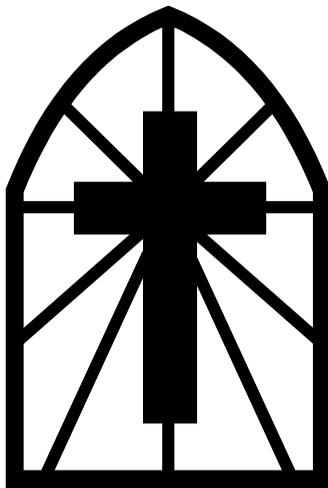


CHRIST
CHURCH
CHALLENGE



January 2008

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.

From the Church Register

Funeral prior to cremation

10 December Pamela Christine Gant Wiles, aged 80



Holy Matrimony

15 December Daniel Paul Sandham and Katherine Ann Kemp

28 December Oliver John Norton and Melissa Jayne Flower

Thanks to everyone

We had a lovely, joyous and holy Christmas at Christ Church. Our services were well advertised in the local press and it was a delight to welcome large numbers of visitors. We owe thanks to all who cleaned, decorated, arranged lighting, read lessons, printed orders of service, sang and (let us not forget!) mulled wine. The people who did these things are too numerous to name but let us hope that they realise how grateful we are to them.



We hope the un-named will not mind a special word of thanks to Sarah Hiscock, the Junior Church leaders and the young cast of our nativity play. Once again, it was not only a delight but gave us something to pray and think about.

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

Following our donations to the Women's Refuge, I have again received a letter of thanks from the Managers of the House. We would like to add our own thanks for all the support that Christ Church Congregation gives us each year. Rumours may have reached you that the Refuge was due to close at the end of November 2007, but I have it on good authority that this is not so. Although it is being taken over by another organisation the facility is still available and will be happy to receive our donations next autumn as usual.



In November we attended the official launch of the new Deanery MU Branch at St Mary's Bathwick, and in December members responded to the invitation from St Luke's MU to join them for their Service of Christmas Lessons and Carols followed by a festive tea.

The £13.00 MU Subscription for 2008 is now due. Of this, £6.75 goes towards the upkeep of Mary Sumner House; £5.00 is paid to the Diocese; and 50p pays for our Quarterly Newsletter. The Deanery Fares Fund receives 25p, and we keep 50p per member for ourselves. I would be grateful to receive your cheques as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, may we wish all members and Christ Church friends a very Happy New Year.

Sylvia M. Ayers (MU Secretary)

Lectionary for January

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
Jan 6	Feast of the Epiphany		
	Isaiah 60.1-6	No reading	Matthew 2.1-12
13	Baptism of Christ		
	Isaiah 42. 1-9	Acts 10. 34-43	Matthew 3. 13 -17
20	Epiphany 3		
	Isaiah 49. 1-7	1 Corinthians 1.1-9	John 1.29-42
27	Epiphany 4		
	Isaiah 9.1-4	1 Corinthians 10-18	Matthew 4.12-23
Feb 3	Candlemas		
	Malachi 3. 1-5	Hebrews 2.14-18	Luke 2.22-40
6	Ash Wednesday		
	Isaiah 58.1-12	No reading	Matthew 6.1-6,16-21
10	Lent 1		
	Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7	Romans 5.12-19	Matthew 4.1-11



COOK BOOKS AND QUEENS Do you know the connection?

Each year the Mothers' Union produces the "Cookbook for Skint Singles" which is distributed to the University in Freshers Week. To raise some funds for next year's edition, we sold a fun Quiz in December on the names of the Queens of England, both Regnant and Consort. So far, we have raised £10 from the sale of these sheets which hopefully gave you endless fun during the dark evenings. The deadline for their return to me is January 27th, so that I can forward the completed sheets to the organiser in time for them to be "marked". Good Luck to everyone, and thank you for taking part.

Sylvia M Ayers

Church Calendar for January

Jan	6	Sun	FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY	
	7	Mon	THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST	
	8	Tues	Mayor's Call to Prayer	
	10	Thur	WILLIAM LAUD, Archbishop	
	11	Fri	MARY SLESSOR, South African Missionary	
			11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	12	Sat	ST ALDRED OF HEXHAM, Archbishop	
	13	Sun	SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	
	15	Tue	Deadline for magazine articles	
	16	Wed	7.30pm	Christ Church Council
	18	Fri	Start of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	
			11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	19	Sat	11.00am	Christian Unity Service at St John's RC Church
	20	Sun	THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	
	24	Thur	ST FRANCIS DE SALES, Bishop	
	25	Fri	CONVERSION OF ST PAUL	
			11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	26	Sat	SS TIMOTHY AND TITUS, Companions of St Paul	
	27	Sun	FOURTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	
	28	Mon	ST THOMAS AQUINAS, Priest	
	30	Wed	KING CHARLES THE MARTYR	
Feb	1	Fri	11.00am	The Cedar Tree Community Café
	3	Sun	CANDLEMAS	
			6.30pm	Choral Evensong

Laity Rota for January

		OT Readers	NT Readers	Gospel
January	6	Georgina Bowman	No reading	David Bishop
	13	Chris Graham	Mark Elliott	Jane Fletcher
	20	Sarah Hiscock	Sylvia Ayers	Margaret Heath
	27	Ann Kemp	Judith Anderson	Margaret Burrows
February	3	Emma Elliott	Richard Gabe	Judith Bishop
	10	David Marles	Eileen Selmes	Bev Pont

Chalice Assistants

January	6	Ann Kemp	Jane Fletcher
	13	Penny Edwards	Bob Siderfin
	20	Andrew Sillett	Tessa Claridge
	27	Bev Pont	Margaret Burrows
February	3	Margaret Heath	Janet Mahto
	10	Chris Graham	Ann Kemp

Intercessors

January	6	Bev Pont
	13	David Marles
	20	Rev Cliff Burrows
	27	Chris Graham
February	3	Georgina Bowman
	10	Rev Antony Claridge

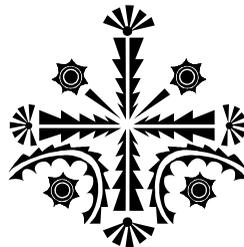


Sidespeople

		8am	10am	
January	6	Clive Tilling	Margaret Heath	Andrew Sillett
	13	Arthur Jones	Tessa Claridge	Janet Mahto
	20	Clive Tilling	Margaret Silver	Frank Twissell
	27	Arthur Jones	Ken and Sylvia Ayers	
February	3	Clive Tilling		

A Grown Up's Christmas in Scotland

This year, we spent Christmas in Scotland. Four years ago, my step-daughter married a Scottish doctor and, instead of them coming to us, this time, for the first time, we went to them – to Helensburgh on the banks of the Clyde. Instead of my wife and myself having to do everything, we just turned up and were entertained. It's a rather wonderful moment when the small person you used to read bedtime stories to can produce the Christmas meal with style and all unaided. The torch has passed to a new generation. It's part of growing up.



When Marianne and Barrie come to Bath they are happy to worship at Christ Church. But on his home patch, my step son-in-law is of the Church of Scotland. So rather than me skulking off to the Episcopalians for a Midnight Mass, I was very happy to sample whatever was on offer at the West Kirk. If the Queen can be an Anglican south of the Border and a Presbyterian in Scotland then so can I.

And what was on offer was a Watchnight Service with lots of singing and a good deal of preaching. 'If you are a visitor please convey our greetings to your own congregation,' said the pew sheet. So that I do – with some thoughts on what I learned from the Scottish way of doing things.

The singing was good, although the carol sheet included, among the usual suspects, a range of Christmas songs you would not find in *Hymns Ancient & Modern Revised*. We were not asked to sing *White Christmas*, *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*, *Chestnuts Roasting by the Fire*, or *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, but I can imagine they might come in handy when turning on the town's Christmas lights.

The teaching/preaching was clear and challenging. We re-lit the four Advent candles of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy – and, when the moment came, the fifth candle of Christmas. We learned that Christmas was the story of God's gift to us. So beyond Boxing Day, traditionally the day for the distribution of alms, had to be about our giving of ourselves to God and to each other.

Just before midnight, as we all moved forward for the Christmas Greeting – a sort of Communion without Communion, a mass Kiss of Peace, we sang a Graham Kendrick carol I had not encountered before, to a good rousing tune:

*Good news, good news to you we bring. Alleluia!
News of great joy that angels sing. Alleluia!*

*Tender mercy
He has shown us
Joy to all the world
For us God sends his only Son
Alleluia!*

*Let earth's dark shadows fly away. Alleluia!
In Christ has dawned an endless day. Alleluia!*

*Now God with us on earth resides. Alleluia!
And heaven's door is open wide. Alleluia!*

For sheer joy it would be hard to beat. Now I know what Rowan Williams meant when he said that sometimes he feels that he needs to sing 'Blessed Assurance' and bang a tambourine.

Q: How do you see yourself in relation to the reformed and evangelical side of our tradition?

*A: It is something that I think became very important to me at one or two points when I needed it as a kind of corrective to what can be a slightly precious and elitist anglo-catholicism. Sometimes you just need to sing *Blessed Assurance* and hit a tambourine. You just need to know that there is something profoundly simple about what an evangelical would rightly call a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and that nothing substitutes for that.*

All this recalled for me my last and only previous Presbyterian Christmas, 30 years ago in Belfast. In the Belmont Presbyterian Church near Stormont, the Rev John Young insisted on a black and white view of the Incarnation. It was no good buying into the ethic of 'good will' if you did not also accept Jesus as the Son of God. Quoting the local boy C. S. Lewis ('who used to live in Circular Road'), he challenged his respectable middle class congregation: either Jesus is the Son of God - or he isn't and you should take no more notice of him than a madman who claims to be a poached egg!

He was quoting Lewis's classic *Mere Christianity*:

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a

great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

Now, how many Anglican sermons stick in the mind for 30 years?

My Christmas 2007 has taken in the Hail Marys of the St James's Islington Carol Service, the incense of St Andrew's Holborn, the Christ Church nativity play, and the exuberance of the West Kirk. All of them affirming, in their own way:

*He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
and His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and meek and lowly,
lived on earth our Savior holy.*

*And our eyes at last shall see Him,
through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle,
is our Lord in heaven above,
And He leads His children on,
to the place where He is gone.*

*Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars
His children crowned,
all in white shall wait around.*

Chris Graham

A Good Headline



On Advent Sunday Cliff preached an honest and charitable sermon on homosexuality and the threatened schism of the Anglican Communion. I imagine that most people listening were sympathetic to some of what Cliff said and less comfortable with, or even outraged by, other parts. His sermon followed a Radio 4 programme in which Michael Buerk presented extracts of an interview with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, together with comments from a range of conservative Christians, from Catholics to Evangelicals.

Comments on the web suggest that people of all points of view were angered by the programme, so it was probably more or less even-handed. I would have preferred to have heard Tutu respond directly to some of the arguments against his position.

The contributors, Anne Widdecombe and George Carey among them, all had some persuasive arguments, but each also offered opinions which would have been quickly knocked down in a discussion. On the liberal side, Tutu suggested that because homosexuality exists, God made it and so it must be good. The same argument would imply that death, disease and everything we find in the world is also good. Clearly, we cannot deduce from God having made something that it is good. We need to think a little bit harder than that.



The more hard-line conservatives failed to see a much deeper inconsistency in their own position: one that Cliff touched on in his sermon. The problem is a fundamental one if asserting that the Bible is unreservedly and unconditionally true; the Word of God; giving timeless truth; handed to us by the saints. That would give us an easy set of rules to follow. However, the Bible is not a book of rules—it is a gift from God and a staggering human achievement, full of life and love and light. There are rules in there, but we don't follow them all and most reasonable people would be aghast if we did. As Cliff hinted, rigid books of rules have a tendency to lead to violence.

Since we don't follow all of the Old Testament rules, we say that *those* rules aren't for us. We'll stick with the New Testament. Well, no! If we can use our reason to decide that prohibitions on tattoos or planting two kinds of seeds in a single field might not be absolutely essential for our eternal salvation, or that execution is a harsh punishment for adultery, then the game is up. Either the Bible is literally "true" from start to finish or we have to use our reason, our common sense, to interpret it. Once this

is stated clearly, it's embarrassingly obvious. Either we take creationism, stoning, and the whole lot or we use our reason. If we try to choose which bits of the Bible to take strictly and literally, we open the whole of it up for question.



Most adults in this country grew up in an atmosphere where male homosexuality was either illegal or barely tolerated; where gay men were regularly beaten up; where school bullying generally included accusations of homosexuality. Only recently has it been acceptable for a public figure to be openly gay. With this level of indoctrination, how do we judge clearly? Is the church's traditional teaching a lone light in a darkening world, or the last flickers of a fire of hate?

A Gospel story mentioned briefly in the broadcast was Jesus' comment on the legality of remarriage after divorce. Jesus said that except in cases of adultery, remarriage is adulterous, yet there has not yet been any threat of schism arising from priests who bless second marriages, and no threats of stoning remarried couples coming from African churches.

In fact, Tutu's main argument was not about homosexuality, but about love, about charity, and it was here that a face to face confrontation would surely have shamed the other contributors, as they exhorted inconsistent adherence to rules, twisted irrelevant passages and scabbled for shreds of scriptural cloth to cover the nakedness of their argument.



People are hungry, Tutu said. They are oppressed and sick and in prison and Jesus didn't tend to such people because he was demonstrating some universal truth. He did it because that's what we should do too. That is love. That is his command to us. Tutu said that a church which is tearing itself in two to defend a position which has promoted hatred and violence, a position which has no reasonable defence, is an embarrassment. Worse, is an abomination and he is filled with shame to call himself a member of that church.

It makes a good headline: Archbishop ashamed to be an Anglican. A more accurate headline would be 'Archbishop calls for hungry to be fed' or 'Archbishop calls for oppressed to be set free'. Amidst the world's suffering and wickedness, the church's bickering over sexuality is an irrelevance when we could stand with the Archbishop, crying in the wilderness, proclaiming the year of the Lord's favour.

David Marles

Prayer Cycle for January

January

- Tues* 1 We rededicate ourselves, and the coming year, to the service of Jesus.
- Wed* 2 That those in authority may be humble, honest and trustworthy.
- Thurs* 3 For all who are coming to terms with the death of a loved one; for those who are bearing a grief which they cannot share.
- Fri* 4 For intelligent interfaith dialogue; for all those affected by acts of terrorism.
- Sat* 5 For the work of the Mission to Seafarers.
- Sun* 6 That the Lord may be made known to us, and that we may be faithful in making him known to all we meet.
- Mon* 7 For all those who have been baptised in the last year. For ourselves, that we may be given grace to be true to our calling.
- Tues* 8 For the people of Bath. For all who visit the city.
- Wed* 9 For David, our Treasurer.
- Thurs* 10 For our Local Ministry Group; that it may be a light in the city of Bath.
- Fri* 11 For Rowan our Archbishop and for Peter our Bishop. For all Anglican Bishops and Primates.
- Sat* 12 For Angela, our Verger.
- Sun* 13 For our Clergy Team.
- Mon* 14 For Emma, Margaret and Sarah, our Deanery Synod representatives.
- Tues* 15 For our branch of the Mother's Union.
- Wed* 16 For our Church Council, meeting tonight, that they may be led by the Holy Spirit in all their discussions.
- Thurs* 17 That rich countries may wake up to the disproportionate damage their societies do to the earth.

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- Fri 18** For Christians throughout the world. For those persecuted for their faith.
- Sat 19** For Mark, David and the choir. For a spirit of joy in our worship of the Lord.
- Sun 20** For Angela and Chris, our Churchwardens; for Frank and Yvonne, our Deputy Churchwardens.
- Mon 21** For the Cedar Tree project; for Nicky and all the helpers; for our local community.
- Tues 22** For the work of Julian House. For all who have no place they call their home.
- Wed 23** For Judith, who prepares our weekly notice sheet.
- Thurs 24** For the work of Dorothy House, for those benefiting from its care and for their families.
- Fri 25** For Cyril and Mark our Readers; for Sarah's ministry at Batheaston .
- Sat 26** For those who work for the Emergency Services.
- Sun 27** For all our readers, chalice assistants, intercessors and sidespeople. For Sarah, who draws up the Laity Rotas.
- Mon 28** For Nicky, our Magazine Editor.
- Tues 29** For intelligent interfaith dialogue; for all those affected by acts of terrorism.
- Wed 30** For countries where unstable political structures are causing violence and oppression.
- Thurs 31** We thank God for the blessings of the month now ending.
- 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.

DID YOU KNOW the answers to the Christmas Quiz?

DID YOU KNOW the tree that grows in Glastonbury and flowers at Christmas is the Thorn or Hawthorn, but probably a Mediterranean variety. Did Joseph bring it here?



Baldur was killed by a spear from a tree on which mistletoe was growing. Ever since medieval times a kissing bough has been part of Christmas celebrations, containing mistletoe, holly and ivy.



Our commonest evergreen is the holly. Often associated with the Crown of Thorns, probably because of the red berries.

Our only liana, which also kills grapevines and was claimed to be a cure for drunkenness, is the ivy.

The plant which is said to flower on January 5th and known as the Myrrh, is also known as Sweet Cicely.

A symbol of Candlemas is the Snowdrop.

The most likely carol is: The Holly and the Ivy.



Lammas land, uncut meadows, encourage growth of the Autmun Crocus.

This seems to be an isolated and unexplained custom: on a Sunday near Christmas a small group of men carry conifer trees into this village church near Lancaster.



I hope you've worked out a 10th question for me.

Cyril Selmes

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Deanery Synod / Laity Rotas / Junior Church	Sarah Hiscock, 2 Mortimer Close, Bath BA1 4EN 07983 556759
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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 concerts@christchurchbath.org

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

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