

Rejoice and look forward

From the Priest-in-Charge...

Revd Heather Smith writes:

Easter's over for another year. The discipline of Lent is done, the journey with Christ through Holy Week is over and we have celebrated the Resurrection. But vestments will remain white for seven weeks, until early June and Pentecost. White is the colour of joy and we wear it at the great celebrations of Christmas and Easter. Neither of these celebrations is just a single day or week. Something as huge as the Resurrection can't be celebrated or digested in just one week.

As we move through the time after Easter we rejoice and, knowing the story, we prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit. In just a few short weeks, power from on high will be the enabler of the work that Christ wants us to do.

In the Gospels, although Jesus has returned to the disciples in bodily form, nothing will ever be the same again. Instead of followers, they must become leaders who spread the message.

These weeks of Easter are a time to think about what God is asking us to do this year. At the Annual Church Meeting we will reflect on the year just gone. A new Church Council will be in place, with members old and new. Where are our priorities within the great commission "Go out and make disciples of all nations"?

Perhaps God has given you a particular concern or a vision for how we can develop, either as a community or in the work we do for those outside our church family.

Come and tell me what you think.



This year's Easter garden, in the St. Michael Chapel.

Our welcome to children (part 2!)

Emma Elliott writes:

When Isaac was about 8 or 9, he often used to chat to our dear friend Ned Townshend, after the service. For those of you who don't remember Ned, he was the husband of our then Priest-in-Charge, Angela. In the time we knew him, he was beginning to suffer from Lewy Bodies dementia. I remember Isaac commenting one time, "If Ned and I were the same age, I think we'd be really good friends." I felt that this was such a touching thing to say. Isaac recognised Ned as someone he could relate to and have common interests with. Isaac enjoyed chatting to Ned, and I hope that Ned valued it too.

The comment also put me in mind of the book *Tom's Midnight Garden*. If you know the story, you'll know it is impossible to get through it without weeping buckets! Tom, bored and lonely at his aunt and uncle's house, discovers a magical Victorian garden at midnight. There, he befriends a girl named Hatty, who mysteriously grows older with each visit. Tom's time in the garden allows him to experience a different world from a different perspective, and he forms a deep bond with Hatty.

When I write reports for the Annual General Meeting, I often focus on how important it is that we welcome children into our church community. (Children are the church of the future as well as the church of today, etc etc.) This is obviously true, but there is something wider to consider, about the relatively unique place a church community can have in a child's life from an inter-generational perspective. Connections between children and adults, that are inter-generational, are of unmeasurable value. When we make inter-generational connections, we gain experience of each other's perspective of place in the world. This is becoming more and more significant, where there is often physical separation between families. For example, some children may not see grandparents regularly, or at all, for various reasons. Some children might have no meaningful contact with adults, other than perhaps their own parents and teachers, who are figures in

authority over them.

In our church, the children hugely value the connections they make with members of the congregation across the generations. If done right, when we embrace children and enfold them into our community, instead of just tolerating them, a church community and the bonds that form can be a long-lasting force for good in a child's life. I hope the adults can sometimes reap those rewards as well.

There was something else too, although I know you'll say it sounds absurd. Of course, Mrs Bartholemew is such a shrunken little old woman, she's hardly bigger than Tom, but you know, he put his arms right round her, and he hugged her goodbye as if she were a little girl.

Prayers for Pope Francis



Revd Preb. Narinder Tegally, Bath and Wells Interfaith Adviser, writes:

It is with deep sorrow that we mourn the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis – a faithful servant of Christ whose life, ministry, and message touched hearts far beyond the walls of the Roman Catholic Church. We give thanks for his witness and pray he may rest in peace and rise in glory. His was a life poured out in service of the Gospel. May he rest now in the peace he preached, and may his hope continue to live in us.

More at <https://bit.ly/prayers-for-pope-francis>.

Christ Church AGM

The Annual General Church Meeting of the Christ Church congregation will be held on Sunday 18 May after the 10am service – so starting at about 11:30am. Come along to elect Churchwardens, Deanery Synod representatives and members of Church Council, and receive reports on the activities of all the groups in the church. Anyone can attend, but you must be on our Electoral Roll to vote or stand for election.

As required by the Church of England's Church Representation Rules, the Electoral Roll has been completely revised this year. The revised roll is on display at the back of the church – please check it before the day of the meeting, and if there are any problems or errors please speak to Heather, one of the Churchwardens or our Electoral Roll officer, Matthew Jones. Mistakes can be corrected but under the Rules no additions can now be made until after the AGM takes place.

Thy Kingdom Come

Thy Kingdom Come is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus. This year it takes place from 29 May to 8 June.

Since it began in May 2016, ten years ago, TKC has grown into a movement that unites more than a million Christians in prayer, in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across 85 different denominations and traditions. Every person, household and church is encouraged to pray during the 11 days in their own way.

Find more information and resources at www.thykingdomcome.global.

8am BCP service

After consultation it has been decided not to revive the monthly 8am BCP Holy Communion service at the present time.

Last month...



In April, Heather blessed the plaque commemorating Margaret and Cliff Burrows, who had a long association with Christ Church and gave a substantial legacy towards the costs of completing the screens around the St Michael Chapel. Members of the Burrows family attended, and Margaret and Cliff's daughter Rachel spoke movingly and entertainingly about them.

Coming events

Marc Kawwas piano recital

What is it? A piano recital by Bethlehem-born Marc Kawwas, with internationally renowned flautist Wissam Boustany. Featuring music by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Ginastera, Saint-Saens and Rachmaninov.

When is it? Saturday 17 May, 7:30pm

Where? St Luke's Church, Bath BA2 2BD

Tickets £15 + £1.50 per order from Bath Box Office, <https://bit.ly/MKinBath>.



Photo courtesy of PalMusic UK

Exploring Faith group

Do you want to think more about your faith? Join us on alternate Thursday afternoons from 2pm to 3pm for a new Exploring Faith group.

We begin with six sessions on “Who is Jesus for us today?”

The first session took place on Thursday 24 April, but all are welcome to join at any stage. Following sessions are: 8 May, 22 May, 5 June, 19 June, 3 July.

Everyone is welcome! For more details, please feel free to contact Heather.

Historic clock repair



In late March the village community of Montacute, near Yeovil, came together to see the church clock being taken down for repair. On hand to help was 93-year-old Humphrey Hamlin, who had wound the clock for many years and restored it himself in 1987. Experts now believe the clock at St Catherine's Church could date back to the 1400s, making it one of the oldest working time-pieces in the country. A fundraising effort is now underway to support its repair and to create an exhibition space in the church. A rededication service is planned for summer 2025.

Talking growth

From the Diocese of Bath and Wells:

In 2024 Bishop Michael issued a challenge to all churches to grow by one adult and one child – *net*, taking into account any reduction in congregation numbers over the year.

At a recent Deanery Synod, the Area Dean of Midsomer Norton, Matthew Street, asked attendees to discuss in small groups, made up of people from different churches, how they think they could meet the challenge.

“It was wonderful to hear the many and varied ideas that people shared in their groups,” Matthew comments, “from the importance of starting with prayer, and with what we already have, to pub church, family lunches, and joining in with what is already taking place.”

In the village of Chilcompton, near Bath, a group of young parents meets twice a month for a Monday supper club.

“After lockdown, we were hearing that there was a lot of loneliness in the village,” explains Revd Esther Smith, Rector of Chilcompton. “We’d started a toddler group, but we wanted to reach slightly older children.

“People come as it suits them – usually twice a month. We started with simple food. The families bring puddings, and it’s usually the dads who do the cooking.

“There’s no sermon or singing. But it’s still a way of being the church – by being present, welcoming, and real.”



Bubble Church at Peasedown St John is a service for babies, toddlers, and young families. Photo: Diocese of Bath and Wells

Bishop's Message for May

It's sowing time!



**From the Rt Revd Michael Beasley,
Bishop of Bath and Wells**

It's sowing time! My greenhouse is currently full of seedlings pushing their way towards the light. Soon all this new life will be big enough to be planted out into the garden. Peas and courgettes, dahlias and zinnias – all ready to grow, blossom and be fruitful.

It's not only seedlings that grow. Churches do too! Just like all that's happening in my greenhouse, this doesn't happen by accident. Evidence shows that churches are most likely to grow when they plan and prepare for this to happen. Church growth is intentional.

Churches in our Diocese have shared accounts of how they have planned for growth and the fruit they're seeing as a result [see *"Talking growth"* on page 4]. There's no "one size fits all" for how this has happened. Just as in our gardens, what grows in one place won't necessarily thrive in another.

Important as planning and preparing may be, these things aren't the vital ingredient for growth. Growth comes when God is alive and at work within us and our churches. In his first letter

to the church he's helped establish in Corinth, St Paul also uses a gardening metaphor to describe the growth he's seeing. Paul says: "I planted, Apollos [Paul's co-worker] watered, but God gave the growth" (1 Cor 3:6).

Without God's input, any plans we have to grow our churches will be little more than strategy, our efforts like those of ants running frantically to and fro. This is why our prayer for growth is essential. Prayer invites God to give us wisdom about what to do. It opens our treasure stores to resource the plans we want to put in place. It asks God to go before us to touch the hearts and minds of those we'd like to reach. It invites God to bless and prosper the work we do.

So be inspired! The accounts from churches in our Diocese show what can happen when we ask God to grow our churches, offering God our prayer, our faith, our effort and our trust.

Let the sowing time begin!

+Michael

Bishop Ruth farewelled

More than 500 clergy, lay leaders and people from across the diocese attended the Chrism Service in Wells Cathedral on Tuesday 15 April to take the opportunity to say farewell to Bishop Ruth. She was attending her last service as Bishop of Taunton before leaving to become suffragan Bishop of Wigan in the Diocese of Liverpool and serve as the Interim Bishop of Liverpool.

You'll find details, along with links to videos of Bishop Ruth's sermon and Bishop Michael's farewell to her, on the Diocesan website at <https://bit.ly/bishop-ruth-farewelled>.

This month's charity: St Andrew's PTFA

The loose collection in the plate on the second and fourth Sunday of the next two months – 11 and 25 May, then 8 and 22 June – will go to the St Andrew's School PTFA. (Donations in collection envelopes will continue to go to Christ Church.)

Emma Elliott writes:

We have a historic association with St Andrew's School. Our Mews building was once Christ Church Infants' School, and in the 1970s the two schools were merged. The Children at Christ Church have decided to support the school, in honour of our long association, and raise funds for the school "Friends of St Andrew's PTA".

The aim of The Friends of St Andrew's PTA is to build a vibrant, fun and inclusive community for St Andrew's Church School, Bath, which includes all members of the community. The PTA help to fund class trips, Easter celebrations, library books, school infrastructure, classroom tech such as cameras, and extra supplies that are not catered for by ever-shrinking school budgets.



Photo courtesy of Emma Elliott

There are plans for a **cake sale** in Christ Church on 11th May, after the main church service. Also, Rachel is making us some fabulous items to sell alongside the cakes.

Please bring cash.

Some of the children are preparing a Film Quiz, which will be available soon. The children are also keen to have a film afternoon, to which they will invite the congregation for a donation to the cause.

The congregation at Christ Church are always incredibly generous to the children's chosen charity of the month. We hope you'll support us this year and raise a fantastic total.

Bath Foodbank news

From Genesis Trust:

From 3 June 2025, Bath Foodbank is merging with Keynsham and Somer Valley Foodbanks to create a combined foodbank run by Genesis Trust Bath to serve local people in crisis. We will operate under the new name of Bath, Keynsham & Somer Valley Foodbank.

As you may know, foodbanks have been facing a number of challenges in recent years, not least because of the increase in the volume and complexities of clients' needs. There are also ever-expanding rules and regulations which need to be managed. This inevitably results in increasing activity and costs. Merging the three foodbanks will help us all to maintain an effective service which best serves our clients across the region.

All three foodbanks are part of the Trussell network of UK foodbanks. Clients are already able to access any of the three foodbanks once they receive their voucher, so each foodbank regularly supports clients from across the area. We also have joined together in providing Citizens Advice support across all three foodbanks, funded by Trussell.

Thank you for your ongoing support for Bath Foodbank. Your kindness is enabling local families and individuals to access emergency food parcels when they need it most. We couldn't offer this support without it.

Christ Church calendar May 2025

1	Thu	<i>Philip and James, Apostles</i> 11am Eucharist
2	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
4	Sun	<i>The Third Sunday of Easter</i> 10am Eucharist
6	Tue	<i>Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, 2023</i>
8	Thu	11am Eucharist Exploring Faith Group meeting, 2pm
9	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
11	Sun	<i>The Fourth Sunday of Easter</i> 10am Eucharist 4pm Open Table Network Holy Communion
14	Wed	<i>Matthias the Apostle</i>
15	Thu	11am Eucharist
16	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
18	Sun	<i>The Fifth Sunday of Easter</i> 10am Eucharist Christ Church Annual Church Meeting (about 11:30am) 4:30pm Choral Evensong
22	Thu	11am Eucharist Exploring Faith Group meeting, 2pm
23	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
25	Sun	<i>The Second Sunday of Easter</i> 10am Eucharist 5pm Iona Contemplative Service
29	Thu	<i>Ascension Day</i> 11am Eucharist
30	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
31	Sat	<i>The Visitation (Visit of Mary to Elizabeth)</i>
June 1	Sun	<i>The Seventh Sunday of Easter</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 May 2025

Thursday	1	For carers
Friday	2	For the unemployed
Saturday	3	For countries which have experienced forest fires
Sunday	4	For Angela our Verger
Monday	5	For those who work in local government
Tuesday	6	For the lonely and depressed
Wednesday	7	For all at sea
Thursday	8	We give thanks for beauty in the world around us
Friday	9	For those in slavery or bonded labour
Saturday	10	For our neighbours at St Mary's Catholic Church
Sunday	11	For the ministry of our Junior Church
Monday	12	For those who work in education
Tuesday	13	That we may have the gift of hope
Wednesday	14	For new members to be added to Christ Church
Thursday	15	We give thanks for those who enrich our lives
Friday	16	For prisoners and prison workers
Saturday	17	For a good harvest
Sunday	18	For Heather our Priest-in-Charge
Monday	19	For those in the legal profession
Tuesday	20	For our charity of the month, St Andrew's School PTFA
Wednesday	21	For peace
Thursday	22	For our link Dioceses in Zambia
Friday	23	For the sick and suffering

Saturday	24	For those recently elected to offices at Christ Church
Sunday	25	For our bishops and clergy
Monday	26	For architects and designers
Tuesday	27	We give thanks for our blessings
Wednesday	28	For those on our long-term prayer list
Thursday	29	That we may be peacemakers
Friday	30	For all who face tragedy
Saturday	31	For those recently baptised or preparing for baptism

Long-term Prayer List

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

Geoff	Chris & David
Daniel	John
Milo	Joanne
Naomi	Chris
Frankie	Ken
John & Sheila	Christine
Margaret	Larry
Sheila W	Razia
John & Jean	Kat
Stewart & Lillian	
AJ	

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 May 2025

Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
4 May Third Sunday of Easter	Georgina Bowman Acts 9:1-6	Jonathan Stead Revelation 5:11-end	Graeme Stacey John 21:1-19
	Intercessions: Mark Elliott		
11 May Fourth Sunday of Easter	Nicky Mathiason Acts 9:36-end	Judith Anderson Revelation 7:9-end	Graham Reaper-Brown John 10:22-30
	Intercessions: Simon Tatton-Brown		
18 May Fifth Sunday of Easter	Morny Davison Acts 11:1-18	Robin Kerr Revelation 21:1-6	David Bishop John 13:31-35
	Intercessions: Jonathan Stead		
25 May Sixth Sunday of Easter	Simon Tatton-Brown Acts 16:9-15	Alex Soboslay Revelation 21:10,22 – 22:5	Nick Wells John 14:23-29 <i>or</i> John 5:1-9
	Intercessions: Beryl Bowes		
1 June Seventh Sunday of Easter	Angela Soboslay Acts 16:16-34	Isobel Powell Revelation 22:12- 14,16-17,20-end	Rachel Preston John 17:20-end
	Intercessions: Georgina Bowman		

Who's who at Christ Church

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Junior Church Emma Elliott

Laity rotas Judith Bishop

Prayer cycle Virginia Knight

Charitable Giving co-ordinator Jonathan Stead

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

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, the Archbishop of Canterbury; Martin Stafford Smith, godfather of John Keble, a founder of the Oxford Movement; 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 for the founding of the church 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*
- 4:30pm 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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