

The lesson of the apple

From the Priest-in-Charge...

Revd Heather Smith writes:

Last month some of us spent a happy few hours harvesting apples in Janet's garden. The apple crop has been a bumper one this year and there was enough to fill a small room! We've been living on apple crumble and apple cake for several weeks.

The apple, of course, is the fruit that caused all that difficulty in the Garden of Eden – or was it? Many of you may know that Genesis never mentions what the fruit was. It came to be thought of as an apple in the 12th century in France, when artists began to represent

it as such. The reason is that the Latin word for apple, “malum”, is a homonym of the Latin word for “evil”. By the 14th century, the apple was widely accepted as the forbidden fruit.

Many years ago, as a curate, I decided to give some more thought to the forbidden fruit in a family service. I went to Waitrose (of course!) and bought the best and most enticing range of fruits I could find. They ranged from exotic to mundane and included a lovely red, shiny apple. I asked the congregation to vote for the fruit that they would

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Apple-picking in Janet's garden – one approach...



And another! Photos courtesy of Jane Nicholson.

Lesson of the apple

Continued from page 1

▶ have found most tempting. By a large margin they voted for the apple! When I laughed and said they were all very conventional, someone pointed out that of all the fruits I'd shown them, the apple really did look the most delicious.

But the best looking doesn't always taste the best. Some apples can be dry and unappetising, while others can be bitter and tart – you can't always tell from the outside. It's good to look deeper than the surface, with apples and people.

Farewells to friends



Last month we said farewell to Ben (above with Jane), who is off to Plymouth Uni to study Law. We also farewelled Jonathan (below and below right), who has returned to South Africa and sends a note from there (above right) to say thanks.



A sincere thank-you

Jonathan Stead writes:

Dear Christ Church friends

I finally arrived at my sister's home after an exhausting journey. This is the house that I grew up in, so it was a joy to be back. I will be staying here until I find a suitable home.

Two weeks ago the plastic surgeon removed the cancer from my leg and took a skin graft from my forearm. I will continue to go to a clinic three times a week to have the wounds cleaned but both are healing well. Susan has been an amazing carer and host, and I have been treated like a VIP patient.

I was overwhelmed by my last service at Christ Church – the moving words of Mark and Heather, the glorious music that moved me to tears, the thoughtful gifts including the map of Bath and the memory book, and the wonderful champagne reception. Above all thank you for the sentiments in the farewell cards, and the outpouring of kindness and fellowship from you all. I have enough warm hugs to keep me going for a long time! I have been so richly blessed through your friendship and loving support over the past 9 years.

I pray that Christ Church continues to be a beacon of welcome and inclusion.

My UK mobile number has stopped working but I am available on this email address: jonathanstead20@gmail.com.

With many blessings and good wishes to each of you.

Jonathan



Autumn concerts

Our concert series on Saturday afternoons at Christ Church continues this month:

■ 11 October: A father-and-son organ recital by David and Simon Winters.

■ 8 November: Sacred and secular choral music sung by Christ Church Choir.

All the concerts will start at 3pm and last approximately an hour. Admission is free (with a retiring collection) and the church will be open from 2:15pm for refreshments.

Please note that parking will be very limited – please consider alternative locations to park or alternative means of transport.

Also last month...



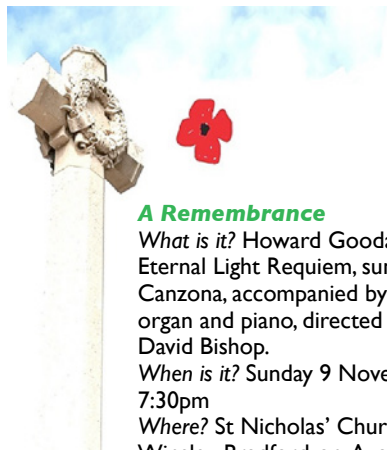
Harvest always sees the church beautifully decorated in seasonal colours – thanks to all those who contributed! Below, Jane captured this photo of a visitor adding its own decorative touch.



Pilgrim Group

Our ecumenical study group will meet next on Thursday 9 October at 7:30pm in the Lower Mews. The group meets on alternate Thursdays and all are welcome. We are continuing to study the book *Water into Wine*, an introduction to St John's Gospel by Stephen Verney. For further information please contact Graham Reaper-Brown.

Coming events



A Remembrance

What is it? Howard Goodall's Eternal Light Requiem, sung by Canzona, accompanied by harp, organ and piano, directed by David Bishop.

When is it? Sunday 9 November, 7:30pm

Where? St Nicholas' Church, Winsley, Bradford-on-Avon BA15 2LH

Exploring Faith Group

Interested in thinking about what the Bible means for us today? This informal group will meet next on Thursday 16 October at 2pm in the Lower Mews and then on alternate Thursdays. Everyone is welcome! For more information, please contact Heather.

Slavery, a present-day problem

From the Diocese of Bath and Wells:

What do you think of when someone mentions slavery? For many of us, it will be an image related to the slave trade from times gone by, but slavery still takes place today, with the Clewer Initiative reporting that more than 120,000 men, women and children are trapped in modern slavery in the UK today – and it could be happening near you. That is the message that campaigners want us to share on Anti-Slavery Day, which this year takes place on Saturday 18 October, ahead of Anti-Slavery Week.

John Dickinson is a Trustee at the Sparrows Project, a South West based charity which raises awareness of modern-day slavery locally and provides support to survivors.

Many people think slavery doesn't happen in places like Bath and Wells. Is that right?

That isn't the case at all. Somerset and the South West may look peaceful, but slavery happens here just as it does in cities. The countryside looks soft and safe, so it's hard for people to imagine. But it does take place.

Who are the people being exploited?

It's often the most vulnerable. Many assume

it's mainly people from overseas, but the largest group on the government's support scheme are UK nationals. Vulnerabilities such as homelessness, drug abuse and family breakdowns are exploited.

How can we spot if slavery might be happening locally?

There are no definitive signs, but there are indicators. For example: people not being allowed to leave their place of work or demonstrating extreme fear of being watched; working in high risk areas such as the construction industry without protective clothing; being collected and returned as a group to the same house on a daily basis and not otherwise leaving those premises or only doing so under escort. Our view is: if it looks wrong, it probably is wrong.

Where is it happening?

We see abuse in nail bars, car washes and the construction industry. Pop-up brothels are another issue, particularly around the Hinkley area. And increasingly, we're seeing exploitation in the care sector.

Why is the care sector such a concern?

There are over 130,000 vacancies in the care sector, and traffickers know this. People are being brought in, particularly from abroad, to fill the gap. Many of them end up trapped and exploited. It's a hidden crisis.

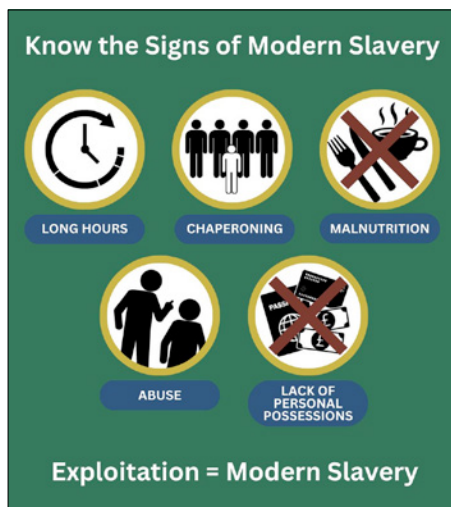
What can people or communities do?

Churches and communities can play a big role. The key is not to close your eyes. Think "if it looks wrong, it probably is wrong."

To find out more, visit the Sparrows Project website at rhsw.org.uk.

If you suspect slavery:

- Call Unseen, the Modern Slavery Helpline: 08000 121 700
- Report at www.modernslaveryhelpline.org
- Or contact the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA): 0800 432 0804



Bishop's Message for October

For or against: slavery and salvation



**From the Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern,
Honorary Assistant Bishop for the
Diocese of Bath and Wells**

Much of our world operates around the challenge to be *for* or *against*. And generally, it is easier to be against things than for them! Look at the tendencies of the media, politics and religious disputes.

On Saturday 18 October, Anti-Slavery Day, people across the UK will re-commit themselves to the fight against modern slavery and human trafficking, one of the great evils of our time. Like William Wilberforce and what we now call historic slavery, we need to fight against the oppression and exploitation of our sisters and brothers today. Abolition is the proper aim of being anti or against.

And the challenge is growing with:

- More vulnerable people susceptible to false promises;
- Increasingly flexible working arrangements, which gives space for criminal agencies to provide goods and services based on exploitation and slave labour;
- Police and prevention resources being ever overstretched;
- And our own insatiable appetite for

cheap products.

There is much we need to learn to oppose and abolish.

But, in facing these almost overwhelming challenges, we must not neglect what is primary for our Christian witness, the call to notice, reach out, rescue and restore. The call to love, to be for those who are hidden, neglected, hurting and ignored.

In Anti-Slavery Week, give time to thinking how you or your church or home group could better learn how to contribute to the fight against modern slavery. The Clewer Initiative has some amazing resources to help us open our eyes and assist the authorities and reach out towards victims.

But, alongside these prayers and practices, consider how you could go the extra mile in the way of the Good Samaritan. Going beyond the indifference of the priest and the Levite, too busy to stop, notice, reach out, rescue; rather how can we better contribute to establishing systems like the partnership between the Good Samaritan and the innkeeper – systems to provide care and the basis of restoring proper health and opportunities to those whose cries represent the voice of Jesus for those willing to listen.

Be against modern slavery this October, but more, be for those who need our friendship and our partnership.

+Alastair

■ Bishop Alastair is Chair of the Clewer Initiative, which exists to raise awareness and mobilise the Church and communities to take action against modern slavery. Visit the website at clewer.org.uk for information and resources to help you reflect on how you can contribute to the fight against modern slavery.

This month's charity: Peggy Dodd Centre

The loose collection on the second and fourth Sundays of the month – 12 and 26 October – will go to the Peggy Dodd Centre. (Donations in collection envelopes will continue to go to Christ Church.)

Peggy Dodd Centre

The Peggy Dodd Centre is a local charity that works to help those living with dementia and memory loss, whilst supporting and providing respite to the people who care for them. It does this through a day centre in Combe Down and a home support service.

The day centre has 12 staff and operates from 9am to 3:30pm each weekday. People attending are provided with a two-course lunch, and there is a range of activities including card games and dominoes. There is also a High Dependency facility, the Margaret Fisher room, which has extra space.

The charity says: "Our vision is to enrich the lives of those living with memory loss and their carers by consistently providing support which respects the needs of each individual."

You can find out more at <https://peggy-dodd-centre.org.uk>.



Photo courtesy of the Peggy Dodd Centre

Abbey climate protest

On Saturday 13 September, four climate activists hung a large banner from the tower of Bath Abbey to demand that the Church take action against "forces causing climate and ecological collapse".

This was part of a day of action by Christian Climate Action activists at cathedrals and abbeys in Canterbury, Durham, Westminster, Winchester and York.

Bishop Michael Beasley, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, issued the following statement:

"While we cannot condone the actions they have taken in order to share their message, which has put them at risk and added pressure on our already overstretched emergency services, we do nonetheless have sympathy for the message they have shared, 'Don't crucify creation', and recognise the seriousness of the climate crisis.

"All Anglicans are called, in line with the fifth mark of mission, to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth. As a diocese, Bath and Wells is committed to Net Zero by 2030 and churches across the diocese, including Bath Abbey, are doing a great deal in order to reach that goal."

Bishop Michael also stated that he has always been willing to meet with Christian Climate Action to share what we as a diocese are already doing and to hear their thoughts as to other steps they think we can take.

Since March 2021, Bath Abbey has been heated by the world's first eco-heating system powered by sustainable energy from Bath's famous hot spring waters.



Photo: Jamie Bellinger/Christian Climate Action

Christ Church calendar Oct. 2025

5	Sun	<i>The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist
9	Thu	11am Eucharist Pilgrim Group meeting, 7:30pm
10	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
11	Sat	Christ Church Autumn Concert – Organ Recital, 3pm
12	Sun	<i>The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist 4pm Open Table Network Holy Communion
16	Thu	11am Eucharist Exploring Faith Group meeting, 2pm
17	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
18	Sat	<i>Luke the Evangelist</i> Anti-Slavery Day
19	Sun	<i>The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist 4:30pm Choral Evensong
23	Thu	11am Eucharist Pilgrim Group meeting, 7:30pm
24	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
26	Sun	<i>The Last Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist 5pm Iona Contemplative Service
28	Tue	<i>Simon and Jude, Apostles</i>
30	Thu	11am Eucharist Exploring Faith Group meeting, 2pm
31	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
Nov	1 Sat	<i>All Saints Day</i>
2	Sun	<i>All Saints / The Fourth Sunday before Advent</i> 10am Eucharist

Our Sunday 10am Eucharist, and other services as advertised, continue to be live-streamed at www.facebook.com/christchurchbath/live
and www.youtube.com/@ChristChurchBath1798/streams

Prayer Cycle for October 2025

Wednesday	1	For those who are persecuted for their faith
Thursday	2	That we may be good stewards of creation
Friday	3	For those in slavery or bonded labour
Saturday	4	For countries in conflict
Sunday	5	For Angela our Verger
Monday	6	For our government and politicians
Tuesday	7	We give thanks for family and friends
Wednesday	8	For all at school
Thursday	9	For our Pilgrim Group, meeting tonight
Friday	10	For victims of violence
Saturday	11	For the chaplaincies at Bath's Universities
Sunday	12	For Mark our Lay Reader
Monday	13	For shopkeepers and shop workers
Tuesday	14	For the lonely and depressed
Wednesday	15	For the Local Deanery Synod
Thursday	16	That we may have the gift of faith
Friday	17	For the homeless
Saturday	18	For peace
Sunday	19	For the ministry of our Junior Church
Monday	20	For those who work in financial services
Tuesday	21	For our Church Council
Wednesday	22	For our charity of the month, the Peggy Dodd Centre

Thursday	23	For our own personal witness
Friday	24	For the sick and suffering
Saturday	25	For the work of Genesis
Sunday	26	For our Bishops and clergy
Monday	27	For prisoners and prison workers
Tuesday	28	We give thanks for artists, poets and musicians
Wednesday	29	For those on our long-term prayer list
Thursday	30	For those recently baptised or preparing for baptism
Friday	31	For those who use and run food banks

Long-term Prayer List

Please remember those we've been asked to pray for...

Geoff	Margaret
Kat	Sheila W
Daniel	John & Jean
Milo	AJ
Naomi	Chris & David
Frankie	Joanne
John & Sheila	Larry
Paul	Razia
Mike	Gerada
Stewart & Lillian	
Debbie & her mum Win	

Want to add a name to the prayer list, either long-term or short-term, or remove one? Please use the lists at the back of the church, or speak to the Verger or one of the Churchwardens.

Cedar Tree is open

The Cedar Tree community café is open every Friday from 11am to 1:30pm. All are welcome! If you live or work in the area, do consider dropping in for a chat, a cup of coffee, home-made cake or a light snack, to support this important part of our outreach to the local community. If you can help on a Friday or make a cake we can sell, then please contact Jenny Hesketh. Your offers will be very gratefully received.



Rotas for October 2025

Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
5 Oct Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity	Graeme Stacey Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4	Jude Bishop 2 Timothy 1:1-14	Robin Kerr Luke 17:5-10
	Intercessions: Georgina Bowman		
12 Oct 17th Sunday after Trinity	Djemila Cope 2 Kings 5:1-3,7-15c	Morny Davison 2 Timothy 2:8-15	David Bishop Luke 17:11-19
	Intercessions: Rachel Preston		
19 Oct 18th Sunday after Trinity	Virginia Knight Genesis 32:22-31	Nick Wells 2 Timothy 3:14 – 4:5	Jenny Hesketh Luke 18:1-8
	Intercessions: Beryl Bowes		
26 Oct Last Sunday after Trinity	Rachel Preston Ecclus. 35:12-17 or Jer. 14:7-10,19-end	Georgina Bowman 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18	Angela Soboslay Luke 18:9-14
	Intercessions: Peter Bowes		
2 Nov All Saints	Alex Soboslay Daniel 7:1-3,15-18	Nicky Mathiason Ephesians 1:11-end	Isobel Powell Luke 6:20-31
	Intercessions: Mark Elliott		

Who's who at Christ Church

Priest-in-Charge Revd Heather Smith
07435 676475 (Wed, Thu, Fri, Sun)
heather.smith@christchurchbath.org

Safeguarding officer Virginia Knight
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christchbathsafeguarding@gmail.com

Supporting clergy
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Revd Beryl Bowes
Revd Dr Peter Bowes

Reader, Director of Music Mark Elliott
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Churchwarden Jane Nicholson
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**Churchwarden,
Cedar Tree café organiser** Jenny Hesketh
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Verger Angela Soboslay
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Chair of Trustees David Bishop
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**Event/concert bookings,
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notices@christchurchbath.org

Deanery Synod Reps Nicola Mathiason
Pauline Swaby-Wallace

**Tower Captain,
Ringing Master** Will Willans

Tower Secretary Maggie Willans
07773 244024
maggiewillans@hotmail.com

Steeple Keeper David Guy

Junior Church Emma Elliott

Laity rotas Judith Bishop

Prayer cycle Virginia Knight

Charitable Giving co-ordinator (TBC)

Mission to Seafarers Sylvia Ayers

Christ Church Link

This magazine is published on the first Sunday of each month. Please send any contributions of news and articles by the 15th of the preceding month to the editor, Alex Soboslay, or by e-mail to magazine@christchurchbath.org



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

About Christ Church

*We're a liberal, inclusive and open church,
seeking God through beauty in our worship, honesty
in our faith and doubt, and support in our community*

Christ Church has an unusual history, out of which has developed a distinctive ministry. It was founded at the end of the 18th century by a group of socially concerned clergy and lay people for those excluded from worship through the system of pew rents. It was probably the first church in England since the Reformation to provide seating for all free of charge. Early supporters included John Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, and William Wilberforce, the great evangelical and campaigner against slavery. We must recognise, however, that much of Bath's wealth at the time derived, directly or indirectly, from the trafficking and exploitation of enslaved human beings, so that inevitably some of the funds donated ultimately derived from this source.

Christ Church is not a parish church and does not have a full-time vicar. This has led to the development of a shared ministry where clergy and laity both make important contributions to worship and church life.

Christ Church is part of the Anglican diocese of Bath and Wells, although it still sits outside the Church of England

parish system. We see ourselves as a traditional and liberal Anglican church. Worship is led by our clergy, and music is provided by our robed choir and organist. New singers of all ages are always very welcome.

As well as worship on Sundays and Thursdays, there are many other activities going on in our community, including our weekly community café every Friday. Our ecumenical Pilgrim Group provides a space for exploration and discussion of faith in an open and non-judgemental setting. Visit the website to check service times and events.

Regular Sunday services

- 10am Sung Eucharist with Junior Church activities for children and young people – *Every Sunday – also streamed at www.facebook.com/christchurchbath*
- 4:00pm Open Table Network Eucharist for the LGBTQ+ community; refreshments from 3:30pm – *second Sunday of each month*
- 4:30pm Choral Evensong – *Usually on the third Sunday of each month*
- 5pm Contemplative Quiet Service (Iona) – *On the fourth Sunday of every month*

Baptisms, marriages and funerals by arrangement – please contact us!

Contacting us

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Email: admin@christchurchbath.org
Website: www.christchurchbath.org

