

CHRIST CHURCH CHALLENGE



December 2004

CHRIST CHURCH, JULIAN ROAD
DIOCESE OF BATH AND WELLS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am	Holy Communion
10.00am	Family Communion, Junior Church & Crèche
First Sundays & Festivals	Choral Evensong and Sermon at 6.30pm
Other Sundays	Said Evening Prayer at 5.30pm (see page 5)

There is amplification to assist the hard of hearing

MID-WEEK SERVICE

11.00am Thursday	Holy Communion
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CHOIR

Junior Choir Practice	Friday 6.30pm - 8.00pm
Adult Practice	Friday 7.30pm - 9.00pm

New singers always welcome - please contact Director of Music 01225 445360

BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, FUNERALS

By arrangement. Please 'phone the Vestry 338869 / Officiating Minister 427462

Chris and Angela, the churchwardens, would like to know about people who are ill, or of any circumstances in which the ministry of the Church would be welcome.

In this edition of the magazine we print full details of our Christmas Services. A leaflet is also available for each member of the congregation to distribute among family and friends. All our Christmas services are suitable for regular churchgoers, those who only come occasionally and, above all, for people who are curious about the true meaning of Christmas.

It would be wonderful if everyone should commit himself or herself to passing on at least two leaflets. We believe we have something true and precious to say about the coming of God into human lives. We can all help to ensure that people get to hear about it.

Forum...



An elderly Christian woman was fretting because time seemed to rush by more quickly than ever. Her vicar went to visit her. The woman was struggling to cope with all the things she had to do. The vicar decided to reassure her by giving her an idea of his schedule and all the things *he* had to do. He hoped she would think that she had comparatively little to worry about and feel more able to cope. As he read her a selection of entries from his diary for November and December, her eyes opened wider and wider. "And then we get to Christmas," he finished. "Ooh I say, vicar!" she exclaimed, "I should think that's the last thing you need!"



Am I the only one who feels despondent upon seeing Christmas wrapping paper, crackers and gifts in the supermarkets in October? I say "despondent" because the early appearance of Christmas merchandise in the shops suggests to me that my Christmas preparations should be on such a scale that I ought to begin them two months beforehand. I cannot imagine that! Nor am I likely to achieve one of those improbable Christmases proposed by various magazines and lifestyle programmes. You might know the sort I mean, where your home is bedecked with hand-made garlands, your Christmas tree is crowned by a magnificent angel that you made whilst your Christmas cake was reaching a state of perfection in your Aga and the paint was drying on your hand-crafted Christmas crackers (which each contain a carefully selected gift and hand-made paper hat, of course).

Some people say they feel uneasy about the way that commercialism, parties and Christmas extravaganzas seem to drown out the true message of Christmas. When early Christians began to celebrate the incarnation they chose to coincide their celebrations with festivals of light marked by other groups. Saturnalia, for instance, was celebrated in Rome prior to the adoption of Christianity as the official state religion of the Roman Empire. I wonder how strong are our arguments for complaining that other influences now seem to be taking over Christmas? If we wish to see Christmas remain as a Christian festival, it is up to us to celebrate it well, whatever that means for each of us personally and as members of the Christian community.



There is a stark contrast between the 'media' Christmas which annually seems to grow bigger, louder, glossier and more costly, and the scene at the heart of the season: the unspectacular, inconspicuous nativity in the stable at Bethlehem. The story surrounding the scene at Bethlehem is very well-known, which is both a blessing and a problem. We might take it for granted, perhaps even feel bored by it, but there is plenty within it to renew our faith and inspire us. For example, in 'O Little Town of Bethlehem', we sing: "O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today!" Be born in us *today*, not just at Christmas time, not back in our childhood, not when our children or grandchildren were young or when someone dear was still alive, but today, now.



The elderly woman commenting on her vicar's schedule could not have been more wrong; Christmas is exactly what we all need! Not the logistical frenzy or exhaustion of the secular side of Christmas, but the spiritual heart of the season. Whether we are struggling to provide the 'perfect' Christmas for others, contemplating Christmas without a loved one, or looking forward to the festive season, those words from the carol will always be true for each one of us who asks God to answer that prayer.

I hope that at Christmas, whatever else happens, you can know Christ coming into your life anew.

Sandy

All's fair at the Guildhall...

Christ Church Christmas Fair on Saturday, 11th December

The place to have morning coffee and lunch on Saturday 11th December is the Guildhall in the very centre of Bath. It's also the place to do a bit of Christmas shopping and to see Father Christmas.

A marvellous young and energetic team has pulled out all the stops to make this year's Christmas Fair one to remember. Let's give them our full support and make sure that the banqueting Hall is teeming with customers spending money all day.



Church Calendar for December

Dec 5 Sun THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5.30pm Said Evening Prayer

6 Mon 8.00pm "Meet Up Monday" - social evening at the Hare and Hounds, Lansdown. All welcome.

9 Thurs 11.00am Holy Communion - Rev Antony Claridge

11 Sat All Day Christmas Fair at the Guildhall

12 Sun THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5.30pm Said Evening Prayer

15 Thur 11.00am Mothers' Union Corporate Communion with Carols- Rev Antony Claridge, followed by Christmas lunch

18 Sat 7.30pm Concert - Bath Philharmonia & Minerva Choir

19 Sun THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6.30pm Christmas Carol Service

23 Thur 11.00am NO SERVICE

Please see Page 9 for services for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

26 Sun STEPHEN, DEACON, FIRST MARTYR

8.00am NO SERVICE

10.00am Family Eucharist

27 Mon JOHN THE APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

28 Tue THE HOLY INNOCENTS

30 Thur 11.00am NO SERVICE

Jan 2 Sun THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Service Rota for December

	8 am	10 am	Evening
		Celebrant Preacher	Leader
Dec	5	Rev Antony Claridge	Rev Antony Claridge
		Rev Cliff Burrows Rev Sandy Munday	
	12	Rev Antony Claridge	Rev Antony Claridge
		Junior Church	
	19	Rev Antony Claridge	Rev Antony Claridge
		Mr Mark Elliott	
	24	2.30pm Rev Antony Claridge 11.00pm Rev Cliff Burrows Rev Sandy Munday	Please see page 9 for details of services for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
	25	8.00am Rev Antony Claridge 10.30am Rev Antony Claridge	
	26	No service Rev Antony Claridge Rev Antony Claridge	
Jan	2	Rev Antony Claridge	Rev Antony Claridge
		Rev Antony Claridge Rev Sandy Munday	

For details of Thursday Services, please refer to the calendar on page 5



Laity Rota for December

Readers	OT Readers	NT Readers	Gospel	
December	5	John Metcalfe	Mark Elliott	Margaret Burrows
	12	Eileen Selmes	Jane Fletcher	Judith Bishop
	19	Martin Palmer	Matthew Jones	Audrey Sheppard
	26	Rosanne Gabe	Sarah Hiscock	Lloyd Grosvenor
January	2	Sylvia Ayers	Jenny Wright	Nicky Gladstone
	9	Emma Elliott	Chris Munday	Bob Siderfin

Chalice Assistants

December	5	June Metcalfe	Bob Siderfin
	12	Margaret Burrows	Chris Graham
	19	Rev Sandy Munday	Cyril Selmes
	26	Jane Fletcher	Penny Edwards
January	2	June Metcalfe	Bob Siderfin
	9	Margaret Burrows	Chris Graham

Intercessors

December	5	Penny Edwards
	12	Bev Pont
	19	David Marles
	26	Cliff Burrows
January	2	Chris Graham
	9	Rev Antony Claridge



Sidespeople

	8am	10am	
December	5	Dorothy Twissell	David Marles Joan Bunkin
	12	Barbara Hayward	John & June Metcalfe
	19	Esther Hewlett	Chris Tanner Ann Charman
	26	Clive Tilling	Tessa Claridge Jean Ferguson
January	2	Elizabeth Iden-Hart	Margaret Silver Frank Twissell
	9	Dil Jones	Ken & Sylvia Ayers

Lectionary for December

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
Dec 5	The Second Sunday of Advent		
	Isaiah 11.1-10	Romans 15.4-13	Matthew 3.1-12
12	The Third Sunday of Advent (Christingle)		
	Isaiah 35. 1-10	James 5.7-10	Matthew 11.2-11
19	The Fourth Sunday of Advent		
	Isaiah 7.10-16	Romans 1.1-7	Matthew 1.18-25
24	Christmas Eve		
	Isaiah 9.2-7	Titus 2.2-7	Luke 2.1-20
25	Christmas Day (8am)		
	Isaiah 52.7-10	Hebrews 1.1-4	John 1.1-14
26	The First Sunday of Christmas		
	Isaiah 63. 7-9	Hebrews 2.10-18	Matthew 2. 13-23
2	The Epiphany		
	Isaiah 60. 1-6	Ephesians 3.1-12	Matthew 2. 1-12

Red- ribboned singer

On the day of our patronal festival, the Feast of Christ the King, Antony presented Sophie Smith with her chorister's ribbon. Following the syllabus laid down by the Royal School of Church Music, Sophie has achieved the highest award which is awarded on internal examination.

Well done Sophie!



Christmas Services

Sunday 19th December

6.30 pm: Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve

2.30 pm: Nativity Play and Blessing of the Crib

The familiar story of the Nativity is presented by our children offering the opportunity to see the traditional story with new eyes

11.30 pm: Midnight Mass

A traditional sung service which takes us into the first hour of Christmas Day, when we can all share the joy of the Incarnation

Christmas Day

8.00 am: Holy Communion

A quiet meditative service with the words of the 1662 Prayer Book

10.30 am: Christmas Celebration with Communion

We hope that that this one-hour service with carols will be the icing on your Christmas cake! Children are invited to bring their best present (so far) to be admired, and it's always worth checking the Christmas Tree for a festive treat.



Christmas Lunch



The Christmas Lunch this year will be on Thursday 16th December, and will be in aid of our Christmas Appeal to provide a tube well for an African village.

If you would like to come to the lunch, please see June or John by Sunday 12th December.

Come and Meet Up on Monday!

Another successful "Meet Up Monday" saw a wide cross-section of the congregation collected in the Hare and Hounds on Lansdown for a most enjoyable evening together.



Take a break from writing your Christmas cards, and come along on Monday 6th December at 8pm in the Hare and Hounds.

If you'd like a lift, please contact Nicky Gladstone 444938.

Christmas in Church

Why does it begin at midnight with Holy Communion?

The hour was first chosen at Rome in the fifth century to symbolise the idea that Christ was born at midnight – a mystical idea in no way hindered by historical evidence! No one knows the hour of his birth.

Certainly in recent times, Holy Communion at midnight on Christmas morning has proved popular with modern families. One British writer pointed out its "domestic convenience" in 1947: "for where there are children and no servants, husband and wife may be unable to communicate at any other time." (So things don't change, then!)

As for Christmas itself, let Matthew tell it his way (Matthew 2: 1 – 11)

We're Making A Difference!



At the time of going to press,
our Appeal total stands at



£300

**£500 will buy a tube well
which will benefit an entire African
village.**

We are hoping that Christ Church will be able to buy a well,
through a scheme organised by the charity World Vision.
If every member of the congregation makes a donation,
this will easily be achieved.

Please see David Marles for further information.

A Friend



In Deed

The Christ Church Friends in Deed scheme is designed to provide a network of good neighbours, called Area Wardens. These Area Wardens have volunteered to do the neighbourly things we used to do for each other when we lived closer together. When the need arises, they are prepared on request to:

- make friendship visits or telephone calls
- do shopping at times of illness or infirmity
- offer or find sources of advice
- handle occasional non-specialist odd jobs

All areas in which church members live are covered by the Friends in Deed scheme. If you need or know of someone else who needs help, you should in the first instance contact the Friends in Deed Co-ordinators, Jane Fletcher (01225 463758) and Yvonne Morris (01225 425555). They will then get in touch with the Area Warden best able to provide the help that is needed.

USPG News



Whilst the world concentrates its attention on Iraq, other countries have slipped out of the spotlight. One of these countries is Sudan.

Earlier this year, reporters visited the various refugee camps, many in Ethiopia, showing the plight of the people who had fled from Sudan. It is estimated that 95,000 Sudanese were forced from their country because of the violence and instability in Western Sudan. The conflict has forced refugees to flee to Uganda, Kenya, Congo-Kinshassa, Central African Republic, Egypt, Chad, Eritrea, Syria and Ethiopia.

USPG is working with the Church in Ethiopia. As chaplain of St. Matthew's Church in Addis Ababa, USPG missionary Andrew Proud believes there is hope in the midst of despair and chaos. Andrew and his church congregation are supporting peace and reconciliation programmes, theological and agricultural training projects. They are helping refugees acquire the practical skills and work structures that will enable them to re-establish stable communities in the camps and afterwards, when they return to Southern Sudan after years of wars.

Anglican Church structures and practices are helping Sudanese refugees. Principles of Church democracy, defined leadership roles and opportunities for community participation are preparing the Sudanese for the time when they can return to Southern Sudan when there is finally peace. Andrew feels that the people will look to the church for re-building local communities. He says the Sudanese in the camps have lost all their normal reference points so the church has had to become their focus for pastoral care and everything else.

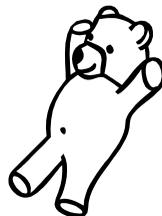
Please remember these people in your prayers and perhaps when considering your giving over Christmas you may feel moved to send a donation to USPG, Partnership House, 157 Waterloo Road, London, SE1 8XA - no matter how small it will be appreciated.

Adrian Pegg

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

By the time of our AGM, the amount collected for the Bath Women's Refuge had risen to £63.95. Twelve 4-piece Dinner Service sets in blue, green and yellow, and pillow slips in the same colours were purchased and the contributions received from Christ Church Congregation were then delivered to the Refuge. The ladies very much value all your help and interest in their work of housing and caring for the desperate women and their children who arrive on their doorstep almost daily.

I am happy to say that teddies are still being knitted by members of our Congregation, and in October Diana Emery from Hallatrow received a parcel of 17 toys from us. However, the number of my knitters has sadly reduced, so, can *you* help? Could you perhaps spare an hour or two to knit a Teddy? Doctors who treat children in third world or war torn countries are asking for them, as they have found that children who have their own Teddies to cuddle in their cots get better quicker than those who don't have one. Each child keeps his own Teddy and can take it home, so the doctors need a continual supply. If you would like to help us with this on-going need, please let me know now, and I will let you have a copy of the easy pattern.



On December 16th, we will have our Branch Corporate Communion, when we hope to include three carols, and hopefully this will be followed by a delicious "Metcalfe" Christmas Lunch. The Branch, and its supporters, would once again like to send our best wishes and heartfelt thanks to Antony for the Service, to Mark for the music, and to John and June for providing the delicious food. Having such a splendid meal to follow the Communion, really makes this a highlight of our Branch Programme.

Sylvia M. Ayers (MU Secretary)

Thank you!

Audrey, Sarah and Catherine Sheppard write, "Dear Christ Church friends, thank you very much for supporting our Coffee Morning for St Catherine's Batheaston on November 13th. With your help, we have raised £280.00.



Welcome return

Everyone was delighted to see Vaughan and Mandy Roberts with their daughter Becky when they returned to Christ Church to join the celebration of our Patronal Festival. It was good to know that they are enjoying their new life in Warwick.



Vaughan's patronal sermon was stimulating and challenging. He ended with words very appropriate to the prospect of a re-organised Deanery. He said: -

"The transformation of the crucified Christ into the glorified Christ is not an end in itself but should be the a reflection of the transformation that we are seeking as the body of Christ – the process of transforming our inner lives so that our outer lives may be similarly transfigured both as individuals and as a Church. There's a lovely proverb which says 'It is the crushed grape that yields the wine'"

Missions to Seafarers

As we get ever nearer to Christmas, you cannot fail to notice all the potential presents in the shops, and of course the splendid array of cards put out by June on the Church table: you probably buy quite a few yourself to send to family and friends.



Following this, of course you will expect to receive a much increased post through your letter box, all suitably adorned with attractive Christmas Stamps. Of course, the cards will find a ready home on your mantelpiece, but what about the envelopes?

Before consigning them to the dustbin, please take a moment or two to carefully cut off the pictorial stamps with a pair of scissors, leaving a half inch border all round, (if you just tear them off, the stamps are apt to get damaged). Then bundle them up for the Missions to Seafarers and leave them in the "A" pigeon hole in Church. I have, however, been asked not to send the ordinary red and blue 1st and 2nd class stamps, as the dealers can no longer sell them. Of course, all other stamps received in the post, even those on bills, will be just as welcome, (even if the contents are not!), and I do most sincerely thank all those regular, if anonymous, contributors to this cause who leave me so many lovely parcels during the year.

Sylvia M. Ayers



The Christ Church Prayer Network

Many thanks to all who have signed up for the Prayer Network.

The sign up forms will be left at the back of church for a few more weeks, and people will be able to join at any time after that by talking to me or one of the Church Wardens.

It would be unwise, I feel, to start the network in the busy month of December, so I plan to work out the fine details and contact everyone within the next few weeks with a starting date very early in the New Year.

A Personal View

A few years ago I asked to be included as Treasurer on the monthly prayer cycle. At first, I felt that I was asking for a privileged position and that it wasn't for me to decide if I was worthy of a spot. I realised that this was nonsense. To ask for others' prayers is to admit our own weakness and our total dependence on God's grace.

I know that there are people in the congregation who use the Prayer Cycle, because I felt the benefit of their prayers. I'm sure that many of you have more striking stories of prayers answered.

Of course, not all of God's answers are clear, not all of them are what we wanted. This was true for Jesus, and it is certainly true for us. But God gives us the faith to know that he always hears us.

David Marles

STAMPS! STAMPS! STAMPS!

Because many of you bought your 2003 Bath Scout Post stamps from us, we have decided to continue with this for a further year. We are much cheaper than the GPO, with our stamps still at 15p each. We will sell them from 28th November, and they are valid until Dec 15th, but only in the Bath area.

Having written and stamped your cards, you will of course need somewhere to post them. Well, worry not! FOR ONE WEEK from December 5th to 12th, there will be Box in Church for you to deposit your post, (cards only please). Until Wednesday 15th, cards can also be posted at any BIBS shop, or at the Scout HQ in Grove Street. IN this way, you will be helping Scouts from all over the City to carry out their promise to 'Help Other People.' May we thank you in advance for your help.

Sylvia Ayers and Frank Twissell



The Marleys were dead: to begin with.



Film Review

The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992)

Brian Henson

The Great Gonzo takes only a small liberty with the opening line as the narrator of Dickens' famous story, and thereby gives roles to both of the original grumpy old men, Statler and Waldorf.

This faithfulness to the book runs through the whole film, with much of the dialogue seeming equally natural when spoken by a Muppet as by a Victorian clerk or undertaker. After watching the film a few times, you wonder whether Dickens hadn't anticipated the coming of the Muppets. Poor, meek, downtrodden Kermit is Bob Cratchit, even as feisty, outspoken Miss Piggy is his wife. Dickens' gentle humour and occasional atrocious punning is similarly a perfect fit for the Muppets.

The darkness of the book is not glossed over, with Gonzo and his sidekick Rizzo the Rat telling the audience they're skipping the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come and heading straight for the happy ending, leaving behind Scrooge, a suitably terrified Michael Caine. Neither does the imminent death of Tiny Tim seem any less real by his being played by a piece of green felt and some calico.

It's the classic Christmas story.

But not, of course, a specifically Christian story or, necessarily, particularly Christmassy. Its message of helping those in need may be a central Christian teaching, but there's not much of it in the Nativity. Even the kindly inn-keeper told a pregnant woman to make do with the barn. Stephen Fry, who wrote a Sherlock Holmes pastiche about the Christmas Carol manuscript, in response to the suggestion that Christmas is a time for considering people less fortunate than ourselves, asked "Oh, and July and April aren't, is that it?"

The Christmas story is a mystery, by which I mean that if you wrote down what it all means, some of what you wrote would be wrong and you wouldn't have said all that you'd hoped. I don't suppose anyone else means this by "mystery", but I can bring in another Carroll and take the same approach as Humpty Dumpty.

But the problems of poverty and homelessness that inspired Dickens' work aren't too far from us today. And if spending an hour and a half watching a film can leave us weeping and filled with love for the poor and needy, then that would be time well spent.

Anyway, great songs, a snowy London scene, a huge prize Turkey. If you don't enjoy all this, you know who'll be coming to visit this Christmas Eve.

God bless us, every one!

David Marles

Don't forget to Sit in for Shelter!

In Britain today, over one million children are suffering in bad housing. They are losing out on their education, their health, and their future prospects, just because of where they live.

Surprised? Think it's a scandal? Well, we're making it easy for you to tell the world that you won't stand for it.

By joining the Shelter sit-in protest you can take the weight off your feet and help over one million children find theirs. The Shelter sit-in is a practical way for you to help end the plight of more than one million children suffering in bad housing.

By sitting in the Shelter armchair at one of our tour venues, or joining the protest online, you will be adding your voice to thousands and demanding that politicians take action.

Your photo will go into our online gallery and may be used in printed publications and an art exhibition - all to show the world that we won't stand for bad housing.

Fri 10 Dec Bristol The Mall at Cribbs Causeway 9am-5pm
You can find the website at www.england.shelter.org.uk



Disappointed petitioners

There was a tremendous response to Sign-Up Sundays, the days on which people were asked to support the Children's Society campaign to make England safe for young runaways. The first petition sheet was quickly filled and church members have been asking for copies to take to work or pass round their neighbourhoods.

Unfortunately, despite several telephone calls the Children's Society has failed to send the copies we need. As soon as additional sheets arrive they will be made available at the back of the church.

Something Else to Sign! - The Big Christmas Card

Following a brilliant suggestion from various members of the Congregation, a large Christmas Card is now on display at the back of Church.

Instead of sending out hundreds of Christmas Cards to one another, the congregation is invited to sign the communal card and make a donation to World Vision. In this way we can give to charity and save some of our energy for mixing all those Christmas Puddings!



Child of Bethlehem



Jessica Safar, age seven, is a child of Bethlehem. All the children who live in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories have had their formative years scarred by the fear or presence of violence. But in Jessica's case it has left her with permanent scars. She was returning from a visit to her father at work when she was caught in the fighting, and hit in the eye by shrapnel from a bullet fired by Israeli soldiers.

Getting to the nearest hospital meant passing a checkpoint guarded by the Israeli army. It was closed, and the family waited in desperation – an everyday misery for thousands of Palestinians on their way to work, education or hospital.

However, when the soldiers saw Jessica's eye, they relented and let her through. She had an emergency operation at the hospital. Fortunately, the shrapnel that caused the damage had not entered her brain, but she lost her sight in one eye.

Jessica and her family were put in touch with the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) in Beit Sahour, just outside Bethlehem. Funded and supported by Christian Aid, the YMCA specialises in helping young people with disabilities and injuries caused by conflict.

At first, Jessica found it very hard to accept what had happened. She took the eye out of her doll. When asked why, she said, "So that my doll, Jennifer, will be like me". But through counselling and care, the YMCA's rehabilitation programme has helped Jessica make a great deal of progress. "I put medicine on Jennifer and she got better", says Jessica. "Her eye doesn't hurt any more".

Jessica has now become used to wearing an artificial eye and returned to school. Her mother says, "The work with the YMCA is great. She is natural again. Her teacher tells me she is an excellent pupil."

Meanwhile, thousands of people are becoming innocent victims of violence in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Christian Aid continues to work with Christians, Muslims and Jews through partner organisations to support initiatives for peace and justice.

Many of the world's poorest people live in the Palestinian territories, and it is one of over 50 countries where Christian Aid works. Christian Aid is asking for your support this Christmas, to help not only Jessica, but the millions who suffer every day as a result of conflict, natural disasters and poverty.

To make a donation to the Child of Bethlehem appeal, you can telephone 0845 7000 300 or visit www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas .

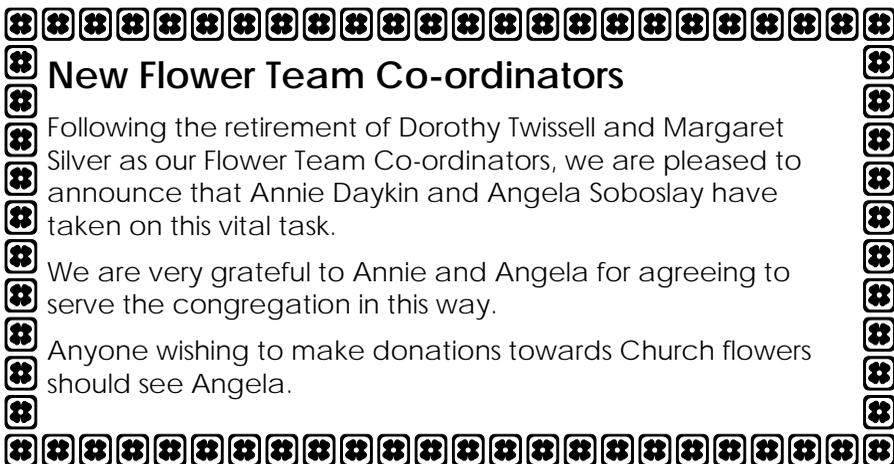
Jenny Wright

A prayer for the children of Bethlehem

Lord Jesus, born in Bethlehem,
we pray for the children of the Middle East
who look up at night to see the same stars
on which you gazed with hope and wonder.

May all who share the same sky
learn to share the same land,
making peace and seeking justice.

Fill our hearts with compassion this Christmas,
and make of us people who bring good news,
in our homes,
in the lands of your birth,
and in every place where children play,
under the mercy of heaven. Amen.



New Flower Team Co-ordinators

Following the retirement of Dorothy Twissell and Margaret Silver as our Flower Team Co-ordinators, we are pleased to announce that Annie Daykin and Angela Soboslay have taken on this vital task.

We are very grateful to Annie and Angela for agreeing to serve the congregation in this way.

Anyone wishing to make donations towards Church flowers should see Angela.

Prayer Cycle for December

- Wed* 1 For those considering a vocation to the priesthood or religious life
- Thur* 2 For our Chalice Assistants and Altar Servers
- Fri* 3 For those facing new challenges at work or at home
- Sat* 4 For our hospitals, nursing homes and local surgeries
- Sun* 5 For members of our congregation who can no longer attend church due to illness or infirmity
- Mon* 6 Let us pray for the congregation as a whole, and for the success of tonight's "Meet Up", that we may all benefit from the fellowship found there
- Tue* 7 For those mourning the loss of a spouse or partner, that they will know God's comfort
- Wed* 8 For all who in any way contribute to the worship at Christ Church and to its ministry
- Thur* 9 For children who have to operate as carers for members of their family
- Fri* 10 For the homeless; for the work of Shelter and Genesis
- Sat* 11 For a happy and successful Christmas Fair today.
- Sun* 12 For churches coping with an interregnum; for country clergy having to minister to a number of parishes
- Mon* 13 For those facing redundancy, for those who are unemployed
- Tue* 14 For journalists and all those who work in the media, that they will be mindful of their responsibilities both to those whom they inform, and those about whom they report
- Wed* 15 For Mark our Director of Music, David our Organist, and the Choir
- Thur* 16 For respect and concern for our environment
- Fri* 17 For those who work for the Emergency Services
- Sat* 18 For the departed who have shared their earthly pilgrimage with us
- Sun* 19 For all members of the congregation who are away from Christ Church today

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- Mon 20** For all who suffer persecution for their faith
- Tue 21** For those who feel that no-one appreciates or cares about them
- Wed 22** For those for whom the material aspect of Christmas celebrations is a source of great concern
- Thur 23** For those for whom Christmas will be a time of painful memories. For families experiencing conflict
- Fri 24** For those who are travelling over Christmas
- Sat 25** Christ the Lord is born. We give thanks for the wonder of the Incarnation
- Sun 26** For those spending this time in hospital and for those whose duty it is to care for others
- Mon 27** For Rowan our Archbishop and for Peter our Bishop
- Tue 28** For Tom and Cyril our readers, and Sarah's ministry at Batheaston
For Mark as he trains to become a reader.
- Wed 29** For peace throughout the world, and for all world leaders
- Thur 30** Let us consider how our attitudes need to change in the New Year
- Fri 31** We thank God for the blessings of the year which is ending and ask him for the grace to meet the challenges which the new year will bring

January 2005

- Sat 1** We dedicate ourselves and all that we will do this year to God our loving Father
- Sun 2** For Antony, Cliff and Sandy, and for their families
- Mon 3** For David our Treasurer, at the beginning of the Church's new financial year
- Tue 4** For the work of USPG in general, and especially for St Anne's Hospital, Lake Malawi
- Wed 5** For our colleagues, in particular any who are difficult to work with
- Thur 6** For success in the struggle against the distribution of drugs
- Fri 7** For Angela and Chris, our Churchwardens
- Sat 8** For the Trustees of Christ Church; for Yvonne, their Chairman
- Sun 9** For all new members of our congregation: for all visitors

Old Christmas devotion in verse

This prayer, found during an archaeological excavation, is very early, probably between second and fourth century.

Helper of men who turn to you,
Light of men in the dark,
Creator of all that grows from seed,
Promoter of all spiritual growth,
Have mercy, Lord, on me.
And make me a temple fit for you.
Do not look too closely at my sins,
For if you are quick to notice my faults
I shall not dare to appear before you.
In your great mercy,
In your boundless love,
Wash away my sins
By the hands of Jesus Christ,
Your only child, the chief healer of souls.



*A Very Happy and Peaceful
Christmas
to all our readers*

WHO'S WHO?

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CHRIST CHURCH, JULIAN ROAD

DIOCESE OF BATH AND WELLS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

PAST HISTORY

Christ Church was built at the end of the 18th Century by the socially concerned clergy and lay people for those excluded from worship by the system of pew rents. It was probably the first church of that time to provide seating free of charge. Early supporters included the Archbishops of Canterbury and York; the great evangelical campaigner against slavery, William Wilberforce; Philip Pusey, the father of E B Pusey; and Martin Stafford Smith, the godfather of John Keble, who were both founders of the Oxford Movement. The building was designed by the famous Bath architect John Palmer, who was responsible for the completion of the Great Pump Room, Lansdown Crescent and St Swithin's, the parish church of Walcot. In November 1998, the congregation, friends and well-wishers from all over the world celebrated the bicentenary.

MINISTRY

Christ Church is unusual in not being a parish church. Much of the vitality of its life and worship derives from the fact that the congregation comes from all areas of the city and the surrounding districts. Whilst there is no full-time paid vicar, there is a non-stipendiary priest-in-charge, who leads a ministerial team of ordained and lay people. Worship at Christ Church largely reflects the traditions of those responsible for its foundation and the rich diversity of the Church of England as a whole. Thus, preaching and Bible-based teaching is firmly set within a liturgical setting which is best described as liberal and catholic.

SERVICES

The 8am Holy Communion is either Book of Common Prayer (1662) or Common Worship. At 10am the Family Eucharist is celebrated according to Common Worship. On the first Sunday of each month, there is a full Choral Evensong. A Junior Church and a Crèche cater for the children and young people who attend the 10am service. At festivals such as Easter, Christmas, Mothering Sunday and Harvest, our special services, designed for the whole family, are very popular.

There are a variety of mid-week activities including Holy Communion at 11am every Thursday (with lunch once a month). The notice board and the weekly notice sheet provide details of discussion and prayer groups which are held at different times throughout the year. An all-age choir, which rehearses on Friday evenings, maintains the much-admired music tradition at Christ Church.

CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

Published on the first Sunday of every month, Christ Church Challenge brings news of the church locally, in the Diocese, and throughout the world. Our website is constantly updated and can be found at www.christchurchbath.org

Articles or news items MUST be with the Editor by the 15th of the month preceding the publication date