



*A Happy and a Holy Christmas to all!*



# Christ Church *Link*

December 2021 ● Number 116 ● 50p where sold

## In the light of the eternal

*From the priest-in-charge...*

### **Revd Lore Chumbley writes:**

Advent begins early this year. We will have reached the second Sunday of Advent by the time you read this. Already we have had freezing temperatures and snow and the arrival of a new strain of Covid-19, and we are still coming to terms with the loss of another two much-loved Christ Church members, Jane Fletcher and Sharon Rawlings. Appropriately, Advent is about both beginnings and endings. Advent Sunday marks the beginning of a new liturgical year as we wait for the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem, but the Advent liturgy and readings direct us to death and judgement, encouraging us to ask: where should we direct our limited time, love and energy in the light of eternal life?

Questions like that led members of the Christ Church leadership team to spend time together last month examining our priorities for the future. We started with the stated Christ Church priorities which you will find on the back page of this and every edition of the *Link*. We are committed to seeking God, following our Lord Jesus Christ through beauty in worship, honesty in our faith and doubt, and service in our community. Are we living up to those? And if those are three pieces of a jigsaw, is there a fourth?

We are, I think, living up to the first challenge, beauty in worship. In our Advent Sunday service the church was decorated with austere elegance. Glorious singing from the combined choir

and congregation contrasted with the choir's equally beautiful singing of the penitential Advent Prose. The Thursday evening Pilgrim Group encourages "honesty in our faith and doubt". This term Brenda has led deep discussions based on the writings of CS Lewis. And the Cedar Tree Café, just one example of Christ Church's "service in the community", continues to offer a genuine welcome and a seat at the table to all.

Is there a missing piece? The concept that recurred in our discussions was the need to build bridges – bridges between members of Christ Church, bridges to other local churches and bridges between Christ Church and our surrounding community. It seemed good to us to let that thought direct our priorities over the next few years, and as you read this edition of the *Link* you may realise that some of those bridges are already being constructed.



*St George's, Wembdon, Bridgwater, Somerset, is taking its mobile nativity around the community. How will you share Christmas? See page 2.*

# Celebrating Advent and Christmas

The Diocese of Bath and Wells says: “We hope and pray that many of the familiar experiences that help Christmas come alive return to our homes, our churches and communities, but whatever December brings there are number of ways you can embrace the spirit of Christmas.”

You can join the Diocese online in Advent as it takes a global perspective to journey through the account of Jesus’ birth. Developed with children and young people in mind by its youth advisers, along with the Send a Cow charity and Movement, the youth and young adult ministry, the Diocese’s Advent activities have something to offer all ages. There are five short videos – one for each week of Advent plus one for Christmas Day featuring Bishop Ruth – and daily challenges on social media, all based on the themes of hope, joy, peace and love.

On Instagram or Twitter, you can follow @goteamadvisers or @sendacow and use the hashtag #AdventAroundTheWorld.

You can also join the Church of England online with its campaign for this year, *At the heart of Christmas*, which is an invitation to everyone to discover – or rediscover – the good news of God’s saving love as revealed in the birth of Jesus. Starting on Christmas Eve and continuing daily (Monday to Saturday) until Epiphany on 6 January, you will be able to hear 12 stories and meditations from the archbishops and guests as they explore themes close to the heart of Christmas.

Visit <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/advent-and-christmas-2021-resources-heart-christmas>.



**At the heart  
of Christmas**

## Christmas services

### Sunday 12 Dec.

- 5pm An LGBT+ affirming carol service at St Stephen’s, Lansdown, in partnership with Oasis Church, Bath. Everyone is welcome!

### Sunday 19 Dec.

- 10am Family Eucharist and Nativity Play – families and children particularly welcome
- 6:30pm Christmas Carol Service – a joyful celebration with our choir singing old and new carols

### Tuesday 21 Dec.

- 6pm Carol singing on St Andrew’s Green

### Friday 24 Dec. – Christmas Eve

- 4:30pm Crib Service – a service for the whole family to hear the Christmas story
- 11:30pm Midnight Eucharist – the traditional start to Christmas, with beautiful words and music

### Saturday 25 Dec. – Christmas Day

- 10am Sung Eucharist



### CitySound Voices On Christmas Night

*What is it?* CitySound Voices present *On Christmas Night* by Bob Chilcott, in a programme of traditional and contemporary carols with conductor Jon Rawles, accompanist Peter French, soloist Katy Thomson and guest singers The Harmonies. Supporting NSPCC and Alzheimers charities. More information at [www.citysound.org.uk](http://www.citysound.org.uk).

*When?* Saturday 18 December, 7:30pm

*Where?* St Stephen’s, Lansdown BA1 5SX

*Tickets* £12 (£5 for under-12s) from choir members or at the door

## Services live and online

Our weekly 10am Sunday Eucharist is open to all in person. For the time being, we will maintain social distancing, and will encourage people to wear masks but will not insist. The congregation is now permitted to sing, but it will show care for others to remain masked as you do so. The service is live streamed at [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath](http://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath).

Special services for Christmas are listed on the facing page. Some will be live streamed – look for information on Facebook.

Our weekly Thursday 11am Eucharist takes place live in church, not online or on Zoom. The church also remains open for private prayer on Wednesday afternoons 2pm – 4pm.

An informal reflective service takes place on the fourth Sunday of each month at 5pm, resuming 23 January. This is led by members of the congregation and will be using the form of evening service in *A Wee Worship Book (Fifth Incarnation)* compiled by the Iona Community and published by their Wild Goose Resource Group. All are welcome. If you'd like further information, please contact Jonathan Stead.

Do send prayer requests – by e-mail to [lore.chumbley@me.com](mailto:lore.chumbley@me.com) or phone or text to Lore on 07595 294146, or by post to Christ Church, Julian Road, Bath BA1 2RH. Note that services will be online, so be mindful of the privacy of friends and loved ones.

Every weekday morning at 8am a group of us are saying Morning Prayer together on Zoom, or you can phone in. If you would like an invitation, please e-mail Lore.

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## Sharon Rawlings RIP

We are deeply saddened to announce that Sharon Rawlings, who had been fighting Covid, died on Saturday 20 November. Our thoughts and prayers are with David and all the family.

Sharon had been probably our longest-serving member, having sung in the choir since she was a child with her father, Lloyd Grosvenor, who is himself remembered with affection. Sharon's funeral will be in Christ Church on Friday 7 January at 1pm.

## Last month...



*On Saturday 13 November four of our young people were among the 47 people confirmed at Wells Cathedral by Bishop Ruth and Assistant Bishop Alastair Redfern. At the top is the whole group outside the cathedral. Congratulations to our newly confirmed members, pictured here with Lore and Kara after the service.*



*This month we said farewell to Jane Fletcher, a long-standing and much-missed member of the congregation, whose funeral was held in Christ Church on Wednesday 17 November.*

# Environmental Emergency recognised

## **Rebekah Cunningham writes:**

Last month our Environment Group made the Declaration that we at Christ Church recognise a climate and environment emergency. This has now been ratified by Council and Trustees and, as well as being posted on our own website and social media, is being sent to our MP Wera Hobhouse, BANES Council, Bath Churches Action Network and Bath and Wells Diocese. Our declaration says:

*On the basis that:*

- 1. The world is facing a severe crisis of environmental degradation and climate change that affects our ability to sustain human civilisation in its present form;*
- 2. The main cause of the crisis is human activity;*
- 3. The crisis is inextricably linked to global injustices and inequality;*
- 4. The crisis indicates a failure of human beings to follow God's mandate to care for the world and to seek justice among its peoples;*

*We, the leaders and members of Christ Church, Julian Road, Bath, want to publicly recognise a Climate and Environmental Emergency, and commit ourselves to:*

- 1. Examining our lives individually and corporately in relation to this crisis, and seeking to live faithfully to God;*
- 2. Bringing forward by April 2022 an action plan to minimise our negative corporate impact on the environment and climate and to help restoration where possible;*



Picture: Sepp Photography / Shutterstock

- 3. Encouraging our members to make relevant lifestyle changes appropriate to their circumstances;*
- 4. Encouraging action on this emergency in our neighbourhoods, workplaces and other spheres of activity;*
- 5. Using whatever influence we may have to bring about positive actions by local and national government and by corporations.*

So now that we've gone public, the hard work begins! The Environment Group will be putting together an action plan, but you will see in item 4 after the second statement that everyone in Christ Church is being encouraged to look at their own lifestyles. One way you can do this is to go to <https://creationcare.org.uk/members/> and fill in their assessment questionnaire. If you have any suggestions about what we could be doing as a church, there is a little suggestions box on the notice board at the back of church. We hope to have regular reports on progress in the *Link* magazine.

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## Stamps for seafarers

### **Sylvia Ayers writes:**

As we get ever nearer to Christmas, you cannot fail to notice all the extra cards and potential presents in the shops; you probably buy quite a few yourselves to send to family and friends. Then, of course, you will expect to receive a much increased post through your door, all suitably adorned with attractive Christmas stamps. Of course, the cards will find a ready home on your mantelpiece, but what about the envelopes? There is still a market for Christmas stamps, even when they have been used to post items to you. Please would you therefore cut AROUND the used stamps, leaving a two centimetre frame, and either pass them to me at Christ Church or leave them for me in the A pigeonhole. I can then send them on to the Missions to Seafarers Office in London, who can sell them to raise funds.



# Bishop's Message for December

*The heart of Christmas*



**From the Rt Revd Ruth Worsley,  
Bishop of Taunton**

What is at the heart of Christmas for you? Is it the feasting and festivities? The carols and the candles? The stockings and the gifts? Or the presence of those you love?

This Christmas we may find ourselves investing more in our preparations, as last year Christmas plans were curtailed and for some even cancelled. A year ago we were to have had all our family gather for Christmas at our house and then, just before, my husband Howard had a positive Covid test. Everything changed and in fact neither of us felt well enough to enjoy a special meal together, let alone welcome others. So, this year I want to pull out all the stops!

The children and grandchildren will be with us, and Howard tells me that Father Christmas will be paying a special visit! However, we are also wanting to make sure that we don't get carried away with all the tinsel and trappings and forget the heart of the story. So, we shall limit our spending

on pressies but make sure that we really value the presence of one another and particularly of the Christ child at the heart of it all.

This year as you anticipate Christmas, through the stories told through Advent windows, or carol services in your church, or Nativities on the move, how might you prepare your heart for the coming Christ child? The wonder of Christmas is that God has never given up on us and in fact loves us so much that he wants to spend time with us. The birth of Jesus, God's Son, into a humble human family brought God into our very midst, into the heart of our homes. This Christmas let's make space for Him once more and listen to the words of love, hope and joy He wants to share with us. And may that inspire our faith in the future, for ourselves and our world.

Wishing you much joy and peace this Christmas!

**+Ruth Taunton**

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## Daily Hope

A free national phoneline offers a simple way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes when they can't go to services in person. It will be particularly welcome to those without internet access to watch streamed services. Daily Hope offers hymns, prayers, daily reflections and a choice of church services over the phone, 24 hours a day.



# This month's charities: for Bath's vulnerable

The retiring collection in the plate on the second and fourth Sunday of the month – 12 and 26 December – plus other collections at services this month as notified will be divided between Julian House and The Genesis Trust. (Donations in collection envelopes continue to go to Christ Church.)

## **Rebekah Cunningham writes:**

**Genesis Trust** is a charity with a Christian ethos, supporting vulnerable people in the Bath area. It provides compassionate help to support people with their immediate needs and journeys with them as they gain confidence, learn new skills, overcome challenges and make choices to restore and rebuild their lives.

Under the heading Genesis Life Projects are three key areas of support – Lifeline, Life Skills and the Life Course – which have a long-term, holistic approach, creating a network of support for clients.

*"I always thought there was no hope. Now I open the kitchen door of my new home and I'm in heaven"* – Sally, Life Course participant

Genesis Trust says: "There are many people like Sally in our community who need Genesis Life Projects to set them on their own path towards a better future. Demand for our service is currently very high, with many people finding themselves newly homeless or in crisis. There is no doubt that the pandemic has caused demand for our services to increase and we anticipate this will continue through the winter months. These people, just holding on, are who we need to serve.

"Thanks to our generous supporters Genesis Life Projects has enabled people like Sally to find self-worth, community and hope. When people feel lost, anxious or are trying to escape pain, it's important to remember



that love is at the heart of their future. We help people to learn to accept and love themselves and from there they can look towards the future with hope."

Can you help Genesis Life Projects share hope this Christmas by making a donation? You can donate online at [www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/genesis-trust-bath](http://www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/genesis-trust-bath)

**Julian House** is a Bath charity that supports vulnerable and at-risk individuals. These include adults and young people experiencing homelessness or escaping domestic abuse, adults with learning difficulties and people who need support after leaving prison.

As well as their 20 bed hostel in Manvers Street, it runs many other services in Bath and across the South West, including supported housing, helping ex offenders, employment skills, bike workshops, refugee resettlement and support of travelling communities.

Julian House says: "As the world starts to return to some sense of 'normality,' this is not the case for the people we support.

"Whether we are deciding to go back to the office, which restaurant to eat at, or when to have friends and family inside for a catch-up, these considerations are far removed for the hundreds of vulnerable and marginalised people we are supporting at this moment.

"Surviving the night on the streets, dealing with immense mental health issues or addiction problems and fearing the next blow from an abusive partner are all very real challenges for the men, women and children that we are desperate to help. We need your help today."

You can donate online at [www.julianhouse.org.uk/donate](http://www.julianhouse.org.uk/donate).

Have a look too at Julian House's Christmas workshops and perhaps treat yourself or someone you love to one. Find details at [www.julianhouse.org.uk/support-us/events/christmas-workshops](http://www.julianhouse.org.uk/support-us/events/christmas-workshops).

# Christ Church calendar Dec. 2021

**5** Sun *The Second Sunday of Advent*  
10am Eucharist  
6:30pm Advent Carol Service

9 Thu 11am Eucharist  
Pilgrim Group meeting, 7:30pm

10 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**12** Sun *The Third Sunday of Advent*  
8am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10am Eucharist  
5pm LGBT+ inclusive Carol Service at St Stephen's, Lansdown

16 Thu 11am Eucharist

17 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**19** Sun *The Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
10am Family Eucharist and Nativity Play  
6:30pm Christmas Carol Service

21 Tue 6:30pm Carol Singing on St Andrew's Green

23 Thu 11am Eucharist

24 Fri *Christmas Eve*  
4:30pm Crib Service – the Christmas story for all the family  
11:30pm Midnight Mass

25 Sat *Christmas Day*  
10am Christmas Day Eucharist

**26** Sun *Boxing Day / Stephen, the first martyr*  
10am Eucharist

27 Mon *John, Apostle and Evangelist*

28 Tue *The Holy Innocents*

30 Thu 11am Eucharist

31 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm (TBC)

**Jan** 1 Sat *Naming and Circumcision of Jesus / New Year's Day*

**2** Sun *The Second Sunday of Christmas*  
10am Eucharist

**Our Sunday 10am Eucharist, Christmas Day Eucharist and other services as advertised are live-streamed at [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath](http://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath)**

# Prayer Cycle for December 2021

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>1</b>	For those who are persecuted for their faith
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>2</b>	For Bible scholars and theologians
<b>Friday</b>	<b>3</b>	For those who use and run food banks
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>4</b>	That we may be open to encounters with God
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>5</b>	For Lore our priest in charge
<b>Monday</b>	<b>6</b>	For those in the legal profession
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>7</b>	For the Christ Church environmental group
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>8</b>	For our neighbours at St Mary's Catholic Church
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>9</b>	For vocations to the ministry
<b>Friday</b>	<b>10</b>	For those who work in dangerous conditions
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>11</b>	We give thanks for family and friends
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>12</b>	For Jane and Janet our churchwardens
<b>Monday</b>	<b>13</b>	For journalists and those who work in the media
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>14</b>	For Mark, David and the choir
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>15</b>	For countries in conflict
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>16</b>	For those preparing for marriage or recently married
<b>Friday</b>	<b>17</b>	For those finding it hard to earn a living
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>18</b>	For our charity of the month
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>19</b>	For Angela our Verger
<b>Monday</b>	<b>20</b>	For architects and designers
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>21</b>	For those who mourn
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>22</b>	For children and their families
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>23</b>	That we may have the gift of joy



<b>Friday</b>	<b>24</b>	For churches, Cathedrals and communities named Christ Church
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>25</b>	Thanksgiving for the Incarnation
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>26</b>	For Colin and all clergy spouses
<b>Monday</b>	<b>27</b>	For those who care for the sick
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>28</b>	For those who have been forced to flee their homes
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>29</b>	For our Diocese of Bath and Wells
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>30</b>	For those on holiday
<b>Friday</b>	<b>31</b>	We give thanks for the blessings of the past year

## Long-term Prayer List

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

Jean  
 Joyce K  
 Revd John  
 Amber  
 David  
 Nick Johnson  
 Jenny  
 Joyce W  
 Hannah  
 Dillon  
 Evelyn  
 Chris  
 Thomas  
 David  
 Roger and Frances  
 Patrick

**Want to add a name to the prayer list, long-term or short-term, or remove one? Please use the lists at the back of the church, or speak to Lore, 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 (watch for information about any changes to these hours over the Christmas / New Year period). All are welcome! If you live or work in the area, do consider dropping in for a cup of tea, home-made cake and a chat, 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, please contact Janet Mahto.



# Rotas for December 2021

*Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist*

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel	Intercessions
<b>5 Dec</b> 2nd Sun. of Advent	<b>Kara Maylor</b> Malachi 3:1-4	<b>Alex Soboslay</b> Philippians 1:3-11	<b>Richard Gabe</b> Luke 3:1-6	<b>Beryl Bowes</b>
<b>12 Dec</b> 3rd Sun. of Advent	<b>David Bishop</b> Zephaniah 3:14-end or Isaiah 12:2-6	<b>Malcolm Wall</b> Philippians 4:4-7	<b>Janet Mahto</b> Luke 3:7-18	<b>Mark Elliott</b>
<b>19 Dec</b> 4th Sun. of Advent	<b>Brenda Wall</b> Micah 5:2-5a	<b>Isaac Elliott</b> Hebrews 10:5-10	<b>Jonathan Stead</b> Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]	<b>Rebekah Cunningham</b>
<b>25 Dec</b> Christmas Day	<b>Mark Elliott</b> Isaiah 9:2-7	<b>Clive Tilling</b> Titus 2:11-14	<b>Judith Bishop</b> Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]	<b>Jonathan Stead</b>
<b>26 Dec</b> 1st of Christmas	<b>TBC</b> 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	<b>TBC</b> Colossians 3:12-17	<b>TBC</b> Luke 2:41-end	<b>TBC</b>
<b>2 Jan</b> 2nd of Christmas	<b>Isaac Elliott</b> Jeremiah 31:7-14	<b>Angela Soboslay</b> Ephesians 1:3-14	<b>Robin Kerr</b> John 1:[1-9] 10-18	<b>Simon Tatton- Brown</b>

# Who's who at Christ Church

**Priest-in-charge** Revd Lore Chumbley  
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**Supporting clergy**  
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Revd Beryl Bowes  
Revd Dr Peter Bowes

**Reader, Director of Music** Mark Elliott  
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**Churchwarden,  
Cedar Tree café organiser** Janet Mahto  
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**Churchwarden** Jane Nicholson  
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**Laitie rotas** Judith Bishop

**Prayer cycle** Virginia Knight

**Junior Church** Emma Elliott

**Churches Together in Bath,  
USPG** Rebekah Cunningham

**Mission to Seafarers** Sylvia Ayers

**Deanery Synod Reps** Brenda Wall  
Pauline Swaby-Wallace

## 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](mailto: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, the Archbishop of Canterbury; William Wilberforce, the great evangelical and campaigner against slavery; and Martin Stafford Smith, godfather of John Keble, a founder of the Oxford Movement.

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.

For anyone concerned about the health risks of congregational singing, we will not sing at the 11am Thursday Eucharist, 8am BCP Communion or 5pm Quiet Service. For now, all services continue to be socially-distanced.

As well as worship on Sundays and Thursday mornings, there are many other activities going on in our community, including our weekly community café every Friday. Visit the website to check service times and events.

## Regular Sunday services

- 8am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) – *On the second Sunday of every month*
- 10am Sung Eucharist with Junior Church activities for children and young people – *Every Sunday – also streamed at [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath](http://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath)*
- 4:30pm Choral Evensong – *Usually on the third Sunday of every month – also streamed*
- 5pm Contemplative Quiet Service (Iona) – *On the fourth Sunday of every month from 23 January*

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



## Contacting us

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