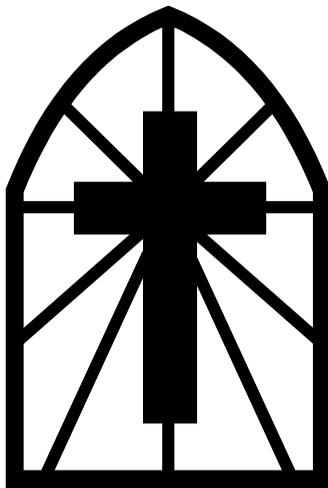


CHRIST  
CHURCH  
CHALLENGE



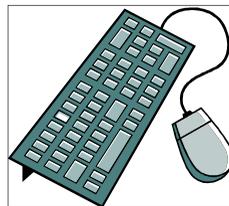
February 2008



## *Forum...*

### **The gift of Lent and the wearing of cross**

Lent begins two days after the publication of this month's magazine. I hope you will enjoy your pancakes but some form of fast should follow the pancake feast. In the old days, people gave up eating flour, meat, eggs and fat. Nowadays, we don't give up these foods for Lent. Like many of the old customs it has died out. But the meaning of some of them is worth preserving. In a Christian culture which yearly becomes more self-indulgent, the ancient Biblical traditions of covering one's head with ashes, wearing sackcloth, and fasting is perhaps more charged with meaning than ever before.



Have you noticed how trendy it has become to wear crosses of gold; ordinary flat crosses, or highly decorative, expensive ones. An article in a weekend glossy magazine recently suggested that fashionable brides should wear large chunky crosses on long chains down to the waist. Believers and unbelievers wear such adornments; the cross has become a fashion accessory. However, cross, which we shall wear on Ash Wednesday, is different. It is the real thing and no fairy story. The sign of the cross made in ash on our foreheads is a sign of mortality.

As the cross is marked on our foreheads, the priest says; "You are created from dust, and to dust you will return". God made the first human being by breathing life into dust, and without God, human beings are nothing more than dust and ashes. This helps us to live in the light of our ultimate accountability before God. There is nothing of which we may boast of ourselves, only of God.

On Ash Wednesday we have a duty to be in church where we can call on God to bring us to true repentance. Wearing the cross of ash is of far more significance than wearing jewellery however pretty it may be. To be ashed is a way of declaring before our heavenly Father that we are prepared, with his help, to change for the better

In the past the church has been accused of burdening people with

guilt and taking the joy out of their lives. There has also been a tendency for some Christians to think themselves a cut above their neighbours. But Ash Wednesday is not about making people feel bad about themselves. The mortality and repentance of Ash Wednesday is there to remind us that we are all equal before God. Not one of us is better than anybody else. We all fall short of goodness and have no claim upon God's attention because we are superior human beings.

The human tendency to think ourselves better than others is not nice. Pride is a sin. However, the abandonment of pride can lead to the discovery of great personal spiritual potential. Released from the need to be beautiful, clever, and successful we can discover more of what God wants us to be. This is the gift of the cross and the comfort of Lent.

*Antony Claridge*

## **MOTHERS' UNION NEWS**

The new Bath Deanery Mothers' Union Branch opened at St Mary's, Bathwick in November, and the first monthly meeting of this year was held at Batheaston in January. Christ Church Members are all entitled to attend these events, while still remaining part of our branch. Our own next Corporate Communion will be held at 11am on Wednesday February 20th. As usual, any of the congregation interested in the work of the MU will be very welcome to join us. The service will be followed by a Lent Lunch.



My deadline for the return of the MU "Queens and Cookbooks" quiz sheets was January 27th, so all should now be back. If there is anyone else who has still not given me their copy (whether it is complete or not), please would you do so at the earliest opportunity. I propose to send them off shortly to the Deanery for marking, together with the £10 raised from their sale. I am also collecting the Mothers Union Annual Subscriptions for 2008, which are due this month, and you will appreciate that prompt payment would greatly assist me. Thank you.

*Sylvia M. Ayers (MU Secretary)*

# Church Calendar for February

<b>Feb</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>CANDLEMAS</b>	
			2.45pm	Mayor's Multi-Faith at the Guildhall
			6.30pm	Choral Evensong
	<b>6</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>	
			11.00am	Holy Communion with imposition of the ashes followed by Lent Lunch at Christ Church
			7.30pm	Sung Eucharist with imposition of the ashes
	<b>8</b>	<b>Fri</b>	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	<b>10</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	
	<b>12</b>	<b>Tue</b>	7.30pm	Churches Together in Bath AGM Holy Trinity, Queen Square
	<b>13</b>	<b>Wed</b>	11.00am	Holy Communion. Lent Lunch at St Mary's.
	<b>14</b>	<b>Thur</b>	ST VALENTINE, Martyr	
	<b>15</b>	<b>Fri</b>	THOMAS BRAY, Priest, Missionary, Founder of SPCK	
			11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	<b>17</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	
			Church Genesis Lunch Box Duty	
	<b>20</b>	<b>Wed</b>	Holy Communion. Lent Lunch at Christ Church.	
	<b>22</b>	<b>Fri</b>	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	<b>23</b>	<b>Sat</b>	ST POLYCARP OF SMYRNA	
	<b>24</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	
	<b>27</b>	<b>Wed</b>	GEORGE HERBET, Priest	
			11.00am	Holy Communion. Lent Lunch at St Mary's.
	<b>29</b>	<b>Fri</b>	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
<b>Mar</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>MOTHERING SUNDAY</b>	
			6.30pm	Choral Evensong

# Laity Rota for February

		OT Readers	NT Readers	Gospel
<b>February</b>	<b>3</b>	Emma Elliott	Richard Gabe	Judith Bishop
	<b>10</b>	David Marles	Eileen Selmes	Bev Pont
	<b>17</b>	Bob Siderfin	Martin Palmer	Nicky Gladstone
	<b>24</b>	David Bishop	No reading	Penny Edwards
<b>March</b>	<b>2</b>		Junior Church	
	<b>9</b>	Mark Elliott	No reading	Jane Fletcher

## Chalice Assistants

<b>February</b>	<b>3</b>	Margaret Heath	Janet Mahto
	<b>10</b>	Chris Graham	Ann Kemp
	<b>17</b>	Jane Fletcher	Penny Edwards
	<b>24</b>	Bob Siderfin	Andrew Sillett
<b>March</b>	<b>2</b>	Tessa Claridge	Bev Pont
	<b>9</b>	Margaret Burrows	Margaret Heath

## Intercessors

<b>February</b>	<b>3</b>	Georgina Bowman
	<b>10</b>	Rev Antony Claridge
	<b>17</b>	Mark Elliott
	<b>24</b>	Penny Edwards
<b>March</b>	<b>2</b>	Junior Church
	<b>9</b>	Bev Pont



## Sidespeople

		8am	10am	
<b>February</b>	<b>3</b>	Clive Tilling	Joan Bunkin	Jean Ferguson
	<b>10</b>	Arthur Jones	Margaret Heath	Andrew Sillett
	<b>17</b>	Clive Tilling	Tessa Claridge	Janet Mahto
	<b>24</b>	Arthur Jones	Margaret Silver	Frank Twissell
<b>March</b>	<b>2</b>	Clive Tilling	Ken and Sylvia Ayers	

# Lectionary for February

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
<b>Feb 3</b>	<b>Candlemas</b>		
	Malachi 3. 1-5	Hebrews 2.14-18	Luke 2.22-40
<b>6</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>		
	Isaiah 58.1-12	No reading	Matthew 6.1-6,16-21
<b>10</b>	<b>Lent 1</b>		
	Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7	Romans 5.12-19	Matthew 4.1-11
<b>17</b>	<b>Lent 2</b>		
	Genesis 12.1-4a	Romans 4.1-5, 13-17	John 3.1-17
<b>24</b>	<b>Lent 3</b>		
	Exodus 17.1-7	No reading	John 4.5-42
<b>2</b>	<b>Mothering Sunday</b>		
	Exodus 2.1-10	Colossians 3.12-17	John 19. 25b-27

## Our Calendar Correspondent Explains... "ST POLYCARP OF SMYRNA" (23rd February)

**Polycarp** was an Associate of, converted by, and disciple of Saint John the Apostle. He was a friend of Saint Ignatius of Antioch and fought Gnosticism. He became Bishop of Smyrna (modern Izmir, Turkey) being a revered Christian leader during the first half of the second century.

The Asia Minor churches recognized Polycarp's leadership and chose him as representative to Pope Anicetus on the question of the date of the Easter celebration.

Only one of the many letters written by Polycarp has survived, the one he wrote to the Church of Philippi, Macedonia. At 86, Polycarp was to be burned alive in a stadium in Smyrna; the flames did not harm him and he was finally killed by a dagger, and his body burned. The "Acts" of Polycarp's martyrdom are the earliest preserved reliable account of a Christian martyr's death.

**DO YOU REMEMBER...**

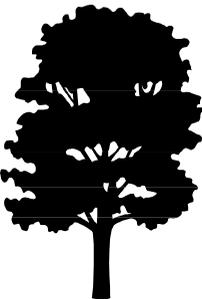
...the two Ronnies and their joke about Four Candles?

Well this month's tree has certainly been used for making FORK HANDLES as well as billiard cues, hockey sticks, planking and cladding. It's one of the most versatile of woods but, unfortunately, has a tendency to split when being felled, thus having a nickname of Widow Maker. However, it is easy to work and to bend into a variety of shapes, using hot sand for softening and curved vices, so there is quite an industry for making walking sticks: the handles are easy to bend, the sticks are springy and the bark is pleasant to hold.



It is often coppiced in a ten-year cycle to produce a series of straight poles. In spite of their usefulness many foresters regard it as a weed tree because its seeds germinate and grow rapidly on any patch of bare soil. The saplings grow quickly, often six feet per year, and create new woods. These trees have replaced many trees lost in the great storms of recent years, notably 1987 and 1990. They have also replaced the elms in hedgerows and other woodlands. Although they were rarely used as boundary markers, there are some venerable exemplars: in Suffolk there is one stool of poles which is eighteen feet across, a thousand years old and still productive. In Scandinavian countries the tree was revered and known as the tree of life.

It was also known as a healing tree. Gilbert White describes how sick children were passed through a split in the tree and the split then plastered with loam: if the split healed the child would be cured. The tree was also favoured by children. If the terminal bud was lost the two side-buds would grow and make a perfect shape for a catapult. Aficionados would then make lead pellets to fire from it. Less dangerous was the game where mud pellets were used and fired from whippy branches: the branch might be poked in the ground or held in the hand. The main aim was to fire the pellet as far as possible. One version was ambitious: could you fire it over your friend's house? Although veneration for this tree has passed, many people were taught to treat the tree with respect. As a play tree they often had ledges or holes where things could be stored or hidden. Their black buds and feathery leaves also made them attractive as individuals and their woods were light green and sunlit.



Yes. I've been writing about the ASH.

*Cyril Selmes*

## **Pick up a good book for Lent** *Feeding mind and spirit*



### **Life Conquers Death: Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2008**

**by John Arnold**

#### **Meditations on the Garden, the Cross, and the Tree of Life.**

How can we come to understand more fully our own story of sin and redemption? This beautiful series of meditations addresses that need. Each chapter moves us one step along the path, and we're also guided by the author's metaphors of wood, trees, and the cross of Christ as we travel. We start in the Garden of Eden, and end at the Tree of Life in the New Jerusalem. Along the way, we encounter biblical passages, pictures by Rembrandt, and insights from such great works of Russian literature as "A Tree Falls in Siberia" as the author brings important questions to our attention. John Arnold has created a series of contemplative readings that will remain with the reader for a long time.

Publisher: SPCK 2008

Paperback £8.99

### **Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief** **by Rowan Williams**

Following the enormous success of *Ponder These Things* and *The Dwelling of the Light* here is a popular new book from the Archbishop of Canterbury. He explores the great statements of belief as they are found in the Creed and weighs them up in relation to the challenges and complexities of life in the world today:

- ✚ God as maker of heaven and earth – can he be trusted?
- ✚ God as 'almighty' – what sense can we make of this in the face of natural disasters like the tsunami?
- ✚ Jesus as God's son – few people believed this during Jesus' lifetime; what changed everything?
- ✚ 'He was crucified under Pontius Pilate' – how do we understand good and evil today?

and more about how to read the Bible, what the Church should be like, death and resurrection.

Wonderful, thought-provoking phrases leap off each page and there is a characteristic depth of thoughtfulness that will reveal new dimensions each time this book is read.

Publisher: Canterbury Press 2007

Paperback £9.99

Each of these books is highly recommended and is available from all good bookshops including the bookshop at Bath Abbey.

Following Cliff's thought-provoking sermon in December, we are pleased to be able to publish further comments from the congregation. You can still read David's article online at [www.christchurchbath.org](http://www.christchurchbath.org).

## **Advent Sermon—further thoughts**

It was good that David took up the debate and I agree with his points. When my mother was asked to join the group that produced the Wolfenden Report she replied, "Hester, homosexuality is not my main interest". Would that the church were seen as more like my old mum.

There was a Simpsons programme in which Mr S appeared to reproduce the old prejudices. I was quite worried. I asked my 11 year-old grandson if he understood what was going on and he kindly explained, "Granny it's about men who like other men". To my relief the homosexual turned out the hero.

It has seemed to me for a long time, although I don't think I was on the case as young as my grandson, that it is odd to enjoy Britten's music, rave about the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel or admire the works of ancient Greeks yet talk, as people used, of "queers", those who "played for the wrong side" and the like. Christ Church appointed Conrad as Church Warden and I was proud we did. Our Chair of CTB Central Zone is of the Metropolitan Church; it is a reflection on the rest of us that there has to be a Metropolitan Church. Another friend, Cicelia, is an ordained Minister of that church. The more evangelical wing will have nothing to do with it. More's the pity.

It would take a more scientific mind than mine to enter into the debate about chemistry, deliberate choice and so on. However in some species I believe there are sex changes to fit in with the needs of the species and I wonder if we should not be grateful to those whose creative urges are not to increase the population? I remember my daughter saying of a friend with relief, "He's not one for the girls—so he's not predatory".

I dislike what is brought out in those who feel revulsion. Mark was posted to Bulgaria just after the Vassall case - for those too young to remember it was Russian blackmail<sup>1</sup> - of the gay son of the acting Rector of St James, Piccadilly - and it was unpleasant to have people sidle up and say, "Don't you think we should keep an eye on X; *his shoes are rather pointed.*" Our attitude must have been cruel. Hard on authors like E M Forsyth and Alan Bennett to feel the need to suppress for so long? The attitude of others led to concealment and subterfuge and shame, it can be argued.

Promiscuity, paedophilia, unsuitable choice of partner and abuse are not

confined to gays. I understand from a nursing chum that similar practices to theirs are used as a method of birth control in Africa and the belief that homosexuals alone spread AIDS is no longer held. And as to being forbidden by scripture, isn't it now thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were really guilty of inhospitality?

Judge not?

Well done, Cliff and David.

*Margaret Heath*

1: John Vassall served 10 years of an 18 year prison sentence for spying. He died in 1996.

## **Keeping a good Lent**

### **Prayer and giving and lunching**

The three elements of a good Lent are; prayer, fasting and alms giving.

We can help each other to keep a good Lent through our fellowship with each other here at Christ Church. Let's all make a serious resolution and say firmly and bravely that we will:

- † Prayer more regularly during the 40 days of Lent in private and, for those able to attend, at the Eucharists on Sundays and at 11am each Wednesday.
- † If possible, to join with the people of St Mary's Roman Catholic Church at the midday lunches held on Wednesdays throughout Lent. Enjoy the friendship and good fellowship and help to achieve the target of £1000 for this year's charity, which is Dorothy House.
- † Give up some of the things we enjoy as an indulgence and give the money we save to a some good cause such as Dorothy House.



For all who are unable to attend the Lent Lunches, please pray for John, June and all the helpers and supporters as they meet each week. These events are a wonderful Lenten observance and witness which have raised astounding amounts of money. The meals are held alternately at Christ Church and St Mary's, as detailed on the calendar.



# Prayer Cycle for February

## *February*

- Fri 1** For our children and young people and for our Junior Church leaders.
- Sat 2** For those who mourn, that they may be comforted.
- Sun 3** For children being bullied at school. For parents who worry about them and do not know how to help.
- Mon 4** For Emma, Margaret and Sarah, our Deanery Synod representatives.
- Tues 5** For our friends, for feasts, for all the blessings poured upon us.
- Wed 6** That the light of God may pierce through the wickedness of this world and through the darkness in our own lives.
- Thurs 7** For all our readers, chalice assistants, intercessors and sidespeople. For Sarah, who draws up the Laity Rotas.
- Fri 8** For the Cedar Tree project; for Nicky and all the helpers; for our local community.
- Sat 9** For all who are working on the Church's new Lighting Scheme.
- Sun 10** For our Clergy Team.
- Mon 11** For Judith, who prepares our weekly notice sheet.
- Tues 12** For David, our Treasurer.
- Wed 13** For Rowan our Archbishop and for Peter our Bishop. For all Anglican Bishops and Primates.
- Thurs 14** For all in a long term relationship; that God may bless and strengthen them and bring them joy.
- Fri 15** For those in physically or emotionally abusive relationships.
- Sat 16** For all who feel lonely. For those with no-one to turn to.
- Sun 17** For the work of Genesis. For all helping at the Lunch Box today.

- 
- Mon 18** For those facing redundancy, for those who are unemployed.
- Tues 19** For members of our congregation who can no longer attend church due to illness or infirmity.
- Wed 20** For the work of Dorothy House, for those benefiting from its care and for their families. For all attending the Lent Lunch today.
- Thurs 21** For all leaders of nations. For those who feel they must use violence to achieve their ends.
- Fri 22** For Angela, our Verger.
- Sat 23** For those suffering from depression, and for those who love them; that they will find the strength to seek the help which they need.
- Sun 24** For Mark, David and the choir. For a spirit of joy in our worship of the Lord.
- Mon 25** For the work of USPG in general, and especially for St Anne's Hospital, Lake Malawi. For Adrian Pegg, our USPG representative.
- Tues 26** For Angela and Chris, our Churchwardens; for Frank and Yvonne, our Deputy Churchwardens.
- Wed 27** For Nicky, our Magazine Editor.
- Thurs 28** For Cyril and Mark our Readers; for Sarah's ministry at Batheaston.
- Fri 29** We thank God for the blessings of the month now ending.
- March**
- Sat 1** For our hospitals, nursing homes and local surgeries and for those who work for the emergency services.
- Sun 2** For the work of the Mothers' Union. For our own mothers and all who have cared for us.
- Mon 3** For our next-door neighbours; for our colleagues at work.

## Recipe of the Month!

*In the first of a new series, we bring you the famous Christmas Fair Soup recipe, with particular thanks to Sarah Jones.*

*Do you have a favourite recipe to share with us?*

### Christ Church Christmas Fair Soup

Serves 6

*Vegetable quantities are prepared weights*

- 8 oz (225g) peeled carrots, cut into 2 inch lengths
- 8 oz (225g) peeled celeriac (or potatoes) cut into 2 inch pieces
- 8 oz (225g) trimmed and washed leeks, halved and cut into 2 inch lengths
- 8 oz (225g) peeled swede, cut into 2 inch pieces
- 1 small onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 ½ pints (1.5 litres) vegetable stock
- 3 bay leaves
- salt and freshly milled black pepper

*You will also need:*

A lidded flameproof casserole with a capacity of 6 pints (3.5 litres)

Pre-heat the oven to gas mark 1 (275 F, 140C). Place everything in the casserole, and bring it up to a gentle simmer, then put the lid on, place it in the lowest part of the oven, and leave it there for three hours, by which time the vegetables will be tender.

Next, remove the bay leaves and process or liquidise the soup in several batches to a puree.

Bon Appetit!



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Officiating Minister	The Rev Antony Claridge, 62 Cranwells Park, Weston, Bath BA1 2YE 01225 427462
Assistant Clergy	The Rev Cliff Burrows, Stonecroft, Entry Hill Drive, Bath BA2 5NL 01225 334743
Reader / Director of Music	Mark Elliott, 32 Charlcombe Lane, Larkhall, Bath BA1 6NS 01225 445360
Reader / Magazine Distributor and Editor Emeritus	Cyril Selmes, 10 Daffords Buildings, Larkhall, Bath BA1 6SG 01225 420039
Churchwarden	Chris Gladstone, 5 Westwoods, Box Road, Bath BA1 7QE 01225 859969
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Deanery Synod / Laity Rotas / Junior Church	Sarah Hiscock, 2 Mortimer Close, Bath BA1 4EN 07983 556759
Deanery Synod / Churches Together in Bath (CTB)	Margaret Heath, St Lawrence, Lansdown Road, Bath BA1 5TD 01225 428272
Mothers' Union (MU)	Margaret Burrows, Stonecroft, Entry Hill Drive, Bath BA2 5NL 01225 334743
CTB / MU Secretary & Treasurer / Missions to Seafarers / Calendar	Sylvia Ayers, 5 Forester Avenue, Bath BA2 6QD 01225 463976
USPG	Adrian Pegg, 68 London Road West, Bath BA1 7DA 01225 858809
Christian Aid / Children's Society	Your name here? Speak to Chris or Angela!
Organist	David Wrigley, 3 Haydon Gate, Radstock, BA3 3RB 01761 439355
Magazine Editor / Secretary to the Trustees	Nicky Gladstone, 5 Westwoods, Box Road, Bath BA1 7QE 01225 859969
Concert and Bookings Co-ordinator / Weekly Notices	Judith Bishop, 01225 869409 Email <a href="mailto:concerts@christchurchbath.org">concerts@christchurchbath.org</a>

# ***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 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. We hold special all-age services once a month and at festivals such as Easter, Christmas, Mothering Sunday and Harvest.

There are a variety of mid-week activities including Holy Communion at 11am every Wednesday during Lent, followed by lunch). 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](http://www.christchurchbath.org)

**The deadline for articles for the magazine is the  
15th of the preceding month.  
Thank you.**