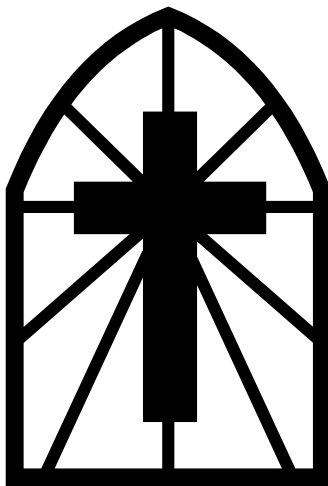


CHRIST  
CHURCH  
CHALLENGE



February 2009

**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*

**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

*Angela and Chris, 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.*

***Lent at Christ Church***

Details of all the Lenten services at Christ Church will be published in a special leaflet available soon.

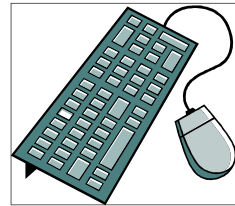
***Sadly, this month sees Chris Graham's valedictory article. We send him on his way with our love and prayers.***

***Matthew Jones has kindly submitted a powerful and personal account of how God has answered prayer and directed his life. You'll find it on page 12.***

***Many thanks to all of our contributors.***

## Forum...

### Cheer up, Lent is here



It seems scarcely possible that Lent is almost here. This year Ash Wednesday falls on 25<sup>th</sup> February. In the forty days leading up to Easter, we shall devote special attention to the disciplines of repentance, self-examination, and self-denial. The ashes with which our foreheads are marked will not only symbolise our inner penitence but also remind us of our mortality in the words that God spoke to Adam in Genesis 3:19, “for dust you are, and to dust you will return”.

Repentance is essential to the Christian life. According to Mark, the very first words of Jesus’ public ministry were, “The time has come, the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the Good News!” (Mark 1:15). The readings selected for the Eucharist during the weeks of Lent take us on a journey self discovery which involves confession and repentance. In fact, Ash Wednesday presents us with what might be the most powerful and elegant confession in all of Christian history, David’s Psalm 51. If you do nothing else for Lent, meditate upon Psalm 51 and you will have done well.

Confessing and repenting whilst easier said than done is no excuse for morbid preoccupation with sin. Confession and repentance are privileges to enjoy, not penalties to fear. They signal good news about God’s forgiveness, not bad news about our failures. We need to remind ourselves that confession and repentance are not penalties to appease an angry God rather, they are the means by which we unburden ourselves of real (as opposed to imagined) sins and restore a relationship with a God who is of unfailing love and great compassion.

**Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness;  
according to the abundance of your compassion blot out my  
offences.**

**(Psalm 51:1)**

Our Lenten mood is penitential, of course; but it is full of confidence, joy and hope, not self-hatred, doom and gloom. Thus we pray with David, “create in me a pure heart, O God” (Psalm 51:10), even as we confess that this is exactly what we do not have.

During Lent many Christians will give up something they enjoy as an act of self-denial and penitence. Jesus does not discourage outward, symbolic acts. But he reminds us that we should not do our outward acts to show off before people, but instead focus on doing them “in secret”

where God alone knows our hearts. He gives the examples of giving alms to the needy, praying in public and fasting in Matthew 6:1–6.

Daubing ashes on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday is not unimportant or wrong. Neither is giving up something for Lent. But these are pointers to the good news that “if we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). They should not be gloomy reminders for morbid introspection. Such outward acts can be rich reminders of broken hearts and contrite spirits whom God truly welcomes and warmly embraces.

*Antony*

## Church Calendar for February

Feb	1	Sun	<b>CANDLEMAS</b>	
			4.30pm	Choral Evensong
	4	Wed	Church Together in Bath AGM and Meeting 7.30pm	
	6	Fri	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	8	Sun	<b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b>	
			Mayor's Multi Faith Gathering	
	13	Fri	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	14	Sat	ST VALENTINE	
	15	Sun	<b>SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT</b>	
	20	Fri	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	22	Sun	<b>SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT</b>	
	24	Tues	ST MATTHIAS, Apostle	
	25	Wed	ASH WEDNESDAY	
	27	Fri	GEORGE HERBERT, Priest	
			11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
Mar	1	Sun	<b>FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT</b>	
			4.30pm	Choral Evensong

# Laity Rota for February

		OT Readers	NT Readers	Gospel
<b>February</b>	<b>1</b>	Matthew Jones	Judith Anderson	Margaret Burrows
	<b>8</b>	Judith Bishop	Emma Elliott	Richard Gabe
	<b>15</b>	Bev Pont	David Marles	Eileen Selmes
	<b>22</b>	Martin Palmer	Nicky Gladstone	Bob Siderfin
<b>March</b>	<b>1</b>	Esme Buss	Morny Davison	Penny Edwards
	<b>8</b>	Georgina Bowman	David Bishop	Mark Elliott

## Chalice Assistants

<b>February</b>	<b>1</b>	Margaret Heath	Janet Mahto
	<b>8</b>	Jane Fletcher	
	<b>15</b>	Penny Edwards	Bob Siderfin
	<b>22</b>	Andrew Sillett	Tessa Claridge
<b>March</b>	<b>1</b>	Bev Pont	Margaret Burrows
	<b>8</b>	Margaret Heath	Janet Mahto

## Intercessors

<b>February</b>	<b>1</b>	Rev Cliff Burrows
	<b>8</b>	
	<b>15</b>	Georgina Bowman
	<b>22</b>	Rev Antony Claridge
<b>February</b>	<b>1</b>	Mark Elliott
	<b>8</b>	Martin Palmer



## Sidespeople

		8am	10am	
<b>February</b>	<b>1</b>	Clive Tilling	Morny Davison	Tessa Claridge
	<b>8</b>	Arthur Jones	Margaret Silver	Frank Twissell
	<b>15</b>	Clive Tilling	Ken & Sylvia Ayers	
	<b>22</b>	Arthur Jones	Andrew Sillett	Janet Mahto
<b>March</b>	<b>1</b>	Clive Tilling	Margaret Heath	Morny Davison
	<b>8</b>	Arthur Jones	Tessa Claridge	Andrew Sillett

# Lectionary for February

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
<b>Feb 8</b>	3rd Sunday before Lent		
	Isaiah 40.21-31	1 Corinthians 9.16-23	Mark 1.29-39
<b>15</b>	2nd Sunday before Lent		
	Proverbs 8.1, 22-31	Colossians 1.15-20	John 1.1-14
<b>22</b>	Sunday next before Lent		
	No reading	2 Corinthians 4: 3-6	Mark 9: 2-9
<b>25</b>	Ash Wednesday		
	Isaiah 58: 1-12	No reading	Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21
<b>Mar 1</b>	Lent 1		
	Genesis 9: 8-17	1 Peter 3: 18-22	Mark s1: 9-15

## Missions to Seafarers Lent Appeal

As you know, the Mission runs over a hundred centres around the world, providing a place for seafarers to worship, to meet people other than their shipmates, or just to post letters or phone home, and I am grateful to the members of our congregation who still support this work.



Caring for seafarers  
around the world

In order to send off a goodly sum as Christ Church's Lent Contribution, please would holders of Missions to Seafarers Boxes return them to me for emptying by Mothering Sunday. I will then notify you in due course of the amount which we have raised.

Also, please don't forget that used stamps of all denominations (!) especially foreign issues are still very much required. Thank you.

*Sylvia M Ayers*

**DON'T WORRY. BE HAPPY**

I haven't contributed anything to the magazine for six months – and now I am penning my last piece. I've moved permanently to London and, while I could follow Matthew and Sarah Jones's example and report periodically from the big city, my new job discourages public comment. And, unlike Matthew and Sarah, I doubt I'm coming back. The fact is I've been too busy moving, job hunting, and so on.

So various possible Christ Church Challenge pieces have remained in my head and never made it on to paper. Like the Trinity Sunday weekend in Ely with my friends from St Andrew's Holborn and the realisation that I need to sort out the Persons of the Trinity in my thinking – or risk the heresy of Sabellianism. Or the Egyptian temple at Dendera where the sparrow really had found her an house; and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young – and I realised that Egyptian, Greek, and Jewish temples all worked on the same principle of a 'Holy of Holies' and had more in common than they or I realised. Or my American pilgrimage to a Quaker wedding in Vermont over the summer and my thoroughly good experience of the Episcopal Church of the USA in the run up to the Lambeth Conference.

I'm moving on from the Advertising Standards Authority after more than eight years in charge. But it seems that I am not to be allowed out before dealing with a sudden rush of religious controversies. First there is unfinished business with the Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland, one of whose local congregations fell foul of the rules about not causing 'serious or widespread offence' with a particularly hot and strong advertisement in the *Belfast Newsletter* denouncing a Gay Pride march. I've agreed to meet Ian Paisley himself – he of 'Save Ulster from Sodomy' – and I shall be interested to hear his response when I point out that he and the Pope are at one on this subject.

And then there's the Humanist Bus. 'There probably isn't a God. Don't worry. Enjoy your life', reads the bus advertisement placed by an anti-religious coalition. There have been objections from atheists to the word 'probably'. A Christian bus driver has gone on strike over it. And Christian Voice, the lobby group who objected to the BBC televising *Gerry Springer: The Musical*, have called on the advertiser to substantiate the claim. The ASA has received more than 200 complaints. So, has the



ASA got to adjudicate on whether or not God doesn't exist – alongside Tesco's claims about ASDA and ASDA's claims about Tesco?

I think the silly season came early this year. 'Probably' was certainly not insisted upon by the ASA. It is much more likely that the advertisers wanted to draw on some capital from that classic Carlsberg slogan – 'probably the best lager'.

Anyway, it got the campaign noticed – which presumably was the intention. And no doubt the subsequent row has been even better news for the advertisers who have achieved more free column inches of press coverage than they could have dreamed of. What it really tells you is that ad space is very cheap in a recession.



As a user of buses and trains myself, I see a lot of advertising by different churches and religious bodies on public transport. A.C. Grayling, the commentator, has suggested that the ASA should insist that such religious ads carry the word 'allegedly'. We shall do no such thing. But surely the poster at Swindon station from one of the Bible societies that proclaims 'The Fool hath said in his heart "There is no God"' is just as offensive to humanists and atheists as 'There probably isn't a God' might be to Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The ASA would have to have very strong grounds for banning an ad that merely expressed an advertiser's opinion in a non-aggressive manner. Surely it's a matter of live and let live. Fortunately, the ASA absolutely isn't required to decide whether or not 'there probably isn't a God' on the basis of evidence. The Code requires advertisers to hold proof of claims 'that are capable of objective substantiation' – and the ASA will not rush in where even some of the finest minds in philosophy and theology have feared to tread. ID Cards, Freedom of Information and missing Child Benefit records cannot be more challenging than that, surely?

Speaking personally, the 'don't worry' part of the ad was what worried me. Because it assumed a vengeful God who rules by fear of the hereafter. That is not my understanding of the Christian God. I'd be much more worried if I thought there was no meaning or purpose to anything. As I take my leave of Christ Church, where I have felt so much at home these last 10 years, I find I am enjoying my life because of my faith, not in spite of it. And the Christ Church family has recently proved to me, as to so many others, a real Christian community in time of need. It has indeed been a privilege to be part of Christ Church, particularly assisting at the Eucharist. 'See how these Christians love another,' is a reality at Christ Church – and that is a wonderful thing.







But what I have also found from personal experience is the truth of the Psalmist's promise 'Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' Surely, those without faith are not foolish, but comfortless.

Another thing I've valued about Christ Church are the hymns. My brother-in-law Richard has just retired from being Vicar of East Dereham in the Norwich diocese. Dereham was where the great 18<sup>th</sup> Century poet and hymn writer William Cowper lived. I'll leave the last word on the Humanist Bus, worry, and the rest to Cowper.

*Chris Graham*

## **God Moves In A Mysterious Way**

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage  
take,  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan his work in vain;  
God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain

Chris has been named as the Government's 'preferred candidate' to be the next Information Commissioner in charge of freedom of information and data protection. He was due to appear before a Commons Select Committee on 27 January for 'pre-appointment scrutiny' and an official announcement should follow later this month. If confirmed, Chris will leave the Advertising Standards Authority in June.

## The Shack by William P. Young



*The Shack* is something of a phenomenon. Rejected by one publisher among many for having “too much Jesus”, it was eventually self-published in 2007 by the American author and two friends. Selling initially through word of mouth, sales began to snowball and by June last year over a million copies had been sold. At the time of writing, it had topped the New York Times Best Sellers list for 28 weeks. Even more auspiciously, *The Shack* featured in the main Christmas window display of Waterstone’s in Bath!

It tells the story of a man called Mack who has experienced abuse in childhood and tragic loss in adulthood. One day he receives an invitation from God to spend the weekend together in the shack of the title. Although the events leading up to this weekend are covered in some detail, the focus of the book is very much on the time Mack and God spend together, during which Mack has the chance to question God about the tragic events of his life. The author is clear that it is not a comprehensive theology, but rather a parable presenting his understanding of the character of God and a Christian response to issues such as freedom, reality, relationships, grace, heaven, evil, pain and suffering. Not that this has stopped a lot of people getting hot under the collar and making accusations of heresy – just try an internet search!

A review we read before starting the book left us expecting something very saccharine and evangelical, but we were wrong on both counts. Although there is perhaps something slightly cloying about the prose to the British ear, it is not so bad that it interferes with the story telling and it’s certainly worth the effort of ignoring it and carrying on.

Perhaps the weakest part of the book is the initial scene setting. For example, the amount of detail about the road names on the journey to the campsite where tragedy struck seemed unnecessary and the descriptions of the developing friendships with other families were a little laboured. But persist, work through the inevitable tragic incident and try and keep your brain switched on for the beautiful and compelling portrait of God which follows.

The God we meet in *The Shack* is most definitely a trinity, as he is represented initially by three different characters. Yet despite this, one of the most striking aspects of the book was how it emphasised the oneness as well as the threeness of God, which has certainly made us think about the Trinity in a new way. For example, it’s easier to associate the “human

*continued on page 11*

*continued from page 10*

Jesus” with the person crucified on Good Friday, but *The Shack* emphasises that it was also the omnipotent, omnipresent creator of the universe who suffered in this way, not “only” God’s son, but God himself.

Another major theme of the book is love. It is clear that the God depicted in *The Shack* has an infinite love for all His creation and especially for every single person, whatever they’ve done and whatever their religion. Whilst this is something that the vast majority of Christians would concur with, *The Shack’s* exploration of some of the more uncomfortable implications of this is eye opening. Not that it is suggested that all roads lead to God, in fact this viewpoint is clearly refuted, but as the Jesus character says “...I will follow any road to find you.”

The church is another area explored in *The Shack*. The conclusion reached is best summarised by another quote from the Jesus character, who describes His church as “...a living, breathing community of all those who love me, not buildings and programs... It’s all about relationships and simply sharing life...being open and available to others around us.” This is once again something that many Christians would concur with, but the practice is harder than the theory. There are words of comfort from the Jesus character though, especially at a time when some many of us are worried about the future of the church: “You can’t build it. It’s my job and I’m actually pretty good at it”.

Overall, the picture of God presented in *The Shack* is of a loving creator who cannot be constrained by the limits the human imagination tries to place on Him. With God, all things are indeed possible, even if we humans cannot comprehend why or how and we can find ultimate freedom if only we can accept we are loved by God and learnt to trust Him. It is this that may lie behind the book’s success. We live in an age when people are happy to describe themselves as “spiritual”, but they shy away from “religion”. *The Shack* presents the good news of God in a way that makes sense to such a generation whilst also helping to strip away preconceptions about the Christian “religion”. If done in the right way, a gift of a copy of *The Shack* might do much to bring a person closer to God. That’s not to say that a practising Christian will not find anything in it, as it’s a multilayered book in which most people will find something every time they read it to help then think about God in a new way and so deepen their faith.

*Matthew and Sarah Jones*



## Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

Regular readers will remember that during our recent two year sojourn to London, we settled in St. Barnabas Church, Dulwich. One of the many things we appreciated about St. Barnabas was people's openness about their personal faith and encounters with God. This is something that we are generally shy of at Christ Church, preferring to express our beliefs in intellectual language and through corporate acts of worship. To be honest, this is one of the things that attracted me to Christ Church in the first place, but our time in London suggested that we might be missing a trick. I'd therefore like to share how God worked in my life during 2008 and what I've learnt from it. I ask those with more theology than me to indulge me, as this is simply a personal account!



The story begins in 2006, when my PhD and Sarah's job were coming to an end. We were fortunate that two exciting opportunities arose for us in London, so with heavy hearts we packed our bags and moved. This decision was only made after much prayer and reflection and we both felt that one day God would lead us back to Bath.

Things went well in London, but we still missed Bath, Christ Church and especially our friends, so barely a week went by when I didn't pray that God would lead us back soon. During this time, two Bible passages were particularly comforting to me: the parable of the widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18 v 1-8) which teaches of the importance of persistence in prayer and Romans 8 v 28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him..."

Then one Sunday in January 2008 it hit me during the prayer after communion – "...you met us in your Son and brought us home..." – with a spurt of adrenaline I just knew that on that morning those words were meant for me in a special way. God was going to bring us home to Bath. It's the one time in my life that I would say with certainty that God spoke to me and I cannot describe how it made my spirit soar.

Less than two weeks later, Sarah saw an advert for a position that was not only her dream job but also based in Bath. She applied and, of course, was offered the job, opening up the move back to Bath for us. Thanks be to God!



However, this left me with a job to find. I have two aunts whose faith and persistence in daily prayer and Bible study are a tremendous example. Knowing that I needed a job,

they were praying for me and one day phoned to say that they felt that God wanted me to take special heed of two Bible passages: "Whether you turn to the right or the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it" (Isaiah 30 v21) and Psalm 37, especially verses 7 and 34: "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him..." and "Wait for the Lord and keep his way..."

Well, hindsight suggests they were right, as three interesting job opportunities that were, apparently, made for me came and went. After the third, I was left full of bitterness, anger and resentment. But God was there, to comfort and heal and help me to forgive, as He always does. And then I saw it, an advert for a job at the RUH in the specialism that only days earlier I'd told my dad I thought I was well qualified for and would enjoy. That said, on the face of it I wasn't at all the person they were looking for, with little of the specified experience or qualifications, but somehow I just knew that this was the job I was meant to have. This impression was reinforced on the morning of my interview, when my Bible reading set for the day was John 15 v 9-17 which ends "Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name" (although our prayers are not always answered in the ways we expect, of course). The rest, as they say, is history and by the time you read this, I'll be working at the RUH. Once more, thanks be to God!

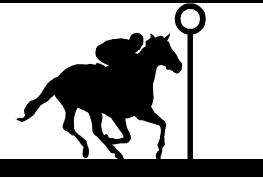
So what have I learned from all this? Above all, I think God's taught me in a very practical way that we really can fully rely on Him if only we have faith and seek his will. It was not easy to find and follow God's plan, but it was much better than the upset caused by my own attempts to engineer something that was not His will. I've also learnt to believe more that God really does answer prayer, both in word and deed. Before, I would have said I believed all this, but that was only in my head. Now, I think, I believe it at a deeper level, in my heart. I hope and pray that I can remember these lessons in the future, even when times are apparently good.

So why am I writing this? In part, I hope that by putting pen to paper I'll help myself to remember what I've learned. But I also hope that if someone out there is feeling discouraged in their faith, this story might serve to encourage them. I'm no super-Christian, I wish I could say that God was always at the centre of everything I do and that I read the Bible and pray everyday, but the truth is that I don't. Yet God still heard my prayers and answered them in a most amazing way. If he can do for me, he will do for you too!

*Matthew Jones*



## Cutting Corners



“...and they're off, *The Crucifer* making a good start in the lead by a head from *The Candle Bearers* in hot pursuit (desperate to keep their flames alight)... and *The Choir*, turning into 'Prayer Book Corner' with a bit of bunching and jostling to get into the first four before 'Central Lectern', some straggling from the second pack, with *Altar Boy* ahead of *The God Botherer* and a near fall from *Visiting Preacher* at the first fence!...”

Not that I'm suggesting we get a racing pundit to give a running commentary throughout our services, but at the rate we do things at the moment, it would be helpful for anyone who's view is obscured by a pillar or the 7' pole-vaulter stood in front of them.

Where has our Sense of Occasion gone? Our Ceremony, our Grace and Dignity. It's as though we can't wait to get it all over and get on with the coffee and a good chat. We go, of our own accord, every week to God's house, a palace, to be uplifted from the awfulness of everyday life, from the drudgery of the mundane, from worry and concerns of our own and the lives of others. Yet we seem to stomp around church as if we were at home, taking shortcuts on our route from one room to the next at what looks, sometimes, like the fastest rate we can possibly manage.

Royalist or not, if you were invited to Buckingham Palace for tea or your investiture, you would still do as you were bid and walk gracefully down the centre of the carpets and bow as protocol expects and this is for the Queen of a nation, we are visiting the King of all Christendom. Remember how Ken Livingstone followed convention after much speculation whether he would bow to the Queen years ago in a line up?

Movement and reading alike become meaningless if executed at such a speed. Their symbolism or point is lost if we have moved on to the next part of the service before having time to consider. The old rule, 'If it seems too slow to you when reading, then it's probably the right speed' applies to both.

I spent a weekend in Canterbury last year and went to the Sunday Eucharist at the Cathedral. The service had all the grace and splendor you would expect from the principal church of our faith. The processions were poised and triumphant, the clergy and choir moved about the building with all the grace and dignity you would expect in such a grand palace. But, oh! the reading, what a shame. Lessons and prayers took off like Harry Potter over a Quidditch Pitch, with the congregation hanging on for grim death like the streamers that used to be pulled by bi-planes past the beaches at seaside resorts when I was a child. Responses and blessings rattled out like rounds of machine-gun fire and you left the building, keeping your head down, at the safe end of the trench.

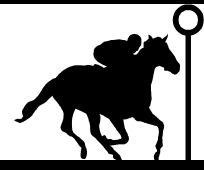
Mark Elliott and I are both very aware that the choir does not set a good example and hours of Square Bashing are planned in the near future. As Head Chorister at the Royal School of Church Music for nearly ten years, I taught thousands of boys and lay clerks to turn square corners and walk in straight lines, slowly, all holding their books and heads the same way. To bow, not from the waist (banging their heads on the person, pew or floor in front of them), but from the neck and head which is sufficient to show due reverence and look orderly and inspirational to the innocent by-stander.

I am aware that many do not agree with, what they would refer to as 'pomp', but if we believe in what we stand and recite each week, *The Creed*, then surely the two go hand in hand, out of respect if nothing else. Developing a technique of getting from your seat to the Lectern by the shortest possible route (even if that does require climbing over the front three rows of pews and their occupants) to achieve it, does not really give much importance to the reading everyone is about to hear.

Since at present we seem very keen on moving at a slow ecclesiastical gallop, maybe we should develop it and revive the old Anglican Olympics by including such events as *Vaulting the Altar Rail* and *Throwing the Revised Parish Psalter*. Although I do feel we should leave *Synchronized Swimming in the font* in the capable hands of the Baptists. Suggestions for other events and your comments generally would be appreciated as always.

To sum up, my suggestion is that we try to put a little style back into our services. To make them a celebration and an event set apart from the mad dash of our everyday lives, with room for contemplation and inspiration. Apart from anything, in respect for the presence we are in. I am sure this would delight Antony, although he would probably view the minimalist approach to bowing with some scepticism. But after leaving the Pulpit by sliding down the banister rail during weddings (in a most dignified manner, I hasten to add), I'm not sure he has a leg to stand on!

...and as we go into the final furlong, it's *The Crucifer* still romping in the lead by a good 8 lengths now, obviously making for a victorious lap of the Vestry Paddock, with *The Candle Bearers* slip streaming their way to second and third, the field well spread out behind the leaders now. And, as they turn at 'Offertory Plate Corner', bringing up the rear, it's *Altar Boy* and *The God Botherer*, with the riderless *Visiting Preacher*, having fallen at 'Pulpit Steps', limping into 'Vestry' for a good rub down and the vestry prayer. Now back to the Grandstand Studio!..."



*Martin Palmer*

At the request of the author, this article has not been edited. It does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial team. If you have a view on the subject, please contribute to the discussion at [admin@christchurchbath.org](mailto:admin@christchurchbath.org).

# Prayer Cycle for February

---

## *February*

- Sun 1** For all preparing for marriage.
- Mon 2** For those who mourn, that they may be comforted.
- Tues 3** For those persecuted for their faith.
- Wed 4** For our hospitals, nursing homes and local surgeries and for those who work for the emergency services.
- Thurs 5** For the Churches Together in Bath, holding their AGM this week.
- Fri 6** For Angela, our Verger.
- Sat 7** For our LMG partners, St Stephen's and St Mary's Charlcombe.
- Sun 8** For all people of faith in this city, for tolerance and understanding.
- Mon 9** For Judith, who prepares our weekly notice sheet.
- Tues 10** For the people of Gaza and those trying to rebuild and bring peace to the region.
- Wed 11** For Margaret, Sarah and Lewis, our Deanery Synod representatives.
- Thurs 12** For all in a long term relationship; that God may bless and strengthen them and bring them joy.
- Fri 13** For the work of the Cedar Tree. For Nicky and all the helpers.
- Sat 14** For our Clergy Team.
- Sun 15** For all our readers, chalice assistants, intercessors and sidespeople. For Sarah, who draws up the Laity Rotas.
- Mon 16** For all who feel lonely. For those with no-one to turn to.



- Tues 17** For Chris and Angela, our church wardens.
- Wed 18** For those who have lost their jobs, or are fearful during the economic crisis.
- Thurs 19** For all who help to run our Junior Church, for Sarah who co-ordinates the rota, and for all our children
- Fri 20** For Mark, our Director of Music and David, our Organist. For our choir.
- Sat 21** For David, our Treasurer and magazine editor.
- Sun 22** For children being bullied at school. For parents who worry about them and do not know how to help.
- Mon 23** For Cyril and Mark our Readers; for Sarah's ministry at Batheaston.
- Tues 24** For feast days and the bounty of the earth.
- Wed 25** That we may use this Lent wisely, examining our lives, our relationships with each other and with creation.
- Thurs 26** For Rowan our Archbishop and for Peter our Bishop. For all Anglican Bishops and Primates.
- Fri 27** For those watching over the sick and the dying.
- Sat 28** Let us thank God for the blessings of the month now ending.

**March**

- Sun 1** For the work of Dorothy House, for those benefiting from its care and for their families.
- Mon 2** For the work of USPG in general, and especially for St Anne's Hospital, Lake Malawi. For Adrian Pegg, our USPG representative.
- Tues 3** For the leaders of the nations.

## Faith, hope and love in the Eucharist

### **A book for Lent from the archbishop**

For the past few decades, the Archbishop of Canterbury has commissioned an 'Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book', collaborating with a Christian publisher. The books concentrate on theological or devotional Christian themes relevant to Lent, in preparation for the celebration of the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ in Holy Week and Easter. The Archbishop commissions the author, and writes the foreword. This year the Lent Book is **Why Go to Church? The Drama of the Eucharist** by Timothy Radcliffe.

Written by a spiritual master this is an important Lent title that examines what it means to celebrate the Eucharist, and in turn reminds us of our capability for love, hope and faith. The Eucharist, writes Radcliffe, is a three-part drama, forming us in faith, hope and love. In his book he examines what it means to celebrate the Eucharist. Whilst other people experience it as boring and pointless, listening to the readings, the sermon and the creed all take us through the crises and challenges of faith. From the offertory through to the end of the Eucharistic prayer we are caught up in the hope that was Christ's, faced with Good Friday. From the Our Father until we are sent on our way, especially in receiving communion, we are formed as people who are capable of love.

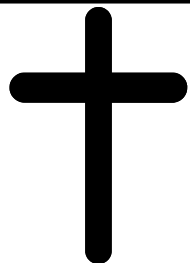
The book is published by Continuum at £9.99 and is available at all good bookshops. More competitive prices may be found at a number of on-line outlets including Tesco Entertainment (yes, really!).

### **John Fenning, Priest**

We were saddened to learn of the death, on 1 January 2009, of the Revd Fenning, who had a long connection with Christ Church and was a reader of Christ Church Challenge up to his death.

He grew up in one of our cottages, and was a member of the choir. As an adult, he taught at Culverhay School and helped in the making of our hymn boards and verger's staff. He also gave us our piano.

In later life, he was ordained and retired to Ireland, coming back to Bath and celebrating the Eucharist at Christ Church on occasion. His parents are buried at Bathampton, and this is where his ashes will be buried.



---

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
Churchwarden / Verger	Angela Soboslay, 285 Newbridge Road, Bath BA1 3HN 01225 333297
Church Council Secretary	David Bishop, The Old Tannery, Turleigh, Bradford on Avon, BA15 2HG 01225 869409
Treasurer to the Trustees / Magazine Editor	David Marles, 5 Westwoods, Box Road, Bath BA1 7QE 01225 859969
Chairman of the Trustees	Yvonne Morris, 3 Summerhill Road, Sion Hill, Bath BA1 2UP. 01225 425555
Secretary to the Trustees	Nicky Gladstone, 5 Westwoods, Box Road, Bath BA1 7QE 01225 859969
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
Deanery Synod	Lewis Boyd, 5 Jesse Hughes Court, Lower Swainswick, BA1 7BE 01225 329190
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	
Organist	David Wrigley, 3 Haydon Gate, Radstock, BA3 3RB 01761 439355
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.**