the desert.

So you see, Lent is much more than eating pancakes, having our foreheads ashed and giving up chocolate. It is entering into the very heart of God and finding yourself.

Reverend Ray Borg, Minister

‘Continental Brass’ at Christ Church

Forget being brassed off, Continental Brass’ eclectic mix of a wide-ranging repertoire showed just how moving and versatile brass music can be. The pure sounds of trumpets, horn and trombone played at the highest level gave new depths to a wide variety of repertoire.

The occasion was the 8th edition of ‘Music in the Afternoon’ – a series of Sunday afternoon concerts being presented at Christ Church, Berry Lane, which has featured musicians of contrasting styles. A large and enthusiastic audience was entertained by this newly formed quartet from Preston.

Directed by Matt Balson on cornet, the other players were Alison Balson (cornet and flugel), Rachael Shore (horn) and Tim Bateman (trombone).

Their repertoire included original works for quartet, arrangements of music by Elgar, Gershwin, Berlin and The Beatles. Particularly popular were the arrangements of hymns – enthusiastically sung by the audience. A highlight for me was the music from ‘Les Miserables’ with an emotive commentary from Matt.

Money raised from this concert will go towards Christ Church’s continuing support for the people of Sierra Leone. During the interval John Spencer gave a very moving summary of the suffering of the people through the Ebola epidemic – many known to him personally through his many visits there on behalf of the Methodist Church.

Geoff Balson

Walk For December - Longridge Fell

The walk this month was somewhat local, centred on our very own fell. There are many permutations of the tracks in the area and this particular trek could be regarded as one of the best.

We started the walk from Hurst Green and we were very lucky with the weather, as Friday and Sunday were both awful, but Saturday was beautiful, cold, clear and sunny.

From the village, we followed the main road for a while. Throughout the walk, we encountered patches of ice and the footpath here was quite difficult with much sliding. Soon we arrived at the church of St. John the Evangelist and in the churchyard there is a monument to one Ikaturu Sugi, a Japanese gentleman who acted as a translator and journalist during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. He later suffered from T.B. and spent the last part of his life being looked after by friends at Stonyhurst.

We were now heading along farm tracks with the fell in front of us and the paths fairly muddy in places, slowly ascending past Greengore and Crowshaw House until we reached Clitheroe Old Road, which we crossed and entered the forest, but due to disease, there are large patches that are currently devoid of trees. Eventually, we arrived at the broad forestry track that runs along the fell and provides easy walking and seemed to be popular with dog walkers. We then took a side track to a viewpoint and our lunch stop. From this spot, we were looking across the Vale of the Hodder to the fells, from Parlick, east to Wolf Fell and Fair Oak Fell. This has to be one of the best views in the county.

The next part of the walk was all downhill, down the forest track to Clitheroe Old Road again which we walked along to Kemple End, entering a track that led to fields where we had to negotiate one or

two difficult stiles. Leaving the muddy fields behind us, we then walked along a quiet lane and soon entered the magnificent complex of Stonyhurst College, past the school to the playing fields and the well-trodden and very familiar path back to Hurst Green.

During the walk, we passed two walking groups who rated this part of the north very highly. We are indeed very fortunate to be able to enjoy such countryside right on our doorstep.

Linda & Eddie Grange

Walk For January - Guild Wheel Part Two

The annual January plod along Blackpool Prom. had to be abandoned this year due to the ferocious winds and high seas. Therefore, because of the adverse conditions, we had a look for an easy, sheltered walk along good paths and the Guild Wheel seemed to fit the bill. We walked a section of the Wheel last year, arguably the best bit along the River Ribble to Avenham Park, but this time, we started at Broughton and walked to the Lancaster Canal and finished at Haslam Park.

We all met up at a lay-by on the A6 near to Broughton Crossroads and as soon as we started to walk, we were attacked by a vicious hail storm and gale force winds, a good start! Soon, we entered a pathway around the High School, followed by a quiet lane where we met a dog that had lost one of its front legs but it didn't seem to be bothered at all by the handicap. By now we were crossing the railway and took a right turn onto another pleasant lane that took us to Lightfoot Lane and the Nog Tow crossroads. How this area has changed since the cycling days of my youth!

The next part of our walk was briefly along Tom Benson Way, followed by a series of excellent estate paths which took us to a

circular junction with seats which made for a convenient lunch stop. After lunch, we continued along more rural pathways until we arrived at a canal bridge and here we left the Wheel and headed towards Preston. On our way, we came to the entrance to the Ribble Link, the waterway created to link up the canal to the River Ribble. No activity today though. The last part of the walk took us along the tow-path and we were passed by a family of ducks that had apparently adopted a solitary moorhen, followed by a number of elegant swans and by this time the weather had improved, with a magnificent rainbow appearing to touch down on the old Tulketh Mill. We now left the canal and strolled through Haslam Park and the end of the walk. Now it was all by 'bus, into town and then out to Broughton.

The Guild Wheel was a splendid creation and a credit to those whose inspiration it was. Next winter we have decided to explore another section, from Avenham Park to the same canal bridge.

Linda & Eddie Grange

Condolences

We send our deepest sympathies from the Church and from the Guild to Pam Calderbank and Sue Lawson and all their families on the death of Connie Gaunt in January. (Pam, of course, took part in the 50th Anniversary Service which Megan mentioned). Connie was a long-standing member of Longridge URC before we joined together and particularly enjoyed singing in the choir.

The Guild

As you know, we had a lovely service last year to celebrate our 50th Anniversary but we really wish more people would come to our meetings. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm in the Coffee Lounge (*some of us just call this 'the foyer' but thanks to Megan for this friendlier name*) and recently have welcomed men to join us. At the February meeting Howard Roscoe was the speaker telling us about a trip to see the Northern Lights, which was really good.

During the Summer months, we go out and about in the evenings and everyone is invited to join us.

We have younger people in Christ Church who would be made so welcome if they would join us and swell our ranks. So many organisations in the Village are having to close and we would hate to see the Ladies' Guild follow this trend. Do come along.

Megan Crew

These are the next 2 dates for Ladies Guild

March 2 Trip to Nepal by Steve Ashcroft

April 13 Fostering by Helen Lomas

Post Script

I don't know whether Megan's title 'The Guild' was deliberate or not but in the light of the fact that men now attend the meetings, this might be a more appropriate title -- what do others think?

We Never Stop Learning

This phrase or similar sayings such as ‘you live and learn’ are used commonly in everyday conversations and for most of us, they are clearly true. Something new on the Television or Radio or just in meeting different people can cause us to say ‘I never knew that before’. Some people like to learn new things in a more structured way by joining classes or groups. The church Craft Club is one example of this, where people bring along some craft project they are doing and share their knowledge with others or get help for their own problems from someone with more skill in that area. If you are into crafts --- anything from card-making to knitting; flower arranging to quilting and many more, why not come along to church on Monday mornings at 10.00am. We have a friendly cup of tea or coffee and a chat as we get on with our projects or watch the occasional demonstration.

Another example of the desire to learn is the University of the Third Age group which has started recently in Longridge. Details of their courses can be found at the Civic Hall and at the Heritage Centre.

There are also several other opportunities provided by the church. We regularly have news of opportunities such as the annual ‘Inspire’ conference available in the foyer. In this magazine, we have invitations to join the Guild and the course ‘Encircled in Care’ which explores the pastoral care of particular groups. These were designed for Pastoral Visitors but anyone is welcome to attend. Each session can be taken on its own so there’s no need to commit to attending on a regular basis.

There are a number of other possibilities coming up in the future. Ray is planning to hold a course on Basic Christian Beliefs. No dates have been set yet, so if you are interested why not have word with him.

As Circuit Tutor, Carol Spencer is planning to hold a series of seven sessions about worship. The course was prepared for those who want to be Worship Leaders but is open to anyone who wants to know more about what worship is and why we do certain things in services.

Worship Leaders exist in both the Methodist and United Reformed Churches. They play a more active part in preparing and leading worship than simply 'reading lessons' or reading out prepared prayers. They do not preach and usually do not have responsibility for the whole service, but can bring special skills such as music or drama or using visual images in worship and work with the preacher or minister to put the whole act of worship together. We have no designated Worship Leaders at Christ Church so there are opportunities there but the course can be taken just as a way of finding out more about what goes into the services. It would also be a good place to ask questions and share ideas. Again, we do not have a starting date for this course but it is likely to be at the end of March or beginning of April and will probably be on Sunday afternoons. There will be more information on the noticeboards when it is available.

Shoebox News

We have received a thank you letter from the Samaritan's Purse organisation telling us that all our shoeboxes last year have gone to Rumania. The letter is on the notice board in the foyer if you would like to read it.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Friday March 6th at Christ Church

This year the service has been prepared by the women of The Bahamas. This year the day is a little bit different from usual. The team who produced the worship material, have specifically stated that they do not want an address or sermon during the service. However the Rev Eddie Sykes who is a Methodist Minister in Morecambe has recently returned from being a Mission partner in The Bahamas and has been involved in a number of the preparatory meetings which have been held round the country. As Eddie lives relatively close to this area, we thought it would be a shame not to take advantage of his experience and knowledge so we have invited him to take part in a 'pre-meeting'. This means that while the Coffee Morning is going on in the foyer and the preparations for the Lent lunch are going ahead in the Hall, Eddie will be available in Church to chat about The Bahamas; answer questions and show a PowerPoint presentation. He will start at 10.00am and we envisage a fairly flexible time where people can come and go, and perhaps get a cuppa and bring it into church. We will try to time the PowerPoint presentation for 10.30 to help those who have other jobs to do, to time their breaks. We plan to finish about ten to eleven and then the service will start at 11.00am led by people from all the churches in Longridge and Grimsargh and joined this year by a member from Hurst Green.

Lent lunch will then follow from 12.00, so why not make it a real 'day' and not just a brief service. Come and bring a friend to any or all of the happenings that day.



**CHRIST CHURCH
LONGRIDGE**

CHOIR CONCERT

Saturday April 18th 7.30pm

Guest Performers:

**'GLOUCESTERSHIRE
POLICE
MALE VOICE CHOIR'**

Tickets: £5

Contact: Carol Rose 01772 783680

all proceeds to Christian Aid

**For more information about Christian Aid
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The Old Routine

Church can be fun!!! We try our best to make it a fun place for all the children who come to various activities. It may surprise you to know that about 90 children from Barnacre Road School and 2to School Pre-school attended the half-termly Connexion Zones in the last twelve months. You may be even more surprised to know that 23 different children aged 11 or under have attended services; Junior Church and/or Sunday Connexion Zone during the last year although only 9 of them are 'regulars'.

Perhaps those of us who are no longer children would like to think of church as a fun place as well. Worship can be very enjoyable but also challenging; we do have social events such as the upcoming concert with the Gloucestershire Police Male Voice Choir and the Christian Aid Quiz but the church has also to keep going from day to day. Please don't forget to support the regular events listed on the back of the Messenger and if you value what the church provides, please consider whether there is anything else you could help with. Everything from Prayer Breakfasts to Connexion Zones, needs organising and preparing so please pray for the church every day and consider how you are able to contribute.

Friday Coffee Rota

Mar 6th	Mrs B Warren	May 1st	Mrs L Grange
Mar 13th	Mrs L Grange	May 8th	Mrs S Lawson
Mar 20th	Mrs M Cook	May 15th	Mrs M Cook
Mar 27th	Rev E Hodgkiss	May 22nd	Rev E Hodgkiss
		May 29th	Mrs A Barnes
Apr 10th	Mrs A Barnes	Jun 5th	Mrs E Marven
Apr 17th	Mrs E Marven	Jun 12th	Mrs B Warren
Apr 24th	Mrs B Warren	Jun 19th	Mrs S Lawson
		Jun 26th	Mrs L Grange

Flower Rota

Mar 8th	Beryl Murrant	Apr 19th	J&K Norman
Mar 15th	Vacant	Apr 26th	Vacant
Mar 22nd	Sue Lawson	May 3rd	Alison Bainbridge
Mar 29th	Audrey Barnes	May 10th	Vacant
Apr 5th	Val Fletcher	May 17th	Sue Lawson
Apr 12th	Margaret Mohyla	May 24th	Betty Warren

Christ Church Worship and Events

Sunday March 1st

9.00am Prayer Breakfast

AM Rev Andrew Mashiter (Holy Communion)

PM Rev Katherine Bland

Monday March 2nd

7.30pm Circuit Local Preachers and Worship Leaders at Ingol

Tuesday March 3rd

7.30pm Pastoral Visitors' Course in church. This session is about the pastoral care of older people including a section about Alzheimer's and dementia. These sessions are open to everyone and everyone is welcome.

7.30pm URC Lay Preachers Fellowship meeting at Cleveleys

Friday March 6th

from 10am Women's World Day of Prayer

(see details elsewhere and notices in foyer and porch)

12.00 Lenten Lunch at Christ Church

Saturday March 7th

9.30-4.30 INSPIRE Conference at Runshaw College

(Booking essential – forms are available in the foyer)

Sunday March 8th

AM Mr Andrew Bennett

3-4pm Connexion Zone

PM Dr Carol Spencer (at Park House)

Tuesday March 10th

7.30pm Circuit Meeting at Bamber Bridge

Friday March 13th

12.00 Lenten Lunch at Christ Church prepared by the CofE

Sunday March 15th MOTHERING SUNDAY

AM Rev Elizabeth Hodgkiss

PM Rev Ray Borg (Holy Communion)

Friday March 20th

12.00 Lenten Lunch at St Wilfrid's prepared by Alston Lane

Sunday March 22nd PASSION SUNDAY

AM Mr Tony Bonser

PM Mr John North

Thursday March 26th

Coffee Day at the Civic Hall. Please see Pam Cliff if you can help.

Friday March 27th

12.00 Lenten Lunch at Christ Church

Saturday March 28th

9.30am District Safeguarding Update session at Ingol Methodist Church

Sunday March 29th PALM SUNDAY

AM Rev Ray Borg

PM Rev Andrew Webb

Monday March 30th No Craft

Thursday April 2nd

7.30pm Maundy Thursday Holy Communion Rev Ray Borg

Friday April 3rd

10.45am Good Friday Worship Dr Carol Spencer followed by short act of worship with the other churches by the War Memorial

Sunday April 5th EASTER DAY

6.30am Easter Sunrise on Beacon Fell

AM Rev Ron Lewis (Holy Communion)

PM Easter Praise Dr Carol Spencer

Sunday April 12th

AM Deacon Janet Edwards

3-4pm Connexion Zone

PM Mr Henry Rose (at Park House)

Monday April 13th

Craft Club restarts

Saturday April 18th

7.30pm Concert for Christian Aid

Guest Performers: Gloucestershire Police Male Voice Choir

Sunday April 19th

AM Rev Sue Griffiths

PM Rev John Maiden

Monday April 20th

7.30pm Circuit Stewards Meeting at Circuit Manse

Saturday April 25th

9.30am Lancashire District Synod at Poulton Le Fylde Methodist

Sunday April 26th

AM Rev Malcolm Hickox

PM Rev Elizabeth Hodgkiss (Holy Communion)

Sunday May 3rd

AM Rev Ray Borg (Holy Communion)

12.30 Annual Church Meeting

PM Circuit Easter offering Service at Ingol

Sunday May 10th

AM Dr Peter Lumsden

3-4pm No Connexion Zone (Connexion Zone will be May 17th)

PM Rev Elizabeth Hodgkiss (at Park House)

Thursday May 14th

7.30pm Circuit Ascension Day Service – venue TBA

Friday May 15th

7.30pm Quiz in aid of Christian Aid

Sunday May 17th

AM Rev Barbara Duchars

3–4pm Connexion Zone

PM Rev Elizabeth Hodgkiss (at Park House)

Sunday May 24th

AM Mrs Zoe Ainsworth

PM Deacon Janet Edwards

Sunday May 31st

AM Rev Nigel Lemon

PM Rev John Fisher

Tuesday June 2nd

7.30pm Local Preachers and Worship Leaders Meeting at Lea

Sunday June 7th CHRIST CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

AM Rev Ray Borg (Holy Communion)

Thursday June 11th

7.30pm District Ordinands Testimony Service venue TBA

Saturday June 13th LONGRIDGE FIELD DAY

(Lots of help needed on the day, please watch the notices or see John Spencer nearer the time).

Thursday June 18th

7.30pm Lancashire District World Church Evening in Lancaster with updates on Sierra Leone; Papua New Guinea and Uruguay projects. More details later.

Wednesday June 24th

Circuit Meeting venue TBA

Services

Events

Activities

SUNDAY

- 9.00am** Prayer Breakfast*
*Normally 1st Sunday of month
- 10.45am** Morning Worship & Junior Church
- 3.00pm** Connexion Zone*
*Normally 2nd Sunday of month
- 6.30pm** Evening Worship*
*2nd Sunday at Park House

MONDAY

- 10.00am** Craft Club
- 7.45pm** Ladies Guild*
*1st Monday of month

FRIDAY

- 7.45am** CTL Morning Prayers*
*At Christ Church in 2015
- 10.00am** Coffee Morning

SATURDAY

- 9.30am** Christ Church Ramblers*
*2nd Saturday each month

MINISTER: Rev Ray Borg 01772 768112

(Church Secretary) Mrs Mel Watson 01772 783581 or
(Senior Steward) Mrs Carol Rose 01772 783680 or
(Pastoral Secretary) Dr Carol Spencer 01772 782829

EDITOR: Robin Spencer
robspencer@o2.co.uk