



# Christ Church Link

Spring 2013 - Issue 12

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.

## Good Friday and Easter Day

Canon Angela Townshend

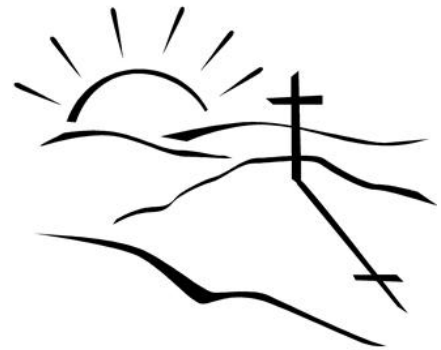
*The Passion of the Christ* is a film by Mel Gibson, of the death of Jesus. Some of you may have seen it. It is a violent film and full of bloody images, but it may be a more realistic depiction of those last hours than any previous film about the death of Jesus. However, if you didn't know the gospel stories, Gibson's interpretation of those last days of Jesus life might have left you wondering what it was all about. For centuries, much of the Church has taught that Jesus had to die because we, humanity, were sinful and someone had to take the punishment. C.S. Lewis, in *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, took this theme and added to it the power of the White Witch who had to see that death was complete.



In another depiction of the life of Christ, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, we see, not only the Passion of Jesus, but his life from the call of the first disciples to his death. In that musical we see how his life and teaching led up to his death and we learn much from his relationships, his love and generosity and his approach to people of all sorts.

Salvation can be found in each part of Jesus' life not only in his death and resurrection. Jesus saves us through his life by showing us what the reign of God looks like, how to be free of a dominating system and how to live a life of love and compassion.

When we follow him, and live our lives as he taught us, we become more Christ-like and we defeat evil.



To focus on the death of Jesus as in *The*

*Passion of the Christ*, is to miss the point. I believe a more helpful depiction of the life and death of Jesus can be seen in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Jesus died because men, and it was men, were threatened by his teaching. They saw their power slipping away because the people recognised the godliness of Jesus and followed him and listened to his teaching about non judgemental love.

The brutality of Jewish and Roman leaders ensured he died a hideous criminal's death. But he returned and the victory was that he rose and was forgiving, loving and non-judgemental. As he was in life, despite the brutality of those who killed him, he was in his risen life. The only thing that can defeat evil is love and God is love.

### Halleluiah, Christ is risen!

If you are interested in reading more about why Jesus died then a useful book is *Consuming Passion*, edited by Simon Barrow and Jonathan Bartley DLT 2005 ISBN 0- 232-52607-9



As you may be aware there are several groups meeting regularly from within the congregation to coordinate and develop various aspects of church life. Here is some feedback from some of them, we hope more will follow in due course.

## **Hospitality**

**Angela Soboslay**

We started Lent with a Pancake & Quiz night on Shrove Tuesday which was an enjoyable evening with lots of pancakes and toppings and Canon Angela being quizmaster. Our recently baptised new member of the congregation, Dylan, helped his table win the quiz.

On Sunday 10th March we celebrated Mothering Sunday with posies of daffodils and a simnel cake.

On Saturday 23rd March at 10am there was a spring clean of the church followed by lunch.

On Easter day the Easter egg hunt will be in church after the service.

## **Liturgy**

**Sarah Jones**

The liturgy group has continued to meet, led by Canon Angela and as you will have seen the new draft service booklet which we have been using in Lent. In fact, it would be accurate to say that there are two draft booklets in circulation: one containing most of the text of the service (including the parts spoken by the priest alone) and a second which contains less of the service text.

Several people have already taken the time to offer feedback on these draft booklets and this is extremely valuable as it is the only way of finding out what really works! If you have comments you would like to add then please speak to Mark, myself or Canon Angela. As we have previously said, the intention is to create a larger number of different seasonal booklets for use throughout the church year. Thank you for your patience as we try out different versions of our written material, we hope that by taking time over this process we will be able to design something that will serve us for many years to come.

## **Building**

**Bob Siderfin**

About three years ago the Church buildings were reviewed at the request of Council and a number of recommendations made - some of which have already been implemented. Our task has been to review and update this report and then to recommend a possible plan of implementation and 'Yes!' we will be improving the lobby as soon as we are able!

Please don't get too excited – finance, inevitably, will be a big factor in what can actually be done and our recommendations will have to be considered by Council and the Trustees in the light of what we can afford and what we can raise from charities and trusts as well as some fund raising. Nevertheless, we hope that our recommendations will be rather more than a 'wish list' and more like a long term plan for the good of the church and its people.

So, where have we got to? Well, the review of the previous report has been completed and work is starting on considering options for implementation. This is greatly influenced by the need for permission from the Church authorities called a 'faculty'. But to prepare the way for such an application we will need to be compliant with current legislation.

One of our serious concerns is the number of trip hazards there are to negotiate when moving to and from communion. There is also a feeling that the position of the choir in the chancel separates the congregation from the altar. The person behind the altar is often called the 'Celebrant' but actually we are all celebrating, celebrating the love of God in Jesus Christ! When we celebrate a birthday or anniversary, we often gather around a table. That is what we want to get the feel of in Christ Church. A way to solve both these problems is to, essentially, swop places – so the choir moves up into the apse, and the altar into the chancel. Communion will be given at the chancel step.

This is just an outline because we are still thinking about the pros and cons, but whatever happens we will need to trial it first with a pilot scheme before we apply for a faculty. We plan to present our plans in more detail at the AGM in April so please come along and give us your views. If you have further questions, please let me know and I will endeavour to explain.

## Exploring Christianity

Exploring Christianity is the diocesan course for lay people wishing to deepen faith, explore scriptures and consider mission and ministry. A group of Christians drawn from Christ Church, St Stephen's and St Mary's Charlcombe (along with individuals who have joined from across Bath and further afield) are currently part way through this programme of study, led by Canon Angela and Rev. Philip (Priest-in-charge at St. Stephen's).

Each week the members meet to study the prepared material, but also share an act of worship at the end of the evening. This story was shared in the worship section in response to a session about the mission and outreach of the church. If you are familiar with the work of Julia Donaldson (author of the children's book *The Gruffalo* amongst many others) then you will be able to spot her influence.

This is the story of a human child  
And a world that seemed dark and scary and wild  
And of people who told her: "There's no reason to gaze  
there's nothing much out there and at the end of your days  
you just stop, there's no more, that's the end of your time  
so find your place in the world, take your place in the line."

But the child looked at the sky and the world all around  
and she said "I feel sure there is more to be found,  
my heart swells already at the things I have seen.  
Why should that be if I'm just selfish genes?"

But some heard the child and started to jeer  
"You're naïve, you're a fool, you've got no idea.  
This is a world that's dark, angry and wild  
and it will eat you alive you silly small child."

So the child stopped exploring and asking and calling  
She took her place in the line and said she was just fine.

But one night she was walking through the town late at night  
And saw in a church car park a very strange site  
A man on his own watching flames in a barbecue  
She had to go over and ask "what are you up to?"

He looked up and replied: "this is called Easter Eve,  
I'm watching, and waiting and trying to believe.  
Easter always sounds crazy when you try and explain it  
but you are welcome to come in, and listen, and sit."

And the child didn't know quite what to say  
but something about the place made her want to stay.  
She went in to the church and sat and was calm  
and listened for a while to a reading and psalm.

She didn't understand all the words that she heard  
but left feeling peaceful and something deep within her stirred  
"I've been told that the world is dark, angry and wild  
but I am sure there is more" sighed the human child.

She came back to listen, she came back to sing  
She came to ask questions and explore many things.

She returned to her journey begun long ago  
She returned to her questions, she still wanted to know  
"My heart's full of love, what does it mean  
If I'm just a vector for that selfish old gene?"

This is a story of a human child  
Finding light in a world that was dark, angry and wild.  
She found a place to ask questions and share other's stories  
about a love they had found that tinged earth with its glory.

## Finding a new Bishop of Bath & Wells

On the 8-9th April The Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments, Caroline Boddington, and the Prime Minister's Secretary for Appointments, Sir Paul Britton will be consulting in Bath and Wells with invited individuals including rural deans, lay chairs, groups of clergy from different settings, young people, diocesan staff, as well as leaders of the civil and business community. There will be a Public Consultation Meeting at 7.30pm on April 8th in Wells Town Hall. These meetings are designed to inform the Appointments Secretaries' view of Somerset, and will indicate the expectations and hopes that the diocese has of a new Bishop

The Crown Nomination Commission, which oversees the selection and appointment of Church of England diocesan bishops will be meeting on 18 July and 5-6 September 2013. If you wish to participate in the process of appointing the new bishop you can attend the public meeting in Wells or write directly to the Appointments' Secretaries before May 20th to comment both on the needs of the diocese and to propose possible candidates as Bishop.



## What does the future look like?

Alex Soboslay and Matthew & Sarah Jones

In January 2010 Matthew and Sarah wrote a piece for *Christ Church Challenge* discussing the future of the church magazine. With the departure of David Marles to Yorkshire, the publication needed a new editor. Here's a reminder of part of what they said:

After discussion with others (including the current editorial team) we feel that the future of the publication may lie in a new direction. We think that fewer editions (perhaps a quarterly format) would mean each issue would be full of high quality content without fatiguing our regular writers. We would also try and bring a more external outlook to the content, while still producing something of interest to the existing congregation of course.

Change is, of course, something that Anglicans are known to be allergic to! However, Matthew and I cannot commit to continuing the magazine in its current form. If you want the existing format to remain, then please step forward. Likewise, we're not trying to develop a monopoly on producing church publications. If you think you would like to take on this project and develop it, then now is your opportunity.

There wasn't an overwhelming responses from people wishing to take on the role of editing the magazine and so Matthew and Sarah took over the brief from David and have developed *Christ Church Link* over the last three years.

Change is an inevitable part of life and with the arrival of Timothy, an extra level of (delightful) complication has been added to the Jones household! Therefore, after careful consideration, they decided that they needed to hand the magazine editorship over to someone else. Within a healthy church community this sharing of roles and tasks should take the form of a natural cycle as different individuals and families go through periods when they are able to offer greater (or lesser) amounts of time to supporting the life of the church.

As you will be aware, this decision has been trailed in *Christ Church Link* and in the notices for some time and Alex Soboslay has come forward with a suggestion for the future of the magazine which he has volunteered to edit. After a productive Jones-Soboslay discussion over tea and biscuits, Alex suggests:

- Returning to a monthly publication, once again incorporating the rotas and prayer cycle
- Including reports from groups such as Mothers' Union and CTB, as at present, plus more regular information from Council, Trustees, possibly Deanery Synod. Develop as a conduit of communication, enhancing the visibility of the various working groups and keeping everybody up-to-date
- A monthly calendar of forthcoming events and supplement to the weekly notice sheet as a channel for announcements etc., particularly as a way of reaching those who don't come to church every week
- Reviewing the nominal cover charge, perhaps instead inviting donations from those who are able to contribute to the production costs
- Distribute the magazine to the wider church community who may be unable to come to church regularly (and may not be able to use the website), keeping them in closer touch with what's happening (the manner in which we execute this distribution may need review as it is somewhat *ad hoc* at present)

However, as ever your views on this are welcome. Alex's proposals will be submitted to Church Council for more detailed discussion, so if you have comments please talk to Alex directly, or a member of council.

## Events from the Bath and Wells Mission Forum

Did you know the diocese has a mission forum? It is a collective of six main groups:

- Local Mission
- Healing
- Renewal
- Rural Life
- Social Justice
- World Mission

The Mission Forum offers advice, resources and training to clergy and laity, parishes and deaneries. As part of our moves to make greater use of the support which the diocese can offer us as a local church community, we thought we would share with you some of the events on offer in the coming weeks:

**Giving Healing a Chance:** Sat 13 April (9:30-12:00) St Augustine's, Locking

An opportunity for those involved or interested in the Christian Healing ministry to get together at a local level to discuss and support one another. The morning will examine the Christian Healing ministry within the local church and also the wider community. We will explore the nature of healing and determine who is entitled to receive this marvellous gift. This free event is open to people from all denominations and walks of life. This event will be repeated on Sat 8 June at St Mary's Church Centre, Nether Stowey.

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/faithandmission/giving-healing-a-chance/>

**More than Food:** Sat 13 April (10am-1pm) St Peter's Church, Taunton TA2 7HD

A South West gathering for Christians who are addressing poverty in their communities, especially those who are involved in sharing food as a means of alleviating poverty. At this event there will be time to share experience and learn from others. We will receive input from Professor Ruth Levitas of Bristol University who has looked into many aspects of the causes of poverty and is an acknowledged expert in the field. We will also look at initiatives such as the Living Wage and at what can be bolted on to existing food banks to support the tide of need that is coming.

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocese/more-than-food/>

**Food, Faith & Power:** Sat 27 April (9am-1pm) The Old Deanery, Wells BA5 2UG

The Mission Forum of the Diocese of Bath and Wells invites you to an event exploring global and local food issues and the role of faith groups and individuals in tackling them. Our key speaker will be Ruth Valerio, Christian writer & activist on justice, environment & lifestyle issues who runs A Rocha's *Living Lightly* initiative. The event is being jointly organised by the Diocesan World Mission, Rural Affairs and Environment groups. As well as hearing from our keynote speaker, there will be a number of workshops/ conversations where delegates will have an opportunity to explore issues in which they have a particular interest.

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/faithandmission/food-faith-power/>

**Climate Change in Rural Communities:** Sat 15 June (9am-1pm) Horton Village Hall, TA19 9QR

The issues of climate change are still with us and getting worse. What are the issues that particularly affect rural communities and how can we address them? This half day event will let you ask the questions you need answered. You will also receive information about what is happening currently and how people are responding in a positive way. One of the key speakers will be Revd Margot Hodson, co-author of *Climate Change, Faith and Rural Communities* a booklet of the Agriculture and Theology Project.

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocese/climate-change-in-rural-communities/>

To find out more about any of these events ring 01749 685104 or email [missionforum@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:missionforum@bathwells.anglican.org)



# Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday 24th March	8am	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	10am	<b>Sung Eucharist with Junior Church</b> With a dramatised reading of the story of Holy Week
	6:30pm	<b>The Passion</b> Choral music and readings for Holy Week
Monday 25th March	8pm	<b>Compline</b>
Tuesday 26th March	8pm	<b>Compline</b> At St. Mary's, Charlcombe
Wednesday 27th March	10am	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	8pm	<b>Compline</b> At St. Stephen's Church, Lansdown
Maundy Thursday 28th March	7:30pm	<b>Agape Meal followed by Vigil</b> At St. Stephen's Church, Lansdown
Good Friday 29th March	10am	Churches Together in Bath <b>Walk of Witness</b> to the Abbey Churchyard leaves Christ Church
	12:30pm	<b>Children at the Foot of the Cross</b>
	1:30pm	<b>Music and Meditation</b>
Holy Saturday 30th March	8:15pm	<b>Easter Ceremonies</b> With renewal of baptism vows
Easter Day 31st March	6:15am	<b>Service at Sunrise</b> A simple service in the beautiful garden of St. Mary's, Charlcombe
	8am	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	10am	<b>Sung Family Eucharist</b> Followed by the Great Christ Church Egg Hunt! <b>Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed!</b>





## From the editors' laptop Matthew and Sarah Jones

As you will have read on page 4 (and as has been extensively trailed

previously) we are stepping down from the editorship of the church magazine. We are really pleased that Alex Soboslay has decided to take on this role and you can read about his plans on page 4 as well. Please support him as he takes the publication in to a new phase.

Our decision to hand this role on to someone new was one which to we gave careful consideration. It became clear that we needed to lessen our workload in order to maintain a

healthy relationship with Christ Church. Many people give a tremendous amount to the church community in all sorts of ways. As well as celebrating those gifts, we need to be mindful that sometimes people need to lessen their commitments, for any number of different reasons. This is healthy, it gives people an opportunity to take on different roles.

The recent meeting about restructuring council was a great example of people contributing to the key discussions about the life of the church. Perhaps this will be a starting point for more people taking an active role in wider church decision making. The more people want to contribute, the more potential we have as a congregation to reach out to our neighbours and share the Easter message of hope and new life.

## Who's who at Christ Church

Priest-in-charge	Canon Angela Townshend 01225 464194 angela.townshend@christchurchbath.org	Junior Church Laity rotas	Sarah Cade
Supporting clergy	Rev'd Cliff Burrows Preb Angela Berners-Wilson	Organist	David Wrigley 01761 439355
Reader Chair of Trustees Director of Music	Mark Elliott 01225 445360 mark.elliott@christchurchbath.org	Pastoral care coordinator	Keri Chivers 01225 421265 keri.chivers@christchurchbath.org
Churchwarden	Malcolm Wall 01225 864933 malcolm.wall@christchurchbath.org	Magazine editors and publicity coordination	Matthew & Sarah Jones 01225 443284 sarah.jones@christchurchbath.org
Churchwarden Chair of Church Council Home Group leader	Lewis Boyd 07739 989639 lewis.boyd@christchurchbath.org	Concert bookings Weekly notice sheet	Judith Bishop 01225 869409 concerts@christchurchbath.org notices@christchurchbath.org
Verger	Angela Soboslay 01225 333297	USPG	Adrian Pegg 01225 858809
Treasurer	David Bishop 01225 869409 david.bishop@christchurchbath.org	Mothers' Union	Margaret Burrows 01225 334743
Secretary to Church Council	Brenda Wall 01225 864933	CTB	Sylvia Ayers 01225 463976 Margaret Heath 01225 428272
Deanery Synod	Morny Davison Andrew Sillett Brenda Wall	Mothers' Union Mission to Seafarers	Sylvia Ayers 01225 463976

## Regular Sunday Services

- 8am Holy Communion using the text from the Book of Common Prayer.  
On the second and fourth Sunday of every month
- 10am Sung Eucharist  
With Junior Church activities for children and young people
- 4:30pm Choral Evensong  
Usually the first Sunday of every month but see website or notice board for details

The church also aims to be a place of spiritual welcome when marking particular points in life's journey. If you would like to discuss holding a service of marriage, baptism or a funeral here, please use the details below to contact us.

## About Christ Church

Christ Church has an unusual history out of which has developed a distinctive ministry. It was built at the end of the 18th century, founded by socially concerned clergy & lay people for those excluded from worship through the system of pew rents. It was probably the first church at that time to provide seating free of charge. Early supporters included the Archbishop of Canterbury, the great evangelical and campaigner against slavery, William Wilberforce and Martin Stafford Smith, godfather of John Keble, a founder of the Oxford Movement.

It is not a parish church and does not have a paid 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 today is part of the Anglican diocese of Bath and Wells, although it still sits outside the normal 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 are separate activities for children in Junior Church groups.

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. Our ecumenical home group provides a space for exploration and discussion of faith in an open and non-judgmental setting.

If you are considering whether Christ Church is a place where you would feel comfortable in exploring the Christian faith, we would be delighted to welcome you, please come along to a service or get in touch with us (see below). If you feel you are looking for a different Christian community we wish you well with God's blessing and we would be happy to tell you of other churches in the area.

## How to find or contact us



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Email: [admin@christchurchbath.org](mailto:admin@christchurchbath.org)

Website: [www.christchurchbath.org](http://www.christchurchbath.org)

