

God in light and darkness

From the Priest-in-Charge...

Revd Heather Smith writes:

I always feel a sense of loss as August gives way to September. The summer is gone, the brightness and warmth begin to fade, and we will experience longer times of darkness. Light and dark are so fundamental to our existence that it isn't surprising they are themes in every major religion.

In Christianity we talk of the light of Christ, and the famous prologue of John's Gospel, read every Christmas, declares "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

Darkness, it seems, is a metaphor for the bad and the frightening. But we need darkness, not least to help us recuperate via sleep and to encourage quietness and reflection. Daylight invigorates. If shops want you to spend money, they will influence your mood

using light. In contrast, darkness calms. But psychologists also believe it softens our inhibitions. They think that darkness increases freedom from constraints, which in turn promotes creativity.

It's tempting to believe that our spiritual quest is to move from darkness to light, but the Bible acknowledges that darkness can be a place of divine encounter and transformation. In Exodus, at the time of the giving of the ten commandments, Moses "approached the thick darkness where God was" (Exodus 20:21).

The light of Christ may bring us strength, courage and optimism, but God is also found in the darkness. As we contemplate the coming of the darker months, let's see them as a time of recuperation and creativity where God is ever present.



In August the Pastoral Care Group held another of its periodic events for members of the Christ Church family who worship online or no longer find it easy to attend services in person. See page 3.

Season of Creation

Creationtide or the Season of Creation is the period in the annual Church calendar dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life. Many churches choose to use this time of year to hold special services and events to give thanks for God's gift of creation, and to renew their commitment to caring for our one planet home.

The season starts 1st September, the Day of Prayer for Creation, and ends 4th October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

The symbol for the Season of Creation 2025 is the Garden of Peace, and the Biblical text for this year is Isaiah 32:14-18:

*The fortress will be abandoned,
the noisy city deserted;
citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland
forever,
the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks,
till the Spirit is poured on us from on high,
and the desert becomes a fertile field,
and the fertile field seems like a forest.
The Lord's justice will dwell in the desert,
his righteousness live in the fertile field.
The fruit of that righteousness will be peace;
its effect will be quietness and confidence
forever.
My people will live in peaceful dwelling places,
in secure homes,
in undisturbed places of rest.*

The prophet pictures a desolated Creation without peace because of the lack of justice and the broken relationship between God and humankind. His hope is that Creation will find peace when justice is restored. There is still hope and the expectation for a peaceful Earth.

You can find more information and resources at <https://seasonofcreation.org>.



**PEACE
WITH CREATION**
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

Living generously

From the Diocese of Bath and Wells:

For Christians, generosity isn't optional or extra to our faith, it is part of who we are. Jesus showed us how to live generously by giving himself completely, in love, in service and in sacrifice. He calls us to do the same, trusting that in giving we find life.

Generosity Week takes place in the Harvest season, so that as we thank God for his generosity to us, we also have an opportunity to think about how we might respond to that generosity. This year Generosity Week is planned for Sunday 28 September to Sunday 5 October, although churches may hold it at any time throughout the year.

"Generosity Week allows us to reflect on what giving really means and to explore what it looks like in practice," says Natalie Wainwright, Bath and Wells Lead Giving and Funding Adviser. "Giving isn't something we do once; it is something we do for life."

Generosity is a response to God's love, lived out in our everyday choices. Generosity can be expressed through time, encouragement, hospitality, prayer and finance.

Natalie says we are often inspired when we think about giving in different ways, and holding a Generosity Week helps us to do that. This may include discussions about legacies and what we pass on to future generations. "Many of our churches have monuments, plaques and windows dedicated to those who left generous gifts in their wills. These are stories of faith in action and may encourage us to reflect on the kind of legacy we may want to leave."

This may also inspire younger generations to contemplate what a generous life looks like. An invitation to take part could be encouraging them to see generosity not as something for later in life, but part of following Jesus now.

Generosity Week can become part of the rhythm of your year, taking a moment to pause and reflect on what it means to live generously in response to God's love.

Find out more about Generosity Week at <https://churchofengland.org/generosity-week>.

Last month: Pastoral Care cream tea

Jenny Hesketh writes:

Once again, we gathered in August for a special Service in the Lady Chapel, followed by a cream tea in the Mews. This is always a cheerful occasion, a chance to chat and catch up with old friends, ensure they continue to feel part of the Church Family, and enjoy the delicious spread laid on by our wonderful volunteers. A huge thank-you to all those who help make the afternoon so successful.

This time, we were also able to celebrate Daphne's 97th birthday with a suitably yummy cake, as you can see [right, top]!

A couple of days later, we celebrated another birthday, this time at Cedar Tree, where we try always to mark the birthdays of our "regulars". Here [right], Lorraine is presented with her cake – with seven candles as I thought 70 might take a bit too much puff!



Photos courtesy of Jane Nicholson

Thanks from Sylvia

Sylvia and Steven Ayers write:

We would very much like to express our grateful thanks to the many members of our congregation who managed to attend with us on 28 July. It was a wonderful funeral service for Ken, as we were then able to bring him back home to Christ Church after his being away from us since February 2024. It has really given us the closure we needed as we feel that he is now at peace.

We were very moved by the comments which you wrote in the Memory Book, and would also like to thank those who donated to the collection – we have sent £70 to the Somerset and Dorset Railway Heritage Trust in Ken's memory.

We would like to add our personal thanks to Revd Heather Smith and Jane Nicholson for all the extra help they gave us in arranging the service; to Alex for reading out Ken's life story so well; and for the lovely displays of flowers and "railwayana" which Jane made for him in the Chapel.

*With all our very grateful thanks,
Sylvia and Steven*

Harvest Thanksgiving

This year's Harvest Thanksgiving is on Sunday 14 September. Following our 10am Eucharist on that day, the traditional Apple Picking will take place in Janet Mahto's garden at Granville Lodge, Weston Road, Bath BA1 2XU. If you need a lift then please let one of the Churchwardens know. If the weather is fine, you are invited to bring a picnic to eat in the garden. There will be a collection for a charity – details nearer the time.

Meet our newest Trustee

John Cope was born in Leicester in 1937 and brought up there. His father was an architect who had won the MC in World War One. His mother died of cancer a week before World War Two started, when John was two years old. He went to Oakham School and served in the Royal Artillery in National Service 1955-57. Then he was articled and became a Chartered Accountant. He was an active Young Conservative and in 1965 was hired by the Conservative Research Department, initially to help Ted Heath, then Shadow Chancellor, with the Finance Bill. In 1969 he married Djemila and they had two daughters, Lucy, a nurse, and Nikki, who sadly died in 2021. They have five grandchildren.

In 1970 he fought Woolwich East (a safe Labour seat) and returned to accountancy in London, but politics drew him back and in 1974 he was elected MP for South Gloucestershire, a constituency stretching from the River Severn to the Wiltshire and Somerset borders and the outskirts of Bristol. It had high technology (Concorde was built there at Filton and Patchway), varied agriculture and much building development. Bradley Stoke and Cribbs Causeway were created and Yate

and other places expanded. He held the seat (then called Northavon) until 1997. The family lived at Berkeley until moving to Bath.

From 1979 to 1994 he held various ministerial offices in the Governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major, including Deputy Chief Whip, Small Firms Minister, Security Minister in Northern Ireland and Paymaster General in the Treasury. He served as Deputy to Chris Patten while he was Chairman of the Party (1990-92). In 1997 he was appointed to the House of Lords and was later Chief Whip there. He retired from active membership of the Lords in 2020, following open-heart surgery, after 46 years in Parliament, including 25 years on his Party's front bench.

John was brought up in the Church of England with the 1662 Prayer Book (of fond memory). Having learnt bellringing at the Abbey, he first joined Christ Church when his friend Ian Hay Davison masterminded the restoration of our bells in 2015. He and Djemila have been regular attenders since Christ Church hosted an event to raise funds for the Spafford Children's Centre, set up by her grandmother in 1925 in Jerusalem, where Djemila was born. Djemila is an elected Christ Church Council member.



Official portrait of Lord Cope of Berkeley. Photo by Roger Harris, Official UK Parliamentary photographs via Wikimedia Commons.

New Chair of Trustees

On 25 September, David Bishop takes up the role of Chair of the Trustees. A long-standing Trustee, David is a former Treasurer of Christ Church. Nick Wells is stepping down as Chair with our thanks for all he has done, not least in leading the process to find and appoint our Priest-in-Charge, but remains a Trustee and becomes Trustees' secretary.

The Trustees will then be: the Ven. Charlie Peer (Archdeacon of Bath, *ex officio*); the Revd Tim Gleghorn (Rector of St Swithin's, *ex officio*); David Bishop (Chair); Zoë Bushell (Treasurer); the Rt Hon Lord (John) Cope of Berkeley; Sarah Sheppard; Oosman Tegally; Nick Wells (Secretary); with two vacancies.

Bishop's Message for September

Generosity begets generosity



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

In August I was privileged to dedicate the restored clock in the tower of Montacute church. It's not just any old clock. In fact, Montacute's is amongst the oldest in the country. Built in the village in around 1400, the clock is so old that it is held in place by iron wedges. At the time of its construction, the nut and the bolt wouldn't be invented for another hundred years!

The Montacute clock is an artefact that seems to generate generosity. In the 1980s the clock was restored by Humphrey Hamlin, for whom it is now named. Humphrey poured time and energy into its mechanism, preventing it from being scrapped. During the last two years, heroic efforts by the people of Montacute have led to its further restoration. All this was marked last month by a whole village gathering. The community choir sang, morris men danced, the local pub provided a hog roast, cake was dispensed in huge quantities.

Montacute is a beautiful example of how generosity begets generosity. Like a chain reaction, one act of generosity, the restoration of the clock, led to

another, another and another. As a result, a whole community was brought together in celebration and joy.

In his second letter to the Church in Corinth, Paul writes of the church in Macedonia that "their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity" (2 Cor 8:2). Having nothing, the Macedonians discovered that they could still give. In turn, their generosity enabled Paul to challenge and encourage the church in Corinth to do the same. All to help the struggling Church in Jerusalem.

As I travel around our diocese, I see this pattern of generosity begetting generosity happening in so many places. One person starts, another adds their contribution, more join in and soon we learn that together we are so much more than the sum of our parts. This is the economy of God. It's an economy that all of us are invited to join.

+Michael

Autumn concerts

For the third year in a row, there will be a concert series on Saturday afternoons at Christ Church this autumn:

- 13 September: a concert of varied music by the Wiltshire Horn Octet.
- 11 October: Organ Recital by Simon and David Winters.
- 8 November: Christ Church Choir Concert.

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 2:30pm for refreshments.

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

Circuit of Bath Walk

Join the Circuit of Bath Walk on Sunday 21 September and take a stand against homelessness. Challenge yourself to take on the full 20 mile route – or a distance of your choosing – and raise sponsorship to help Julian House support the many people experiencing homelessness and escaping domestic abuse across the South West.

By taking part you'll get to appreciate this historic city and its surrounding countryside like never before. In addition, by raising sponsorship you will be helping Julian House to provide life-changing support to more than 2,000 vulnerable men, women and children across the region.

Julian House projects reach the people who have been forced to live on the edges of society. Clients may be rough sleeping or homeless, recovering from addiction, escaping domestic abuse, building a new life as refugees from their homeland, or seeking to start again after a prison sentence.

If you complete the full epic route, you will be rewarded with a special environmentally-friendly medal to mark your amazing achievement. If you prefer not to walk the full 20 miles, a free taxi service will operate between the checkpoints, allowing you to get back to your start point.

The route is fully waymarked, thanks to a collaboration with Bathscape and Cotswolds National Landscape.

You can find full details and register at <https://circuitofbathwalk.co.uk>.



This month's charity: Peggy Dodd Centre

The loose collection on the second and fourth Sundays of the next two months – 14 and 28 September, plus 12 and 26 October – will go to the Peggy Dodd Centre. (Donations in collection envelopes will continue to go to Christ Church.)

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>.

Farewell to Jonathan



On Sunday 7 September, we will be saying farewell to Jonathan Stead, who is returning to South Africa. Jonathan has served in various roles including as a member of Church Council and Churchwarden, and has also contributed much

behind the scenes to our life and worship. Christ Church is richer for his dedication and generous commitment, and he leaves with our warmest thanks, prayers and good wishes.

Christ Church calendar Sep. 2025

7	Sun	<i>The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist
8	Mon	<i>Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Accession of King Charles III</i>
11	Thu	11am Eucharist
12	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
13	Sat	Christ Church Autumn Concert – Wiltshire Horn Octet, 3pm
14	Sun	<i>Harvest Thanksgiving</i> 10am Eucharist 4pm Open Table Network Holy Communion
18	Thu	11am Eucharist
19	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
21	Sun	<i>The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist 4:30pm Choral Evensong
22	Mon	<i>Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist</i>
25	Thu	11am Eucharist
26	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
28	Sun	<i>The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity</i> 10am Eucharist 5pm Iona Contemplative Service
29	Mon	<i>Michael and All Angels</i>
Oct	2	Thu 11am Eucharist
	3	Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm
	5	Sun <i>The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity</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

Got an event you want to let everyone know about? Send an e-mail with all the details to magazine@christchurchbath.org.
For the weekly notice sheet, e-mail notices@christchurchbath.org

Prayer Cycle for September 2025

Monday	1	For those who work in local government
Tuesday	2	For countries which have experienced forest fires
Wednesday	3	For Christian unity
Thursday	4	We give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy
Friday	5	For those who lack food or water
Saturday	6	For carers
Sunday	7	For Jane and Jenny our churchwardens
Monday	8	For architects and designers
Tuesday	9	For the mentally ill
Wednesday	10	For new members to be added to Christ Church
Thursday	11	For those with addictions
Friday	12	For the unemployed
Saturday	13	For peace
Sunday	14	For Heather our priest in charge
Monday	15	For those who work in education
Tuesday	16	For countries experiencing civil unrest
Wednesday	17	For those who mourn
Thursday	18	We give thanks for beauty in the world around us
Friday	19	For the ministry of the Cedar Tree
Saturday	20	For our bell-ringing team
Sunday	21	For our Diocese of Bath and Wells
Monday	22	For those in the legal profession

Tuesday	23	For our charity of the month, the Peggy Dodd Centre
Wednesday	24	For our Local Ministry Group partners
Thursday	25	That we may have the gift of kindness
Friday	26	For all who face tragedy
Saturday	27	For those on our long-term prayer list
Sunday	28	For those on our church rotas
Monday	29	For Bible scholars and theologians
Tuesday	30	We give thanks for the blessings of the past month

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 September 2025

Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
7 Sep Twelfth Sunday after Trinity	Nicky Mathiason Deuteronomy 30:15-end	Rachel Preston Philemon 1-21	Judith Anderson Luke 14:25-33
	Intercessions: Simon Tatton-Brown		
14 Sep Harvest	Zoë Bushell Deuteronomy 26:1-11	Angela Soboslay Philippians 4:4-9	Jeremy Smith John 6:25-35
	Intercessions: Mark Elliott		
21 Sep 14th Sunday after Trinity	Alex Soboslay Amos 8:4-7	Simon Tatton-Brown 1 Timothy 2:1-7	Peter Bowes Luke 16:1-13
	Intercessions: Sarah Jones		
28 Sep Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity	Emma Elliott Amos 6:1a,4-7	Beryl Bowes 1 Timothy 6:6-19	Graham Reaper-Brown Luke 16:19-end
	Intercessions: Pam Hitchens		
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		

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
07896 916840
christchbathsafeguarding@gmail.com

Supporting clergy
Revd Canon Simon Tatton-Brown
01225 835404
simon.tatton-brown@christchurchbath.org

Revd Beryl Bowes
Revd Dr Peter Bowes

Reader, Director of Music Mark Elliott
01225 445360
mark.elliott@christchurchbath.org

Churchwarden Jane Nicholson
07990 552413
jane@janemnicholson.com

**Churchwarden,
Cedar Tree café organiser** Jenny Hesketh
jenny.hesketh@me.com

Verger Angela Soboslay
01225 333297
angela.soboslay@christchurchbath.org

Chair of Trustees David Bishop
07771 854145
chair@christchurchbath.org

Treasurer Zoë Bushell
zoe.bushell@christchurchbath.org

**Organist and Assistant
Director of Music** David Winters
david.winters@christchurchbath.org

Christ Church Link editor Alex Soboslay
07769 655927
alexs@christchurchbath.org

**Event/concert bookings,
weekly notice sheet** Judith Bishop
01225 858816
concerts@christchurchbath.org
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 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



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

Christ Church,
Julian Road,
Bath BA1 2RH
Phone: 01225 338869
(answer phone)

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

