



Anniversary of the apse

150 years since the biggest reordering yet in Christ Church

As we turn to thinking once again about how we wish to configure the east end of the church, it may be apt to note that next month is the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the apse.

When Christ Church was built, it had a flat wall at the east end, with panels displaying the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Creed (below). In 1861 the Trustees purchased No. 5 Montpelier, the house adjacent to the east end of the building, demolished it, and began constructing a curved apse

designed by John Elkington Gill, the leading architect of his day in Bath. This was completed in 1866 (below) and consecrated on 21 June that year, 150 years ago next month. The carved stone tiles around the apse, also designed by Gill, were added in 1871, as were the stained glass windows above by Clayton & Bell. The carved oak reredos was installed in 1905 (the artists, H.H. Martyn & Co. of Cheltenham, were later responsible for the architectural decoration work on the SS Queen Mary).



News about Angela B-W's new appointment

ABW and Andrew are moving from Bath to the Quantocks

On Easter Sunday it was announced that Angela Berners-Wilson has been appointed Rector of the Quantock Towers Benefice, which comprises St George's, Bicknoller; the Church of the Holy Ghost, Crowcombe; St Mary's, Stogumber; St George's, Sampford Brett; All Saints, Monksilver, with St Martin's, Elworthy; and St Mary the Virgin, Nettlecombe.

St Martin's is a redundant church in the care of a charity, but is used at least once a year for a candlelit Advent Carol Service (no electricity in the church!). Apart from Nettlecombe, each church has its own village, Stogumber being the largest. The Rectory is in Bicknoller.

Angela writes: I will be in charge of a Benefice of six parishes, with diverse traditions, but all having absolute gems of medieval churches. There will be three other clergy in the team and six Readers, so I will not be on my own with that many churches, I am pleased to say! The Rural Dean is an NSM in the Benefice and there is a house-for-duty newly retired clergy couple – he is

licensed to the Benefice, his wife to the whole Deanery. There are some lovely people there and a real willingness to work together and reach out more to the local community. There are two primary schools that are federated, and a plethora of local organisations and community focussed projects.

We will be living in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and there is even a Heritage Railway line – the West Somerset – nearby, with two stations (Stogumber and Crowcombe Heathfield) within the Benefice, for Andrew!

You would be welcome to come and visit, perhaps walk the Coleridge Way, which passes through Monksilver Churchyard, and our house looks on to one of the Quantocks. We feel so blessed. Do pencil 25th July into diary please for my Induction by our new Suffragan Bishop of Taunton, +Ruth Worsley. Not sure yet which church that will be held in – Stogumber holds 200 but has very little parking, so it may be one of the others. We will let you know.

I have enjoyed my job at the University enormously, and particularly our



The stunning scenery around Bicknoller.



Bicknoller church. Photos courtesy of Angela B-W.

“I go to prepare a place for you”

link with Christ Church, and have never stayed anywhere so long (almost 12 years by the summer), but it is now time to move on to pastures new – both literal and metaphorical! I am only sorry not to have longer to work with Lore. We will move in early July – not fixed the exact date yet but my last Sunday will be 3rd July.

Please don't lose touch – we are still in the same Diocese and it is less than two hours drive from Bath. Eventually we will retire to our house in Bristol, so we intend to stay in the area and not move too far from all our many friends in Bath.



The interior of the church at Stogumber.

Revd Lore Chumbley writes:

Thursday 5 May is Ascension Day. It's a principal feast. Children used to have the day off school. At Christ Church this year we will mark it with sung evensong at 7pm followed by a celebration in Lower Mews to which everyone is invited.

Ascension Day marks the end of Our Lord's resurrection appearances on earth and the beginning of his reign in heaven at the right hand of the Father. Conventional words – but of course we have no idea what "reigning in heaven at the right hand of the Father" actually means. But we do know, as the writer of the letter to the Hebrews reminds us, "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin." There is a man in heaven who knows what it is like to be us.

Beyond Ascension Day we look toward Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the Church's year there is always a rhythm of growth and decrease, arrival and departing. In July we will say goodbye to the Revd Prebendary Angela Berners-Wilson and Andrew. For all of us at Christ Church that will be a painful parting – but for them it is a joyful new beginning. More than that, the Ascension assures us that even when we feel utterly bereft, God's apparent withdrawal is in reality an invitation to experience more closely his presence with us.

Brenda to train as Reader

Congratulations to Brenda Wall, who has been accepted for training as a lay Reader following a selection interview in mid April and support from the congregation of Christ Church. Our love and prayers are with her as she begins her training later this year.

Christian Aid Week: loving every neighbour

We believe Jesus calls us to love others as our neighbours – and not just the ones next door or at the end of the street. We're all made in God's image, which means the whole world is our neighbourhood.

Through the funds raised during Christian Aid Week (15-21 May), people in developing countries could be given a safe place to call home, and big strides could be made towards a world where everyone has enough food to eat, now and in the future.

Bangladesh's location, geography, large rivers and monsoon climate make it incredibly vulnerable to natural disasters, including floods and cyclones. Bangladesh is home to 160 million people, four fifths of whom live

on less than £1.30 a day, making it one of the most densely populated countries on earth.

Every year, when the snow melts on the Himalayas, the Brahmaputra river swells and sends water into homes, spoiling crops and ruins families' only possessions. Homes can be destroyed, children swept away in rapid water and the land on which poor communities' lives are built washed away.

Christian Aid partner GUK works with both women and men in poor rural communities beside the Brahmaputra river to give them somewhere safe, secure and dry to live. GUK is supporting families suffering the consequences of annual floods and is providing families, like mum-of-three Feroza's, with earth plinths to raise their homes six to eight feet above water, creating a safe place for them to rebuild their home and safely keep livestock. They are being introduced to new seeds so they can grow essential crops.

Feroza, whose home has been swept away seven times, now has a flood-proof home, and the chance of creating a safe, secure future for her family.

For more about Christian Aid Week and how you can help transform the lives of our global neighbours, visit www.caweek.org



Christian Aid believes the most vulnerable do not have to be swept away by the tide of poverty.

Wall to Wall Harmony for St Stephen's

Our neighbours and Local Ministry Group partners at St Stephen's, Lansdown, have sent everyone at Christ Church a special invitation to a concert to help raise funds towards the repair of the church's chancel wall, which has been an ongoing problem.

The concert will take place on Saturday 7 May at 7:30pm at St Stephen's, Lansdown Road, Bath BA1 5SX. We're told to expect "an evening of close harmony and fun" – the theme is "Wall to Wall Harmony" and it will feature Black Sheep Harmony, an all-women

barbershop group, who will be joined by some other groups, giving the evening a rich mixture of styles and approaches.

"If you like your harmony close," our invitation declares, "this will be an absolute treat. If you don't, come along and have your mind changed!"

Tickets are £10, available at the door. All proceeds go to St Stephen's. To find out more, look for the poster at the back of church; to find out about Black Sheep Harmony, visit the website www.blacksheepharmony.co.uk

Just passing through

Margaret Heath writes:

“Enjoy your weekend – or perhaps I should not say that, remembering the subject.” I had told the speaker I was off to Ammerdown for a weekend workshop on the end of life, the first time this has been laid on. In fact I could hardly have enjoyed myself more, and the group of about 14 of us, of mixed ages, seemed to share my enthusiasm.

We were considering the challenges of ageing, changes in our priorities, the acceptance of limitations and in at least one case of pain, unfinished business especially in relationships, forgiveness, loss, grief and much else. We learned a lot about ourselves and indeed others; there was a very strict agreement that all sharing was confidential and share we did, in pairs or threes or with the whole group.

Sue Brayne, who led the course, is an Ammerdown volunteer and very well qualified to speak on dying. She was an SRN, has a master’s degree and is a psychotherapist with a lot of experience. She never talked down to us; she did not “have all the answers” but enabled often taboo subjects to be discussed in an open and non-judgemental environment. She is very well read and brought in various books which she had found helpful. The booklet, “Nearing the end of life,” which she has written with a psychiatrist, is available on Kindle at no cost. I recommend it. If interested try googling for further details.

Gazing at the Divine in icons

Mother Sarah, Orthodox Chaplain at the University of Bath, is to lead a time of prayerfulness using icons as a way of gazing at the Divine and allowing the Divine to gaze upon us. All are invited to come together for a time of reflection, conversation and prayer on Wednesday 11 May at St James’ Priory, Whitson Street, Bristol, BSI 3NZ, 7–9pm (refreshments from 6.45pm). To find out about the former Benedictine priory, the oldest building in Bristol, visit www.stjamespriory.org.uk

Discover The Ornate & the Beautiful



The Ornate & the Beautiful is a stunning new exhibition at The Bishop’s Palace and Gardens, Wells BA5 2PD, until 2 September.

The exhibition will showcase artefacts and archival material charting the rich history of textile design and beautiful artefacts of worship through the history of the Church from the 14th Century to modern day. On display will be items from the collections of Downside Abbey, The Bishop’s Palace and Wells Cathedral, many of which have never been on public display before.

Aside from the historic examples of vestments the exhibition will feature photos of some of the items in use and smaller items of stunning jewellery and adornment.

The focus is on telling the story of the fine craftsmanship and the beauty of the textiles, supplemented by interpretation contemporary with the creation of these artefacts, as well as contextual interpretation of fashions in church vestments linked to the changing history of the Church.

For opening times and other information, visit www.bishopspalace.org.uk



Week of Prayer

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have written to every serving parish priest in the Church of England expressing their wish “to see a great wave of prayer across our land, throughout the Church of England and many other Churches” in the week leading up to Pentecost, from 8th to 15th May.

The week of prayer will culminate in “Beacon Events” around the country over Pentecost weekend, where people will pray for the renewal of the Holy Spirit and the confidence to share their faith.

In their letter the Archbishops wrote: “At the heart of our prayers will be words that Jesus himself taught us – ‘Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.’ It is impossible to overstate the life-transforming power of the Lord’s Prayer. It is a prayer that is reassuring enough to be on the lips of the dying and yet dangerous enough to be banned in cinemas. It is famous enough to be spoken each day by billions in hundreds of languages and yet intimate enough to draw us ever closer into friendship with Jesus Christ. It is simple enough to be memorised by small children and yet profound enough to sustain a whole lifetime of prayer. When we pray it with sincerity and with joy, there is no imagining the new ways in which God can use us to his glory.”

You’ll find more information and resources at <http://thykingdom.co.uk>

Coming events

Organ Recital: Messiaen Pentecost Mass

What is it? Matthew Owens (Organist and Master of the Choristers, Wells Cathedral) and Prebendary Elsa van der Zee (narrator) give the annual performance of Olivier Messiaen’s *Messe de la Pentecôte* in the third of this year’s Messiaen meditations. For details visit wellscathedral.org.uk

When is it? Sunday 15 May, 4:30–5:00pm

Where? Wells Cathedral, BA5 2US

Admission free; retiring collection in aid of Wells Cathedral Music

Aled Jones Cathedral Tour Concert

Aled Jones MBE is singing in cathedrals across the UK on a 22-date tour, and comes to Wells in mid May. The event is likely to be popular, so secure your tickets soon! For details visit wellscathedral.org.uk or call Wells Cathedral Shop Box Office (01749 672773)

When is it? Thursday 19 May, 7:30–9:30pm

Where? Wells Cathedral, BA5 2US

Admission £19.50–£35 plus booking fee, available from ticket agencies

Apple Picking Party in aid of Genesis

What is it? Janet Mahto is opening her garden again this year in aid of Genesis Trust

When is it? Sunday 4 September 2016

Where? Granville Lodge, Weston Road, Bath BA1 2XU. *Put the date in your diary now!*

Thanks expressed at Annual General Meeting

At our AGM on Sunday 24 April, our new Priest-in-Charge, Revd Lore Chumbley, noted that Christ Church has “so many helpers” and expressed thanks to all those who give their time and abilities in so many ways. Particular thanks go to those who are standing down from various positions: Margaret Burrows, David Rawlings and Angela Soboslay, whose terms of office on Church Council are ending (with a special word of gratitude to David, who served as Lay Chair of Council through the vacancy); Morny Davison and Andrew

Sillett, who are standing down as Deanery Synod representatives; Yvonne Morris, standing down as Assistant Churchwarden; and Margaret Heath, who feels that the time has come to step down as our representative to Churches Together in Bath.

In addition to electing new members of Church Council and Deanery Synod reps (see facing page), the meeting welcomed Rebekah Cunningham as our new CTB rep. It was also announced that Janet Mahto has accepted the vacant position on the Trustees.

Church Council

At the Christ Church AGM on Sunday 24 April, Malcolm Wall and Alex Soboslay were re-elected as Churchwardens. Janet Mahto and Sylvia Ayers were elected as Assistant Churchwardens. Brenda Wall continues to serve as Deanery Synod representative and is now joined by Sarah Kerr and Jane Nicholson.

The members of Church Council for 2016-17 are as follows:

Ex officio members

Revd Lore Chumbley	Priest-in-Charge
Mark Elliott	Reader
Malcolm Wall	Churchwarden, Council Treasurer
Alex Soboslay	Churchwarden
Brenda Wall	Deanery Synod rep
Sarah Kerr	Deanery Synod rep
Jane Nicholson	Deanery Synod rep

Elected until 2017

Judith Anderson
Matthew Jones
Sharon Rawlings

Elected until 2018

Judith Bishop
Rowena Hall
Janet Mahto

Elected until 2019

Georgina Bowman
Virginia Knight
Penny Edwards

The first meeting of the new Council will take place on Tuesday 17 May. Dates for meetings for the rest of the year should be set at the first meeting.

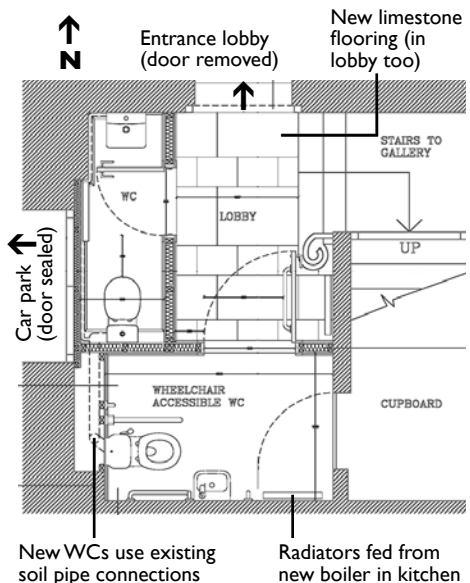
The next Annual General Meeting for all those on the Christ Church electoral roll will take place on Sunday 30 April 2017.

Coming comforts

As reported at the AGM, work should begin shortly on refurbishing the lavatories in the church building and the Lower Mews.

After much deliberation, the Trustees opted for a design with two cubicles in the south-west corner of the church building, where our present lavatories are located. Unlike the facilities we have at the moment, one of these will be an accessible cubicle fully compliant with building regulations. Our architects could not come up with any way to squeeze more cubicles into the space available. We are now awaiting formal approval from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), the final step before applying for a faculty (the Church of England counterpart of planning permission).

Before this work begins, we expect to have renovated the choir vestry lavatory in the north-west corner of the building, near the choir vestry door, which has been affected by a leaky roof and badly needs redecoration. In addition, a second lavatory will be added in the Lower Mews, alongside the present accessible cubicle. The plan is for all these to be in service before work on the main loos begins.



Are you an extremist?

Almost half of non-religious American adults consider Christianity to be extremist, according to a 2015 study. A report released this February by the Barna Group suggests that although Christianity is still the dominant religion in the US, the climate of opinion is shifting: for decades the trend has been to regard Christianity as irrelevant, but this view “is increasingly giving way to the notion that Christianity is bad for society.”

In the study, 45% of those who self-identified as atheist, agnostic or religiously unaffiliated – categorised as “sceptics” – agreed with the statement that “Christianity is extremist”. Only 14% of this group strongly disagreed.

The study acknowledges that the current political situation around the world, and in particular religiously-motivated terrorism, fed an understandable concern about religious extremism. Three-quarters of all Americans – and nine out of ten American adults with no faith affiliation – agreed that “being religiously extreme is a threat to society”.

But what exactly is extreme? The researchers took a list of more than 20 different activities and beliefs, and asked a random, representative sample of American adults to identify how extreme each of them was. The results fell into four categories:

- **Category 1** – actions considered to be “extreme” by at least 80% of American adults – included using religion to justify violence, refusing standard medical care for children, and refusing to serve a customer whose lifestyle conflicted with your own beliefs. For the most part, these three things were viewed as extreme by a majority of all demographic segments as well.

- **Category 2** – activities and beliefs considered extreme by 50% to 79% – included preaching a religious message in a public place, distributing religious material door-to-door, and protesting government policies that conflict with religious views.

- **Category 3** – considered extreme by 20% to 49% – included speaking in tongues (“praying in a special language”), quitting a well-paid

job to pursue mission work in another country, wearing special clothes or a head covering for religious observance, and fasting or refraining from food for a period of time.

- **Category 4** – considered extreme by 6% to 19% of American adults – included reading the Koran or the Bible silently in a public place, attending religious services on a weekly basis, and volunteering to help people in need.

Unsurprisingly, evangelical Christians were far less likely to perceive many actions and beliefs as extreme. They were just as likely as the general population to say that religiously motivated violence and refusing children medical attention are extremist. Also, evangelicals are just as likely as the general population to say that wearing special garments or head coverings and reading the Koran in public are extremist actions.

However, there were areas where evangelical Christians and “sceptics” diverged hugely. Attempting to convert others to Christianity is considered extreme by just 10% of evangelicals, but 83% of “sceptics”. Just 1% of evangelicals believe it is religious extremism to teach children that same-sex relationships are morally wrong, compared to 75% of “sceptics”.

“The research starkly demonstrates the ways in which evangelicals and many practising Catholics are out of the cultural mainstream,” said David Kinnaman, who is president of Barna and directed the research. “In fact, sceptics and the religiously unaffiliated are now much closer to the cultural ‘norm’ than are religious conservatives.

“The most contentious issues are the ways in which religious conviction gets expressed publicly,” Kinnaman noted, “but the findings illustrate that a wide range of actions, even beliefs, are now viewed as extremist by large chunks of the population.”

(There are doubtless cultural differences involved as well: most British people would almost certainly consider speaking in tongues much more peculiar than fasting, for example, but both are “Category 3” here.) For more details, visit bit.ly/barna-extreme

New resources available to encourage vocations

Church leaders are being provided with more support to encourage congregations to discover God's call in their lives in a new set of resources published today by the Church of England.

Research and good practice gathered in dioceses on developing a range of vocations from lay and ordained ministry to religious life has been made available by the Church of England's Church Support Hub.

The church wants to find new role models, increasing the number of minority ethnic vocations, young vocations, and encouraging women to take up more leadership roles.

Parish and diocesan leaders are encouraged to grow a pro-active culture of vocation by providing opportunities to get involved and praying and teaching about vocation.

Resources to encourage prayer for a renewal and increase in vocations throughout the Church of England have been launched in conjunction with the website.

'Prayer Postcards' to share with people seeking to discover their vocation and resources to mount seven days of prayer for vocations to ministry and other roles in the Church have been published on the Church Print Hub.

The campaign comes after the General Synod backed moves to increase the number of candidates for ordination by 50% over the next five years and to increase the youthfulness and ethnic diversity of candidates.

The Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, said: "Every Christian has a unique part to play in God's great plan of salvation, both through their church involvement and in their mission to the wider world.

"Vocations Sunday is a great day to reflect on what our part in that plan might be, at a time when our Church is urgently praying for an increase in the number and range of vocations, both lay and ordained."

Nigeria-born Martha Weatherill, a first year ordinand at St Stephen's House in Oxford, spoke of how her calling to be ordained was inspired after attending a Minority Ethnic Vocations Conference supported by the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) and the Ministry Division of the Church of England.

"I've always served, doing one thing or another in the Church, but I saw myself as someone who was going to graduate and get a job in the City as an accountant," she said.

"Four years ago when I was serving in a care home, a woman who was a resident said to me 'thankyou so much for the Holy Communion service, without this we wouldn't get access to the Church or have communion.'

"At that point, I felt like a switch had been turned on, as if the Lord was saying to me that this was my destiny, this was what I was born to do."

The Church Support Hub helps provide churches with information they need about occasional offices and other key opportunities for ministry and mission.

**Visit the website at
www.churchsupporthub.org**

A year in the life of a CofE priest: How a photo project changed my life

A photographer who devoted a year of his life to documenting the ministry of a Church of England priest has spoken of how the experience changed his life – and drew him back to his Christian faith and regular church going.

Jim Grover said photographing Rev Kit Gunasekera, a priest in Clapham, south London, had been ‘the most incredible experience’ and had shone a light on the ‘amazing’ unseen ministry of Church of England clergy.

“I learned about what it takes to be a minister – I find ministry now an inspiring thing – I think what I call the ‘foot soldiers’, what the local parish priests do in their communities day in, day out, is remarkable,” he said.

“Whilst at the top of the church there are a whole series of very big issues being wrestled with, out in the parishes, on the ground, ministers are going about their days doing amazing things for the people they connect with.”

The project, called *Of Things Not Seen*, was aimed at showing the ‘unseen’ ministry of CofE clergy beyond Sunday services, baptisms, weddings and funerals. They show Rev Kit at home, in his church and caring for people in the wider community.

A selection of the photographs was viewed by 7,500 people in an exhibition earlier this year at the Oxo Gallery on London’s South Bank and displayed on a series of websites, as well as discussed on TV and radio.

The reaction to the photographs has been moving, Mr Grover said, with a second visitors’ book at the gallery ordered after the first book filled rapidly with positive responses – many from clergy visitors.

Some people said how viewing the photographs had made them re- think their own relationship with their faith and the church, he said.

Speaking about the ‘unexpected, unintended and wonderful’ impact of the project on his own life, Mr Grover, a former Group Strategy Director with the company Diageo, said he had moved from being a ‘classic Christmas day church goer’, to recommitting to his faith and becoming a regular church goer.

“I had a very busy work life, I used to run round the world a lot, so weekends were very precious... My faith and the church weren’t a big part of my life for a long time – it wasn’t a deliberate move away from it, but it took a back seat while other things were more important,” he said.

“Now that has completely changed. I really love going to church and learning more about God and faith and spending time with Kit’s parishioners. My Sundays are now completely changed from what they were.

“Every Sunday you will find me at church and other times too. I am on the PCC – I am completely recommitted to church both as a churchgoer and a believer with faith as well as someone trying to help Kit’s Church as much as I can on the sort of agenda items that churches face.”

You can find out more about the project as well as view the photos at www.ofthingsnotseen.com

You can read Jim’s blog online at bit.ly/OfThingsNotSeen

The new Bishop of Oxford is announced

The new Bishop of Oxford is to be the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Downing Street has announced. Bishop Steven succeeds the Rt Revd John Pritchard, who retired in October 2014 after seven years in post.

Bishop Steven, who is 58, is currently Bishop of Sheffield, a role he has held since 2009. He serves on the Archbishops' Council and Chairs the Ministry Council of the Church of England. He has been a member of the House of Lords since 2013.

He has a passion for mission and evangelism and for finding creative ways of sharing the Gospel. He is the co-author of the Emmaus and Pilgrim courses, which help people engage with the Christian faith.

The Bishop of Oxford leads the Church of England in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, supported by the Area Bishops of Dorchester, Buckingham and Reading. The Diocese is one of the largest and most complex in the Church of England, stretching from Milton Keynes in the north, to Newbury in the south; from the Cotswolds in the west to Slough in the east.

The Diocese has a population of 2.3 million people, more than 800 churches and almost 600 parochial clergy. It includes 12 secondary and 270 primary church schools. As the senior bishop in the Diocese, Bishop Steven will lead a large team and is expected to have a wide ranging role across the Thames Valley alongside his national responsibilities.

Bishop Steven has personal connections with Oxford: he is a graduate of Worcester College, Oxford, and met and married his wife Ann in the city. The family lived in Oxford from 2004 until 2009 when Bishop Steven was leading 'Fresh Expressions', an initiative aimed at encouraging new forms of church for the 21st century.

Speaking about his appointment, Bishop Steven said: "I am looking forward enormously to a new challenge and new responsibility in

the Diocese of Oxford and to working with the senior team and many others to serve the local communities and to build up the life of the Church. There are many signs of God's grace at work across the Diocese and immense potential for the future. I would ask for the prayers of the Diocese in the coming weeks and months for all that lies ahead."

The Bishop of Dorchester, the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, who is serving as Acting Bishop of Oxford during the vacancy, said: "Today is a great day for our Diocese as we welcome the announcement of the next Bishop of Oxford. As both a diocesan bishop and as a parish priest Steven has shown a passion for sharing the good news of Christ in both traditional and innovative ways. Link that to his wide experience of training men and women for a variety of ministries and you can understand there will be much rejoicing around the Diocese today."

During the announcement day Bishop Steven travelled across the diocese, visiting all three counties of his new diocese. The day began with breakfast with colleagues in Bicester, an area of significant new housing development, and ended with Evening Prayer at the Cathedral.

"Today will be just a whistlestop tour but I'm very much looking forward to making longer visits to all corners of the diocese when I take up office later in the year," he said.

The Dean of Christ Church, the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy, said: "The Cathedral very much looks forward to welcoming Bishop Steven to Oxford, and to the wider diocese.

"Bishop Steven comes with a wealth of experience in ministry, mission and in theological education, and the diocese will welcome the many gifts that he will bring to our work across the cities, communities and counties of the diocese. The diocese – like its cathedral – is both complex and unique, and we look forward to the distinctive gifts that Bishop Steven will bring to us in our shared vocation."

A plentiful harvest - Renewal & Reform update

Renewal and Reform is a body of work which seeks to provide a narrative of hope to the Church of England in the 21st century. It aims to build on the 3 goals articulated by General Synod in 2010 to:

Contribute as the national church to the common good

Facilitate the growth of the church in numbers and depth of discipleship

Re-imagine the church's ministry

Renewal and Reform is based on an understanding of the plentiful harvest described in Luke's Gospel:

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field". Luke 10:2

It seeks to build on the excellent work already taking place across the church to articulate a hopeful future for our churches and, more particularly, the communities we serve. But it doesn't seek to duck the serious challenges we face but rather is based on a realistic assessment of where we are and how we might respond.

And one of the clear and intended outcomes of this work is to reverse the decline of the Church of England so that we become a growing church, in every region and for every generation; a church open to and for everyone in England, building up the Body of Christ and working for the common good; a confident church, equipping new generations of leaders, ordained and lay, for ministry and mission.

Essentially Renewal and Reform seeks to bring a message of hope through changed lives and transformed communities as people of faith and people finding faith discover their vocation to love God and serve others. This loving service will find voice and expression in a myriad of ways but will be underpinned by justice, mercy and a humble walk with God.

The work is multi-faceted. Some is rather technical – for example how money is distributed to dioceses to support mission in the lowest income communities, and how we begin to resource the planned increase in ordinands from 2017 onwards. Some of it is more creative – how we understand lay leadership and lay ministry into the future. Some of it is more assertive – how we give effect to the Archbishops' priority on evangelism, in Archbishop Justin's language to move it from an app that we may or may not chose to download to it being the operating system of the church and the core of our individual Christian life and witness.

Current work centres on:

- Initiating a major piece of work on digital evangelism so that Christians can be confident of sharing their faith in a digital age
- Continuing with a major training programme for bishops and deans and identifying a next generation of Christian leaders
- Helping dioceses think and plan strategically for the future
- Providing resources for church planting and major development projects such as Liverpool diocese's 'Transforming Wigan' and Birmingham diocese's 'Growing Younger'
- Looking at how Christians can better connect their faith and life beyond the walls of the church
- Finalising the new financial arrangements for supporting students at theological college

We are also transforming our digital and social media to make communication and interaction much easier. This will include an overhaul of the Renewal & Reform pages on the Church of England website (www.churchofengland.org/renewal-reform) and providing regular updates, blogs, and podcasts.

Bishop's Message for May

Let Pentecost set you alight to share the good news



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

May is a special month. Not least because it is the month in which I was born. No special birthday this year, however, and I'm not sure if I really want to keep counting! However, it is also in this month that we mark the birthday of the Church: the day of Pentecost, the day when the Spirit of God set his people alight with the wonder of what God had done for them. Those new believers couldn't help but tell their story.

During the week leading up to Pentecost (8–15 May) Archbishops Justin Welby and John Sentamu are calling on us all to pray in the words of the Lord, as he taught us to say, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done". They are encouraging us to pray for the evangelisation of the nation.

Within the diocese we are beginning to make our first strategic priority one of "putting mission and evangelism at the heart of all we do". This means that

we want to make sure we stay true to that initial purpose of what the Church is all about, the same purpose as that small gathering of believers who wanted to share their story of faith with others.

"Mission statements" are common practice for most companies, let alone churches, these days. However, the word "evangelism" can make us feel somewhat uncomfortable. All the talk of radicalism and fundamentalism in the media can make us fearful of using the word. Perhaps some of us have even experienced an over-zealous believer seeking to browbeat us into thinking as they do. However it would be a shame to allow the baby to get thrown out with the bathwater.

Christ's last words to his disciples after his resurrection and before he left them to return to his Father, were "Go to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples." Evangelism means "good news", or in its active sense, "bringing or announcing good news". So what's so wrong with that?

The Old Testament tells a wonderful story of four lepers who, during the siege of Samaria by the Syrian army, decided that as they were already rejected by their families and starving they might as well throw themselves on the mercy of the enemy. On arriving in the camp they discover it abandoned and so stuff themselves with the abundant food remaining and claim the spoils of war. And then they think, "We shouldn't be doing this! We have good news and we shouldn't keep it to ourselves." (2 Kings 7:9, GNB)

If we have discovered the life-giving bread of Christ then shouldn't we too begin sharing it?

+Ruth Taunton

Godparents Sunday, 1st May

In 2014, 114,000 children under the age of 12 were baptised in the Church of England, which means that about 350,000 adults took on the role of godparent. That's more people than live in Cardiff or Coventry, and about 6,000 every week. Some will be taking on the role for a second, third or even seventh time, but for many more it will be a first.

Each of them will make big promises in the baptism service – promises to pray, to be an example to the child, to care for them and to lead them towards the way of faith. In fact, having godparents in a child's life is

the top reason that parents give for having a child baptised – a remarkable 91% gave that as one of their reasons.

Godparents are also important to the church. So it makes sense for the Church of England to acknowledge and support this relationship and to recognise its importance in the lifelong journey of discovering all that faith in Jesus Christ means. That's why Sunday 1 May is being marked as Godparents Sunday. We are being invited to set aside time to give thanks, to encourage and above all to pray with and for godparents and godchildren.

Our charity for May: Wizzybugs

The loose collection in the plate on Sunday 8 May, plus an optional retiring collection for the rest of May, will go to Wizzybugs.

Wizzybugs are fun and innovative powered wheelchairs designed specifically for children under five. Wizzybugs address the needs of children with mobility-restricting conditions such as cerebral palsy, spinal muscular atrophy, spina bifida and muscular dystrophy. Even those as young as 14 months can operate the simple controls, allowing them to zip around with their peers, developing spatial awareness, social interaction and independence. It can be



used indoors and outdoors in accessible areas such as level gardens, playgrounds and parks, enabling children to enjoy the experience of mobility with their "first wheels".

The original buggy was created in the early 1990s in close partnership with the Children's Centre at the Royal United Hospital in Bath. The buggy's design was driven by the same mission that the current Wizzybug follows: fun, independent mobility for young children.

Wizzybugs are built in Bath by Designability (Bath Institute of Medical Engineering), which runs a charitable scheme to make Wizzybugs available, free of charge, to children in mainland UK who could benefit from them. There is generally no NHS funding for powered mobility for children under five, so funds need to be raised for the scheme. Thanks to the generosity of funders, the scheme has been able to provide 231 families with Wizzybugs so far.

Through the scheme, a child can have a Wizzybug for as long as they can benefit (which is usually until they outgrow it).

They then return their Wizzybug and it is refurbished for another child.

For more about Wizzybugs and the loan scheme, visit www.designability.org.uk/product/wizzybug

Christ Church calendar May 2016

May	1	Sun	<i>The Sixth Sunday of Easter</i> (No Choral Evensong)
	2	Mon	<i>Philip and James, Apostles</i>
	5	Thu	<i>Ascension Day</i> 7pm Evensong, followed by refreshments in the Lower Mews
	6	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am–1:30pm
	8	Sun	<i>The Seventh Sunday of Easter</i> 8am Holy Communion (BCP)
	13	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am–1:30pm
	14	Sat	<i>Matthias the Apostle</i>
	15	Sun	<i>Pentecost</i>
	17	Tue	Christ Church Council meeting, 7:40pm
	19	Thu	Christ Church Trustees meeting, 7:30pm
	20	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am–1:30pm
	21	Sat	12 noon, Jo Howe and David Wrigley wedding
	22	Sun	<i>Trinity Sunday</i> Baptism of Owen Cade (at 10am service)
	24	Tue	<i>John and Charles Wesley, evangelists and hymn writers</i>
	26	Thu	<i>Corpus Christi</i>
	27	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am–1:30pm
	29	Sun	<i>The First Sunday after Trinity</i> Christ Church rostered to assist at Genesis Sunday Centre
	31	Tue	<i>The Visitation (Visit of Mary to Elizabeth)</i>
June	3	Fri	Cedar Tree café, 11am–1:30pm
	5	Sun	<i>The Second Sunday after Trinity</i> 4:30pm Choral Evenson

Got something you want to let everyone know about? Pop a note in the “Magazine Editor” pigeonhole at the back of church or 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 May 2016

Sunday	1	For Alex and Malcolm our Churchwardens
Monday	2	For the emergency services
Tuesday	3	For good relations between different faiths
Wednesday	4	For all who produce publicity for Christ Church
Thursday	5	We give thanks for family and friends
Friday	6	For the ministry of the Cedar Tree
Saturday	7	For those who have been forced to flee their homes
Sunday	8	For Lore and Colin
Monday	9	For our government and politicians
Tuesday	10	That we may be pure in heart
Wednesday	11	For all carers
Thursday	12	For our neighbours at St Mary's Catholic Church
Friday	13	For the sick and suffering
Saturday	14	We give thanks for beauty in the world around us
Sunday	15	For our Diocese of Bath & Wells
Monday	16	For scientists and engineers
Tuesday	17	For our branch of the Mothers' Union
Wednesday	18	For vocations to the ministry
Thursday	19	That we may be open to encounters with God
Friday	20	For those finding it hard to earn a living
Saturday	21	For those recently baptised or preparing for baptism
Sunday	22	For our servers and others who assist at the altar
Monday	23	For those who work in the transport industry
Tuesday	24	For countries which have recently experienced earthquakes

Wednesday	25	For our link dioceses in Zambia
Thursday	26	For children and their families
Friday	27	For all who face tragedy
Saturday	28	For prisoners and prison workers
Sunday	29	For all clergy who take services at Christ Church
Monday	30	For those who teach
Tuesday	31	We give thanks for the blessings of the past month

Long-term Prayer List

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

Rachel Sillett
 Cyril Selmes
 Ned Townshend
 Joyce Fairburn
 Val Curtis
 Martin Palmer

Rosemary Bethel
 Katharine
 David Slater
 David Lavis
 Jason Batup
 Don Sparks

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 let the Verger or one of the Churchwardens know.

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

Rotas for May 2016

Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
1 May Easter 6	Jane Fletcher Ezekiel 37:1-14	Peter Woodward Acts 16:9-15	Rowena Hall John 14:23-29
8 May Easter 7	Morny Davison Ezekiel 36:24-28	Sylvia Ayers Acts 16:16-34	Judith Anderson John 17:20-end
15 May Pentecost	Richard Gabe Romans 8:14-17	Rebekah Cunningham Acts 2:1-21	Penny Edwards John 14:8-17
22 May Trinity Sunday	Charles Rice Proverbs 8: 1-4,22-31	Virginia Knight Romans 5:1-5	Janet Mahto John 16:12-15
29 May Trinity 1	Andrew Sillett 1 Kings 8:22-23, 41-43	Brenda Wall Galatians 1:1-12	Georgina Bowman Luke 7:1-10
5 June Trinity 2	Emma Elliott 1 Kings 17:17-end	Alex Soboslay Galatians 1:11-end	Margaret Heath Luke 7:11-17

Laity rota, Sunday 10am Eucharist

	Chalice assistants	Sidespeople	Intercessions
1 May	Brenda Wall, Keri Chivers	Jane Nicholson, Margaret Silver	Margaret Heath
8 May	Andrew Sillett, Brenda Wall	Morny Davison, Janet Mahto	Mark Elliott
15 May	Malcolm Wall, Jane Fletcher	Ken Ayers, Sylvia Ayers	Sarah Jones
22 May	Clive Tilling, Keri Chivers	Margaret Silver, Andrew Sillett	Georgina Bowman
29 May	Brenda Wall, David Rawlings	Jane Nicholson, Margaret Heath	Rebekah Cunningham
5 June	Janet Mahto, Andrew Sillett	Rowena Hall, Morny Davison	Penny Edwards

Who's who at Christ Church

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Revd Preb. Angela Berners-Wilson
Revd Canon Simon Tatton-Brown

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Tower Captain Ian Hay Davison
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**Ringing Master
Steeple Keeper** Will Willans
David Kelly

Laity rotas Sarah Cade

Prayer cycle Virginia Knight

Cedar Tree café Janet Mahto

Publicity co-ordinators Janet Mahto,
Lewis Boyd, Hazel Boyd

Junior Church Emma Elliott

**United Society,
Churches Together in Bath,
Traidcraft stall** Rebekah Cunningham

Mothers' Union Sylvia Ayers
01225 463976

Mission to Seafarers Sylvia Ayers

Deanery Synod Reps Brenda Wall
Sarah Kerr
Jane Nicholson



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 normal 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. There is the option of separate activities for children in Junior Church groups during our 10am Sunday service.

As well as worship on a Sunday morning, there are many other activities going on in our community. We support the Genesis Sunday Centre and have our own community café. The musical tradition of the church continues to thrive, and we have an active choir. New singers of all ages are always welcome. Our ecumenical Home Group provides a space for exploration and discussion of faith in an open and non-judgemental setting.

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
- 4:30pm Choral Evensong
Usually the first Sunday of every month, but see website or notice board for details

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



Contacting us

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