



Christ Church Link

Summer 2010 Issue 1

We're an open-minded Christian community exploring our faith together

50p

How many Anglicans does it take to change a light bulb?

Mark Elliott

You may be aware of the humorous form known as the "light bulb joke" which always start with the question "How may X does is take to change a light bulb?"

Some of my personal favourites are:

Q. How many folk singers does it take to change a light bulb?

A. Two. One to put in the new bulb and one to write a song about how good the old light bulb was.

Q. How many soprano soloists does it take to change a light bulb?

A. One. They just hold the bulb and the world revolves around them.

Q. How many software engineers does it take to change a light bulb?

A. None. That'll be a hardware problem.

There is one which is more directly relevant to the topic I have in mind:

Q. How many Anglicans does it take to change a light bulb?

A. CHANGE????!!

We Anglicans have quite a poor reputation when it comes to handling change. It is often said that if something is done in church once, it's an Unwelcome Innovation. If it is done three times, it becomes a Tradition.

And yet, change is part of all human life. Time does not stand still; change is hard-wired into the whole of creation. All things move, develop, grow, decay, reform - our own bodies, the surface of our planet, ideas and ideologies. To try to avoid change is to try to avoid life, to avoid living.

Inevitably, there will be quite a lot of change at Christ Church over the next year or two and it is understandable that people will, perhaps, be nervous about this. The departure of a well loved vicar (or in our case "Priest-in-Charge") always leaves a big hole at the centre of a church. It can be unsettling not to have an obvious leadership figure, and the uncertainty about the future can be worrying.

Add to this the departure of other Significant Persons (in the form of Chris, Nicky, Josh, Lizzie and David) and we are looking at a lot of change to things that have felt constant for a good few years.

The message I would like to proclaim loudly and strongly is this: *change is good!* Rather than looking at this as a time of uncertainty which we must struggle through and get over with as quickly as possible, I think we should embrace it as an exciting time of

formation and renewal; a time to take stock and think about the new directions in which God might be leading us, both as a community and as individuals with it. I'm already greatly encouraged by the way people are coming forward to take on new roles and responsibilities, and I believe we have a genuinely special community here at Christ Church. We should be proud of the strong traditions we have to draw on, and these should inform our future, but we should also be bold and confident in trying new directions, reinventing some traditions, and yes, perhaps dropping those that no longer seem to serve God in our little corner of the world. The only true constant is God. As long as we try to take our journey with him, we will not go far wrong.



Saying our goodbyes

As we welcome you to the first edition of our new Christ Church publication, it seems rather sad that much contained here is about goodbyes.

Many words will be shared over the next few weeks about the huge contributions made to church life by all the people who are leaving us this summer, and in these short paragraphs we cannot hope to say an adequate farewell.

Antony Claridge has been Priest-in-Charge here for 13 years and we will miss him greatly. He shares some of his thoughts with us on page 4.

We also say *au revoir* to Chris, Nicky, Joshua and Eliza Gladstone and David Marles. They have all done huge amounts for Christ Church, much of it unglamorous and unsung. We thank them all and wish them well as they begin a new stage of life in Yorkshire. Josh and Lizzie let us in on some of their observations of church on page 7.

Your new editors invite your opinions on page 6, and also include a few observations about the changes about to happen in their lives and the need for your help in producing the magazine in coming months.

We look forward to receiving your feedback on the new publication.

Encouragement?

Matthew Jones

One of the many things I've enjoyed about the Home Group's studies of Acts is finding out about one of the unsung heroes of the New Testament, St. Barnabas. When times were tough for the early church, when money was scarce but things needed to be done, if he could do something about it, he did what he could to help. Maybe he couldn't do the work himself, but he could still do something to show that he was there for those in need and something to encourage others who could help, and the work went on. Such was his work in encouraging others that he was nicknamed the "Son of Encouragement".

There are many people and many situations in life where there is difficulty, situations where there is a need for encouragement. Not unrealistic enthusiasm, not a refusal to face facts, but encouragement to people who are trying their hardest to be the best they can be, and

simply need a little extra, a cheer or word, a look or touch to know that they have your support.

As we bid a sad farewell to friends who have done so much for Christ Church, our thoughts turn to how we can carry on the work that they have done faithfully for so many years. There are many people who have taken on extra tasks, but there are still more things to be done. I firmly believe that Christ Church can and will go from strength to strength, but there will be costs, whether in late nights, less time with friends and family or the burden of responsibility and a lengthy "to do" list.

But we can learn much from the example of St. Barnabas. If there is work to be done and any one of us can do something about it, we should do what we can to help. This is vital, we need everyone to do their bit to share the tasks needed to keep Christ Church alive and vibrant. But we must also be vigilant to make sure that no one takes on more than they or their family can bear.

But just as importantly, we must follow St. Barnabas' example and encourage others in their work.

"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other..."

I Thessalonians 5:11

You might not be able to do a task, but could you be the person whose kindness, enthusiasm and support encourages others in their work or responsibilities? Criticism can sting (even in jest) and we remember it for much longer than thanks, so it can be hard to carry on with routine but vital tasks without becoming discouraged. This can be destructive in the long-term, both for individuals and the church. So whilst we must always strive for high standards and look to improve what we do as a church, we must ensure that we continually encourage and thank people for their efforts for Christ Church.

Who are you going to encourage in some way during the week that lies ahead?

With thanks and credit to Rev Dr Derek Browning, Morningside Parish Church, Edinburgh.

In a spirit of encouragement, we wish Abbi Sanders all the best as she starts at Durham University this autumn and thank her for everything she has contributed to Christ Church.



Find us on Wikipedia!

Christ Church, Bath now features on the hugely popular online encyclopaedia: Wikipedia. Wikipedia is a multilingual, web-based, free-content encyclopedia which anyone can edit. The name is a portmanteau of the words wiki (a technology for creating collaborative websites, from the Hawaiian word wiki, meaning "quick") and encyclopedia. Wikipedia has grown rapidly into one of the largest reference web sites, attracting nearly 68 million visitors monthly.

You can find our page at www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christ_Church,_Bath

Many thanks to Virginia Knight who has put the page together. If you have more to contribute (including photographs) please let Virginia know.



The return of 'Big Questions: Little Answers'

It would be a lie to say this feature is back due to popular demand, as no actual demands have been received, however it did seem like an excellent way to introduce our new church warden: Malcolm Wall.

What are your hobbies?

Family! Gardening, occasional golf and tennis, travel and walking, theatre and music. Trying to relax and (more and more) avoiding too much time at work.

What car do you drive?

Volvo V50.

What is your favourite film, and why?

The Shawshank Redemption. It shows how the innocent person can still prevail in an unfair society, how you shouldn't buckle under adversity, and how you must remain positive in life, and never forget you're there to drain the swamp even though you're up to your neck in alligators.

What is your favourite kind of music?

Classical - not too heavy. Preferably with a tune!

What is your favourite kind of meal / food?

Healthy Bistro: salads and also fish.

What has been your proudest moment?

1. The birth of each of our two children: Alex and Charlotte.
2. Getting my MBA at Michigan State University Business School.

What is the most amazing place you have visited?

The Taj Mahal - I'll never forget it standing out as a huge white beautiful shimmering kind of wedding cake, which contrasts to all the poverty and squalor that surrounds it. A *must* to see!

What famous person, dead or alive, would you like to meet?

Winston Churchill - preferably alive (!)

What's your pet hate?

Boastful, arrogant, selfish people, of which I know several, who try to trample on all else in the pursuit of their own glory.

What's your favourite book?

Greenmantle by John Buchan - and many others of his books.

Tell us a little known fact about yourself

I broke my neck playing rugby at university and I had a heart attack last year: but I am a positive and proactive person in work and play - "Half Full" and definitely not "Half Empty!"

Salad and Espresso Days

Some thoughts from Antony

The other day I did what I often do; I found myself turning into the Christ Church car park when, in fact, the church wasn't my actual destination. This just goes to show how Christ Church has been central to my life for the past thirteen years. Now it must come to an end. On Sunday, 25th July, protocol demands that I walk out the west door not to return for two years and then only by invitation.

In the 1950s when the world was young, we were all charmed by a little musical called "Salad Days". Julian Slade and Dorothy Reynolds wrote it as an end of season romp for the Theatre Royal, Bristol. A line from one of the songs seems appropriate. "It's not that I want to stay, it's just that I don't want to go". My heart tells me I don't want to leave Christ Church but my head knows that it is time.

First arriving

My association with Christ Church began long before 1998 when I became priest in charge. Tessa and I came to Bath in 1981 when I was appointed as Head of Broadlands School in Keynsham. We soon found Christ Church and with our young children Edward and Victoria received a characteristically warm welcome. Ronald Broackes was the incumbent and became a wise and kindly mentor.

Ordination

My time as a person in the pew was relatively short. I was training for the priesthood, and I was moved on to various pastoral placements. However, when I was ordained in Wells Cathedral I was touched to see a crowd of people from Christ Church in the nave.

My first church appointment was as an assistant priest in the Keynsham Team Ministry. Here I was able to minister within the catchment area of my school and try work out my chosen vocation as a priest in the work place.

Christ Church as a home

To come to Christ Church was, as Tessa and I both said, like coming home. Leaving this home will be sad but I shall be sustained by many happy memories. The music has been a particular joy and an often spectacular expression of the joy of praising God. And I shall always recall the thought-provoking performances of the Christ Church Repertory Company— the versatility of our young people has always been a source of amazement. I shall think too of the Lent lunches and the friendship of our neighbours at St Mary's Roman Catholic Church. And with fellowship in

mind, it will be impossible not to think of the staff and clientele of the Cedar Tree Café.

I am conscious, also, of all our friends in our Local Ministry Group – the first and still the most active of its kind in the Deanery. How can any of us forget those lovely weekends spent together at Brunel Manor?



A distinctive place and distinctive people

We often think of our church as a distinctive place. And I think it is true. With no stipendiary clergy Christ Church has, over the years, developed a concept of a ministry shared between the laity and the ordained. In his doctoral thesis, my distinguished predecessor, the Revd Dr Vaughan Roberts wrote of Christ Church and its "people's ministry". There can be no doubt that it is the people of Christ Church who have shaped its distinctiveness and catholic liberalism, so well expressed in liturgical, ecumenical and inter-faith terms.

It is people who make places special and I shall never forget any of you. I have done my best, as your priest, to minister to you in times of sorrow and of joy. And you, in your turn, have certainly done so for my family and me. My prayer is that Christ Church will continue to be a place where people minister to and with each other in the name of Christ.

Looking forward

Now I must say to myself, "What now?" I do not really know the answer. But how's this for a start? In the 1950s when, as a student in London, I hummed the songs from Salad Days, espresso coffee bars were all the rage. Good strong coffee came at 9p a cup. Since then, I have always loved coffee bars. In my retirement I think I shall spend much time in them, reading novels. If you ever come across me, please don't forget that I do like a pastry with my espresso.

Churches Together in Bath (CTB)

Sylvia Ayres

The recent meeting (8 June) was held in St. John's Church, Bathwick. Reports covered the Christian Aid launch service, the Women's World Day of Prayer services, the Cross Walk on Good Friday and the flower show service at Victoria Park, where Sarah Sheppard gave the address.

The following CTB events are planned for the coming year:

Road Peace Service – 21 November 2010

Central Zone Epiphany Service at St. Mary's – 16 January 2011

Portnall Lecture given by Satish Kumar at Holy Trinity – 18 June 2011

The CTB executive plans to hold ecumenical Lent Groups in 2011. Laurie Coombs reminded the meeting of the successful joint events held at Christ Church and St. Mary's, which have existed for some years and look likely to continue.

It was suggested that we could hold an away day at Downside Abbey, which Abbot Aiden would be asked to lead. Investigations are proceeding but no date has been fixed. Rev. Kieran Bourne, our representative in the CTB executive, has been appointed to be the Mayor's Chaplain for his year of office. Antony's retirement was also announced, and it is very pleasing that members expressed a desire to attend his farewell service.

Mothers' Union News

Sylvia Ayres

We would like to send our heart-felt thanks to everyone who supported our summer appeal for the MU Overseas Fund. This year the MU has

already sent funds to Africa for the purchase of bikes and driving licences for MU workers and for the translation of prayer books. In the UK there are costs associated with running Mary Sumner House (MU headquarters) and the production of MU literature and publicity.

The MU office has recently issued us with a large catalogue of "goodies", which will appeal to everyone from

babies to grandparents, so if anyone would like to buy a gift from it, please let me or Margaret Burrows know. We will shortly be taking orders for Christmas cards, calendars (this year featuring a marine life theme) and diaries. Although this is early, we hope you will wish to purchase

something from us, particularly if you are a regular customer.

The MU Faith and Policy Unit will hold its Autumn retreat at Abbey House, Glastonbury, from 4 to 6 October under the title *Love God, Your Neighbour and Yourself*. It is open to MU

members and friends.

The cost will be £137 (including a £12 deposit). More details and application forms are available from Margaret, and your prayers are asked for all participants.

The annual MU lecture, entitled *Mystery and Mime*, which will explore the spiritual development of children, will be held on 9 October at the Blue Coat School in Wells from 10am to 1pm. All are welcome, but booking a place is recommended.



About the Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union is an international Christian charity that seeks to support families worldwide.

In 81 countries, members share one heartfelt vision - to bring about a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships. This is not a vague hope, but a goal actively pursued through prayer, programmes, policy work and community relationships.

Members are not all mothers, or even all women. Single, married, parents, grandparents, for all 4 million members Mothers' Union provides a network through which they can serve Christ in their own community.

If you would like to know more, speak to Sylvia Ayres or Margaret Burrows or have a look at the MU website: www.themothersunion.org. You can even follow the organisation on Twitter!

The annual university students Freshers' Fairs will be held this year on 29 September (Bath Spa) and 1 October (Uni of Bath). As usual, the MU will be there to distribute cook books, so Margaret would welcome donations of money and/or flapjacks.

Coming up at Christ Church

Sunday 4 July 4:30pm	Choral Evensong
Tuesday 13 July	Trustees meeting
Sunday 25 July Service 10am Party 11:30am-6pm	Service at church followed by farewell party at Bath Race Course (please let the Churchwardens know if you need a lift)
Thursday 29 July 7:30pm	Home Group end-of-term social (details from Matthew, Sarah or Lewis)
Sunday 5th September	Choir return from their summer break

From the editors' laptop

Matthew and Sarah Jones



The next edition of *Christ Church Link* is due in the autumn. The deadline for the submission of articles is Sunday 5 September.

The news may have already reached you that the Jones household is set to increase

by one this November. We have it on good authority that having a new baby turns your world upside down, so whilst we are excited about becoming parents, we do expect it to impact on what we are able to do for Christ Church this Advent and Christmas. So we begin as editors with some requests for your prayerful consideration.

Christmas

Christmas is a key time for every church to consider its outreach and publicity and although we are happy to prepare materials in advance of baby Jones' arrival, we will need someone to take on the role of distributing it in the first couple of weeks of December.

The plan to publish *Christ Church Link* on a quarterly basis also means a winter edition will be due in December, and we anticipate we cannot promise to fulfil that task, so (in the manner of Radio 4's *Today* programme) we are seeking a guest editor for this edition.

Please give some thought as to whether you could assist with these tasks, we'd be happy to discuss what is involved and would be deeply appreciative of offers of help.

Thirdly, the Christmas Eve service for children is something Sarah has planned and coordinated in past years, and she feels it would be more than foolhardy to offer to organise it in 2010! If you

have suggestions as to what format this service should take (for example, should it be a joint LMG event?) or would like to help organise it please let Sarah know. Of course we would be particularly interested to hear what the younger members of our congregation think.

The future of *Christ Church Link*

As we launch the refreshed version of the church magazine, it's a good time to think about what we as a church think it is for. A more detailed version of the weekly notices, in which we discuss past and future events? Or a forum for theologically interesting articles? Perhaps you think the magazine should have a more external focus and be used as a way to reach out to our local community. And how does a paper magazine continue to remain a relevant use of our precious time and resources when we have an ever developing website?

Whatever is decided will have an impact on how the magazine is put together. For example, should an externally focused magazine include reports from the different groups related to Christ Church? Whilst a newcomer might like to know that these groups exist, the details of their operation are probably only relevant to regular church members, so how would you feel if this information was displayed only on the website or notice boards? Likewise, an externally focused magazine with limited space might call for difficult decisions: how much editorial freedom to shorten or cut articles is appropriate?

We think that the magazine should evolve to become a means of regularly bringing Christ Church to the attention of our local community, whilst at the same time continuing to serve the regular congregation with thought provoking articles and news on upcoming events. Some things may have to change in order to achieve this, so now is the time to "tell us what you reckon"....!

'If you could see it through our eyes'

Joshua and Eliza Gladstone tell us what they think about Christ Church and a little bit about what they are looking forward to in Yorkshire

Q. What are your favourite things about Christ Church?

"I like Junior Church: seeing my friends and doing the crafts, the teachers are nice too. Choir is fun and I like doing anything when we can show the grown-ups what we have done, or surprise them (like when we threw balloons off the balcony!)"

"Meeting friends, Junior Church (it's good when people explain stuff to us and I like the crafts), choir (it's good especially when there are extra instruments like shakers or drums), and I liked throwing balloons off the balcony a few weeks ago!"

Q. Who is in charge at Christ Church? Who is the busiest?

"Antony, Angela and Uncle Mark (he's the conductor) I think Uncle Mark might be the busiest."

"Antony (he has to do all the loud speaking and the actions), Uncle Mark is in charge of all the singing and Angela arranges stuff to happen. The church wardens are very busy too, they have lots of tasks to do."

Q. Is there anything you would change at church?

"Sometimes there is too much talking, and we can't really join in, it's just the same old thing."

"It would be good if there were more toys. And we have to spend a lot of time being quiet, we don't always get a chance to show what we have done or made"

Q. What are you looking forward to at your new house, school and church?

"Having a tree house and learning to ride a pony! I might even get to ride to school when I'm older. We're going to make a pond and keep ducks and bees."

"I like the new church, but I'll miss Christ Church. I'm looking forward to having more animals and we've got lots of plans for the garden. We're also going to make a buggy from a Land Rover chassis!"

Good luck Josh and Lizzie! We look forward to hearing all about your Yorkshire adventures.

Who's who

Officiating Minister	The Rev Antony Claridge 01225 427462	Organist	David Wrigley 01761 439355
Reader	Mark Elliott 01225 445360	Magazine editors and publicity coordination	Matthew & Sarah Jones 01225 443284
Chairman of Trustees	mark@christchurchbath.org		
Director of Music			
Reader	Cyril Selmes 01225 420039	Concert bookings Weekly notice sheet	Judith Bishop 01225 869409 concerts@christchurchbath.org
Churchwarden	Lewis Boyd 01225 329190	USPG	Adrian Pegg 01225 858809
Home group leader			
Churchwarden	Malcolm Wall	Mothers' Union	Margaret Burrows 01225 334743
Verger	Angela Soboslay 01225 333297	Deanery Synod Churches Together in Bath	Margaret Heath 01225 428272
Treasurer	David Bishop 01225 869409	Deanery Synod	Andrew Sillett
Junior Church	Sarah Cade 01225 339305	Churches Together in Bath Mothers' Union Mission to Seafarers Church Calendar	Sylvia Ayers 01225 463976
Laity rotas			

Regular Sunday Services

- 8am Holy Communion
using the text from the Book of Common Prayer
- 10am Sung Holy Communion
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

Christ Church
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BA1 2RH
Telephone: 01225 338869 (answerphone)
Email: admin@christchurchbath.org
Website: www.christchurchbath.org

