

'Sharing God's love so that all may know Jesus'



Connections



May 2021

The Church Magazine for Warwick Road URC & West Orchard URC

Warwick Road URC 10 Warwick Row Coventry CV1 1EX West Orchard URC Baginton Road Coventry CV3 6FP



In this month's magazine

Letter to the Editor	2
Dear Friends	3
West Orchard pastoral news	
Poetry Café	
News in Brief from around the UK	
World Day of Prayer 2021	6
Eco Church - No Mow May	
Thoughts on Pentecost Sunday (23 May)	7
Easter decorations	8
News in Brief from beyond the UK	<u>g</u>
Warwick Road Church Centre activities and Meal Delivery Service - May upo	date .10
Smiles - An Atheist in the Woods	
Puzzle Pages	12
Mouse Makes	
Connections – June 2021 issue deadline	15
Church Contacts	16

Letter to the Editor

Dear Claire,

Now that I no longer make regular contributions to *Connections*, I would just like to thank everyone who helps to publish the magazine every month - the people who write the articles, the editorial staff, the printing and all involved in keeping us informed at this difficult time. Thank you all and stay safe.

George Drake



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Dear Friends

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep." [John 21:15-17]



In Matthew chapter 26:34 Jesus tells Peter "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times". The number three seems to be very significant in our culture, many folks believing that some things come in threes. And it is difficult to argue against this. Even the current guidance from the Government is threefold: hands, face, space! In our faith we have the triune nature of God as Parent, Son, and Holy Spirit. The significance of Jesus questioning Peter is, of course, to allow this disciple to accept three times forgiveness and allowing him to move forward in his ministry unburdened by the past and in particular his denying of Jesus three times.

So as I write to you today, I wonder if I could encourage you to look forward into the three months ahead and think of three things about church life that you hold as important. I would then ask you to pray about these things and to reflect how the passage above speaks into your prayers.

I, for one, look forward to meeting you all in person again, sharing worship in our buildings and understanding how we move forward in the post-Covid world, sharing the gift of love that is Jesus Christ.

With this in mind, I remind you of another set of three to be found in our Bible, from Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

So now may the love of God bless you, keep you and may his light shine upon you.

Best wishes and every blessing

Pete



West Orchard pastoral news

April showers and cold winds are keeping us indoors, even though we are allowed to be a bit more adventurous. Rev Yvonne is taking her sabbatical and hoping to see her family.

The nation is mourning the loss of the Duke of Edinburgh who died peacefully at the age of 99. Our prayers are for the Queen and the Royal Family as they deal with the formalities.

We are sorry to hear that Sue Matthews' brother died in Scotland after a long illness. Sadly, she was unable to attend the funeral but watched it online as did many others.

We hope that most of us have been able to have the vaccine to keep us safe.

Madge Taylor and Marsh Mulrooney have had cataract operations which both went well. Margaret Bamford, Julia Dixon, and John Bruffell are all struggling with ill-health, which we hope will improve as the weather does. Our prayers are for these and other friends of the church.

We hear that Beryl White has settled happily in St Andrew's House and is having visitors now. Our other good news is that Cameron and Dylan are both becoming 18 this month so we wish them Happy Birthday and all the best for their future careers.

Rose Tomlinson

Poetry Café

Poetry Café meets on the first Thursday of each month. During the Covid-19 outbreak, we have been meeting online via Zoom, at 2pm. We each share two or three poems – these are usually on a set theme but don't have to be!



The next meetings are:

Thursday, 6 May, Theme: 'Pot luck'

Thursday, 3 June, Theme: 'Transitions'



All are welcome. To join in the next Zoom session or for more information, please contact Craig Muir: ministercoventryneurc@gmail.com.

NEWS IN BRIEF FROM AROUND THE UK



March 2021 saw the announcement of the completion of the £1.7m restoration of the Anglican Chapel at Coventry's London Road Cemetery and repair works to the Jewish Chapel, the 1871 mortuary room, the Bier Store and the Paxton monument. The 18 acres of disused quarries were purchased for £900 from the Freemans Guild following an

1844 local Act of Parliament. Joseph Paxton, the landscape designer, was employed to lead the team and the cemetery was opened in 1847. It had a Prospect Tower overlooking the Sherbourne Valley, for the warning of horse-pulled hearses. Joseph Paxton, later knighted, became an MP for Coventry and also Mayor. At the time of this construction he was the head gardener to his Grace the Duke of Devonshire.

Allotments, golf courses, sports pitches and farmland in the UK could be claimed back by councils following concerns over a lack of land for burials, especially since the pandemic. For example, Upton-upon-Severn Parish Council in 1888 bought land for future burial space and are now claiming it back from allotment holders. In 2019 there was an 11% increase in burials, with 134,000 buried. Although cremations in 2019 were up to 77.8% of deaths, there is still concern because Islamic, Jewish and Orthodox Christian teachings call for the believers to be buried.

George Spencer, the great-great-great-uncle of Diana, Princess of Wales, and great-

uncle of Winston Churchill, has been recognised by the Pope and given the title of Venerable, which means he is on the path to sainthood. George was the youngest son of the 2nd Earl Spencer and converted to Catholicism, which horrified his family. He was born in 1799 and died in 1864. He joined the Passionist Order and was ordained in Rome under the name Father Ignatius of St Paul. Although a cricket enthusiastic, he ministered to poor Irish migrants in the West Midlands and preached both in the UK and Europe.



More than £400,000-worth of paving slabs have been stolen in the last five years from historic churchyards and buildings. Portland, York and Cotswold stone are popular and the police want stone traders and architectural salvage businesses to be regulated in the same way as metal dealers.

The mothers of the bride and groom are finally to have their names entered in the official register of marriages in the first reform of the law since Queen Victoria in 1837. The new regulations amending the Marriage Act 1947 were laid before Parliament on 22 February 2021. The marriage certificate will not now be issued by the Minister during the service but held electronically by the local Register Office.

Barry Stelfox

World Day of Prayer 2021



The World Day of Prayer (WDP) always takes place on the first Friday in March each year. On that day a service is held worldwide, which focuses on a different country each year. This year it was Vanuatu, a group of islands east of Australia.

The women of the chosen country prepare the service well in advance and it is translated into hundreds of languages, so that in every country the same service is followed during that day.

It is a way of uniting Christian worship and prayer, by highlighting the needs and problems, as well as achievements of ordinary people in situations very far from our own experience. It is an opportunity to learn of the daily lives of ordinary people, so that we can pray for them with understanding.

There are usually several venues in Coventry where the ecumenical service is held at different times of the day, providing an opportunity for members of different churches to worship together. However, because of the Covid lockdown, this year had to be different. Our minister, Revd Yvonne Stone, offered to lead the service, and Revd Peter Kimberley did the technical part, for which we were very grateful.

The theme this year was "Building on a Strong Foundation" and took the parable of the houses built on sand and rock. Mary Goodwin from West Orchard and Rita Dalton from Warwick Road organised our members who took part by recording the readings and prayers.; Tim Campain recorded the organ parts for the hymns. The service went out on Friday 5 March and served for Sunday 7 March as well.

Holyhead Road URC held a "live" Zoom service, organised by Olive Holtom and hosted by Karen Adams, and 250 service booklets were distributed to our members, friends and neighbours. Those who didn't have access to YouTube could read the service booklet and pray at home.

WDP HQ asked us to mention that the offering was important because it was usually distributed to numerous charities who depended on some income from the Day of Prayer, the only opportunity to collect money for them.

Our appeal resulted in collecting £425 but there could be considerably more, as many have donated on line or sent cheques directly to HQ in Kent. Many thanks to all those who contributed.

The link for the YouTube recording was sent out widely around Coventry and beyond, so it was good to be able to contact and involve many who had no previous experience of WDP.

Rita Dalton

Eco Church - No Mow May

We have had Dry January and Movember and now is the time to support Plantlife's No Mow May. Simply lock up your lawn mower for the month of May and let the wild flowers in your garden bloom, providing a feast of nectar for our hungry pollinators.

If you stop mowing your whole lawn, or even just a part of it, for a month or a season, you can create a busy wildlife habitat. Plants already present will have the chance to grow and bloom.



Clover seeds may already be in your lawn as they used to be included in packets of lawn seed. Other seeds get blown in or dropped by birds. Dandelions, yarrow and buttercups are all brilliant sources of food for pollinators. You may also see daisies, speedwell, selfheal, buttercups and cowslips. Even orchids might appear.

The pollen and nectar of flowering plants will attract pollinating bees, butterflies, beetles and more. Longer grass will provide shelter and somewhere for animals such as frogs, newts, hedgehogs and lizards to forage.

After May you may want to cut it down. Set your mower to a blade height of about seven centimetres and only mow roughly every six to eight weeks. This will help keep vigorous species under control and encourage good root development by any perennial flowers.

For more information, see the National History Museum's web page on 'How to grow a lawn that's better for wildlife'.

Jenny Barnes

Thoughts on Pentecost Sunday (23 May)

A Christian may not always be conscious of the Holy Spirit's presence, but he would not even be a Christian in his absence. – John Blanchard

Before Christ sent the Church into the world, He sent the Spirit into the Church. The same order must be observed today. – John R W Stott

The gift of the Spirit was a fruit of the resurrection of Christ. – John Calvin

The Spirit is not given to make Bible study needless, but to make it effective. – JI Packer

From Parish Pump

Easter decorations

Both Warwick Road and West Orchard church premises were beautifully decorated for Easter. Many thanks to all of those who contributed in making these displays possible.

















Thanks to Pauline Blanchard, Peter Kimberley and David Lathbury for the photos.

NEWS IN BRIEF FROM BEYOND THE UK

A major construction of the 93 metre (305ft) spire of Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, has started, with the requirement that it be built "as per the original". Tree surgeons have begun "harvesting" 1,000 special oak trees from many parts of France. Many of these had to be at least 1 metre (more than 3ft) wide and 18 metres (60ft) long. Eight of the trees for the most monumental part of the spire were found in the Forest of Berce that once belonged to the Kings of France. All trees had to be felled in March otherwise harmful tree sap and moisture could enter the wood fibres; then the trunks must be left out to dry for up to 18 months.

The author Ken Follett wanted to help financially with the Notre Dame rebuilding programme but as €1bn had already been pledged, he has decided to give the £125,000 royalties from his 2019 essay *Notre Dame: A Short History of the Meaning of Cathedrals* to St Samson's Cathedral in Dol-en-Bretagne, Brittany, which is a gothic masterpiece. The author has been enamoured of Notre Dame since he researched its history for

the fictional 12th century town of Kingsbridge in the novel *The Pillars of the Earth* which became a bestselling book, TV series and video game. In this book the cathedral was burnt down with the fire starting in the roof, the same as Notre Dame!

Christian ruins have been discovered at Tal Ganoub Qasar al-Agouz in the Bahariya Oasis, Egypt, revealing several buildings made of basalt, others carved into the bedrock and some made of mud bricks. This remote complex, located in the desert south-west of Cairo, was occupied between the 4th and 8th centuries. Both Greek and Coptic symbols, graffiti and religious inscriptions have been found on the church walls. The Egyptian Government has announced several major new archaeological discoveries in recent months with the hopes of encouraging tourism.

The next Oberammergau Passion Play, which is only performed every 10 years, is to be in May 2022. The cast must now observe the Hair and Beard Decree of 1870 which forbids all participants from having their hair cut from the previous Ash Wednesday (17 February 2021). This is so the cast look "homogeneously historical", enabling actors to grow into their roles - plus saving the cost of wigs and false beards! The only exception to this rule is for the 1,800 extras playing Romans.

The Jesuit Conference of Canada and the Catholic Church in America have pledged \$100m to the descendants of 272 people who in 1838 were sold by Jesuit priests to plantations in Louisiana for about \$500,000. The money was needed to finance a college (which became Georgetown University) which was in financial difficulty. In 1839 Pope Gregory XVI banned Catholics from participating in the slave trade.

Barry Stelfox

Warwick Road Church Centre activities and Meal Delivery Service - May update

The rules have now changed, with non-essential shops, hairdressers, restaurants and pubs among those businesses reopening for the first time this year. Such was the pent-up demand that one pub in Coventry had a queue of over 100 people at midnight on the first day. I only hope that similar scenes will not be repeated at WRURC when the café eventually opens its doors!

Last month I mentioned the potential problems with demand for use of our main room. This issue was discussed by the Elders and Trustees, who considered issues such as the loss of revenue, the need for additional cleaning, the general ongoing uncertainty and the overall risks of reopening. Safety is our prime concern.

It was agreed that we should continue to support the two Alcoholics Anonymous groups and our food delivery service. We are now also considering a restart request from the Messengers of Salvation who have had Sunday worship in our Church Centre for several years.

Our current plan is to continue the meal delivery service until at least the end of June, when it will be reviewed. On 21 and 28 May we intend to invite a small group to have their lunch at the Centre and then slowly build this up during June, probably adding another day and extending the numbers involved.

Menu for May 2021

	Mains	Desserts
Friday 7	Chicken & mushroom pie,	Fresh cream scone
May	potatoes and veg	Citrus sponge and custard
	Pork and apple casserole	
Friday 14	Ham & leek pie, potatoes and	Eve's pudding and custard
May	vegetables	Chocolate brownie
	Mince beef cobbler, potatoes and vegetables	
Friday 21	Beef lasagne and new potatoes	Jam roly-poly and custard
May	Chicken dinner	Lemon meringue pie
Friday 28	Smoked haddock, new potatoes	Creamy rice pudding
May	and peas	Fruit tart
	Shepherd's pie and vegetables	

If you are interested in trying the meal service, leave a message on the church office answerphone (024 7622 0299), remembering to give your contact details. Alternatively, send an email to office@wrurc.co.uk. I will then phone you to explain how the system works. The prices: main course £4, pudding £2 and delivery £1.

Ann's jam, marmalade and chutney venture continues. Contact her on (024) 7627 3131 to place an order or you can include it with your food delivery order: Pear & Ginger Jam (£2.20), Mixed Fruit Jam (£2.00), Blackberry & Apple Jam (£1.80), Original Marmalade (£1.40) or Marmalade with Ginger (£1.70). Chutney (smaller jars): Spicy Carrot & Apple Chutney (£0.80) and Spicy Apple with Walnut Chutney (£1.00).

Keith Greenall, Church Centre Manager

Smiles - An Atheist in the Woods

An atheist was walking through the woods. "What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!" he said to himself.

Suddenly, he heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. He turned to look ... and saw a 7-foot grizzly bear charging towards him. He ran as fast as he could along the path. He looked over his shoulder and saw that the bear was closing on him. He looked over his shoulder again, and the bear was even closer and then ... he tripped and fell.

Rolling over to pick himself up, he found the bear was right on top of him, reaching towards him with its left paw and raising the right paw to strike. At that instant the atheist cried out: "Oh my God!"

Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent.

A bright light shone upon the man, and a voice came out of the sky: "You deny my existence for all these years, you teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?"

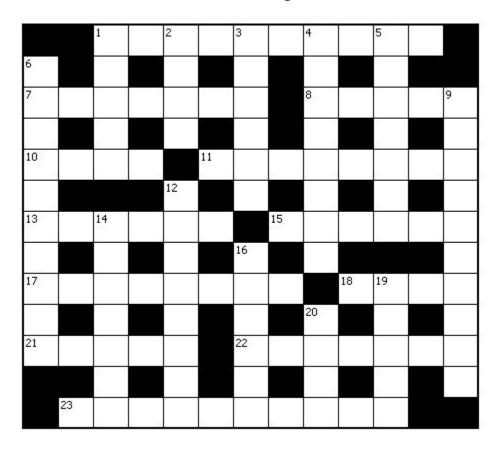
The atheist looked directly into the light. "It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now ... but perhaps you could make the bear a Christian?"

There was a pause ... "Very well," said the voice. The light went out. The sounds of the forest resumed. And the bear dropped his right arm, brought both paws together, bowed his head and spoke:

"Lord, bless this food, which I am about to receive."

Submitted by Barry Stelfox

Puzzle Pages



Across

- 1 Sense of right and wrong (1 Corinthians 8:7) (10)
- 7 Coming (John 11:17) (7)
- 8 'All I have is —, and all you have is mine' (John 17:10) (5)
- 10 Smarten (Acts 9:34) (4)
- 11 Hold back (Job 9:13) (8)
- 13 Member of the Society of Friends (6)
- 15 At ague (anag.) (6)
- 17 Citizen of the Greek capital (8)
- 18 So be it (Galatians 6:18) (4)
- 21 Twentieth-century poet and dramatist who wrote Murder in the
- Cathedral, T.S. (5) 22 Empowers (Philippians 3:21) (7)
- 23 Imposing (1 Samuel 9:2) (10)

Down

- 1 Healed (Luke 7:21) (5)
- 2 Central space in a church (4)
- 3 Co-founder of Spring Harvest and General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance 1983–97, Clive (6)
- 4 Moses killed one when he saw him beating
- a Hebrew labourer (Exodus 2:12) (8)
- 5 Bravery (Acts 4:13) (7)
- 6 It interrupted Paul and Silas singing hymns in a Philippian jail (Acts 16:26) (10)
- 9 Transgression (Psalm 36:1) (10)
- 12 Irish province in which Dublin is situated (8)
- 14 Same hit (anag.) (7)
- 16 'The Spirit of God was hovering over the —' (Genesis 1:2) (6)
- 19 Author of the immortal stories of Winnie the Pooh, A.A. (5) 20 Cab (4)

SUDOKU (EASY)

	7			5	4	6	3	8
		9			7	1		
				8		7		9
	8				6	3	7	1
		3				2		
1	4	2	5				9	
3		8		2				
		7	3			5		
5	2	6	7	9			8	

SUDOKU (MEDIUM)

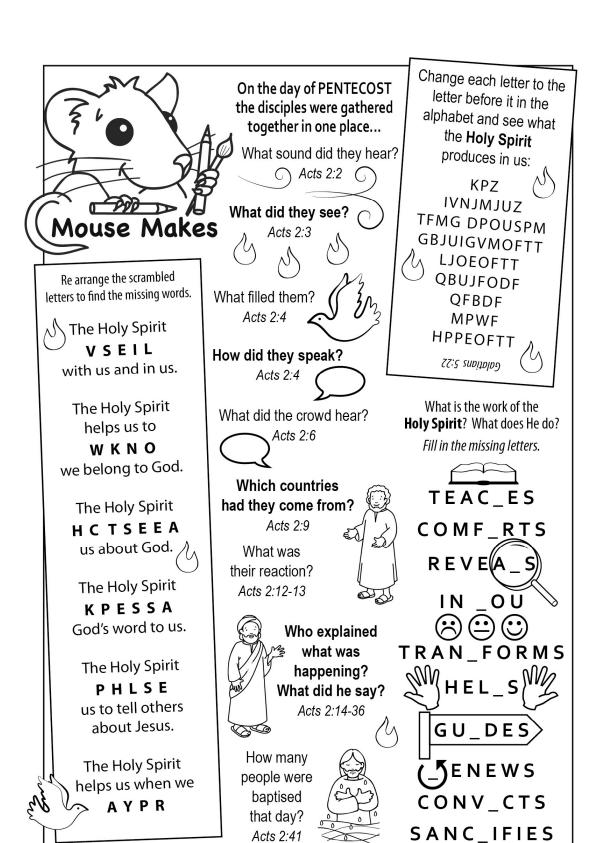
	1	9	2					7
		7	8				5	9
	5				7			1
			5					8
9				3				5
1					6			
3			6				7	
5	7				1	9		
4					8	5	3	

Solutions on page 15

WORDSEARCH

The first Sunday in May is Rogation Sunday, when many parishes still 'beat the bounds'. Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land. The Romans used to process around the cornfields each Spring, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, in order to get rid of evil. About 465AD, Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, ordered that prayers should be said in fields ruined by earthquake or storm; thus 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial. It arrived in England early in the 8th century. Each Spring, led by the priest, a little party from the parish would set out with a cross to trace the parish boundaries. They'd implore God to keep their corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to harvest. In the days when maps were scarce, 'beating the bounds' helped remind everyone just where the boundaries were.

SUNDAY MAY ROGATION BEAT BOUNDS ASKING BLESSING SEED LAND ROMANS	PROCESSED CORNFIELDS SPRING EARTHQUAKE STORM PRAYER CROSS BOUNDARIES CROPS HARVEST MAPS	G D N P L M B S E E R A N O I T A G O R N K E A I S I P N S U N D A Y A S S S D D S N A E U A M S Y C N P I D A E Q R C E P U R O M A N S H P H L O I S S O R C H T A K B N S D L E I F N R O C G A T B D D E A V A E R P R O C E S S E D E O O A D R U O A S K I N G P Y A M S E T T P G S N S
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SOLUTION - SUDUKO (EASY)

2	7	1	9	5	4	6	3	8
8	5	9	6	3	7	1	2	4
6	3	4	1	8	2	7	5	9
9	8	5	2	4	6	3	7	1
7	6	3	8	1	9	2	4	5
1	4	2	5	7	3	8	9	6
3	1	8	4	2	5	9	6	7
4	9	7	3	6	8	5	1	2
5	2	6	7	9	1	4	8	3

SOLUTION - SUDUKO (MEDIUM)

8	1	9	2	6	5	3	4	7
6	4	7	8	1	3	2	5	9
2	5	3	4	9	7	8	6	1
7	3	4	5	2	9	6	1	8
9	8	6	1	3	4	7	2	5
1	2	5	7	8	6	4	9	3
3	9	8	6	5	2	1	7	4
5	7	2	3	4	1	9	8	6
4	6	1	9	7	8	5	3	2

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Across: 1 Conscience. 7 Arrival. 8 Yours. 10 Tidy. 11 Restrain. 13 Quaker. 15 Gateau. 17 Athenian. 18 Amen. 21 Eliot. 22 Enables. 23 Impressive.

Down: 1 Cured. 2 Nave. 3 Calver. 4 Egyptian. 5 Courage. 6 Earthquake. 9 Sinfulness. 12 Leinster. 14 Atheism. 16 Waters. 19 Milne. 20 Taxi.

Connections - June 2021 issue deadline

News, articles and other items to be included in the June 2021 issue of **Connections** should be sent by email to the editor, Claire Booth (clairehbooth@hotmail.com) no later than Wednesday, 19 May 2021.

Connections will be published in digital format while the Coronavirus restrictions are still in place. You will be able to view it on the church websites www.warwickroadurc.org.uk and www.westorchardurc.org.uk or it can be sent to you by email if you prefer.

If you want it emailed to you, please contact Keith Greenall: <u>keith@wrurc.co.uk</u> or Hugh Maccallum: <u>westorchardoffice@gmail.com</u>.

Thanks, *Claire*

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views of the URC or its congregation

Church Contacts



Minister:
Reverend Yvonne Stone
Currently on sabbatical



Mission, Outreach and Worship Leader: Reverend Peter Kimberley

tel: 07581 710348

email: westorchardoutreach@gmail.com

Warwick Road

Church Secretary: Post currently vacant

Church Treasurer: Richard Blanchard

email: richardblanchard29244@gmail.com

Church Office:

10 Warwick Row, Coventry, CV1 1EX

tel: 024 7622 0299

website: www.warwickroadurc.org.uk

email: wrurc@wrurc.co.uk

West Orchard

Church Secretary:

Pauline Luckett

email: westorchardsecretary@gmail.com

Church Treasurer:

Margaret Costigan

email: westorchardtreasurer@gmail.com

Church Administrator and Room Bookings Secretary:

Hugh Maccallum tel. 024 7641 9927 (Please leave a message on the answerphone) website: www.westorchardurc.org.uk

email: westorchardoffice@gmail.com

