



*A Happy and a Holy Christmas to all!*



# Christ Church *Link*

December 2023 ● Number 140 ● 50p where sold

## Thine is the victory

*From the priest-in-charge...*

**Revd Lore Chumbley writes:**

As I write this there is a pause in hostilities in the Holy Land – not a ceasefire but a brief cessation for the exchange of hostages. I fear that by the time you read this hostilities will have resumed. The killing and destruction of God’s chosen people by God’s chosen people is an abomination and as it continues there is danger that it will draw more of the countries of the world into the destruction.

All four of my grandparents lived through two world wars and never spoke of it, except that my English

grandmother would say with feeling, “I hate waste.”

It was surely reckless waste for God to risk the Incarnation. And yet, Christ emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and allowed himself to be taken hostage and executed by a partnership between religious authorities who believed they were obeying the living God, and Roman authorities representing the epitome of civilisation. Neither group seems to have had much time for the humility, story telling and prayer which the disciples saw in Jesus. ▶

*Continued on page 2*



*Bishop Ruth presided and many old friends returned to celebrate our 225th anniversary. See inside.*

# Thine is the victory

*Continued from page 1*

▶ Humility, story telling and prayer seem weak things to set against the religious authority of the High Priest and the military power of Rome, and yet the High Priest and the Roman Empire are long gone. The resurrected Christ is the one after whom we are called, the one whom we worship and the one with whom we will celebrate the glory of Christmas – the point of entry for God into the world.

So I won't wish you a happy Christmas in spite of the war and death in the world, but because in Christ, God has conquered war and death. Have a blessed Advent and, when it comes, a happy and a holy Christmas.



*Lore and our Churchwardens, Jane and Jonathan, with Bishop Ruth after our celebration service.*



*No celebration would be complete without the traditional cakes decorated by Jo Palmer.*

# Curate's Corner

**Revd Kara Maylor writes:**

I hope you all enjoyed the wonderful 225th anniversary celebrations a few weeks ago. What a privilege it was to be part of such a gathering and a celebration of what has been and what will be.

As we begin Advent I have been impacted by the book that Bren is using for her Advent Group. Sadly I have not been able to join them, but I love the way the book leads us through this season. David Cole says: "Advent is a time of waiting – not an idle waiting but an active and pragmatic waiting. For the Celtic Christians, it was a time to look both towards the coming Christ and also within themselves. It was a time to 'prepare the way for the Lord, make straight... a highway for our God' (Isaiah 40:3), both within themselves and also in the world in which they lived."

It is as true for us today as it was back then. In our world that so desperately needs the light of Jesus let us in this season prepare our hearts and minds to do this. As you cwtch up and keep warm in front of a roaring fire with a comforting drink, think and pray about how we are being prepared for our next season as part of our welcoming and inclusive Christ Church community.



*On 26 November Maggie Willans and Morný Davison formally presented the donor board commemorating those whose generosity made possible the refurbishment of our bells in 2014.*

# You are warmly invited...

## **Jane Nicholson writes:**

There were no less than 140 names past and present that came to mind when I was asked to collate the “guest list” on behalf of Christ Church to celebrate 225 glorious years. It was such a privilege. I would like to share with you how people responded. It fills one’s heart with such joy.

“Thank you for your kind invitation. Sending Christ Church love, prayers and our very best wishes.”

“So very pleased to be remembered and included and look forward to attending.”

“Thrilled to be included. Thank you so much for remembering our family.”

“Have a wonderful time and thinking of you as you celebrate.”

“Christ Church remains really special to me even decades on. I would have loved to be there.”

“So moved that Christ Church remembers our beloved parents in such high esteem.”

“Sadly we are unable to attend this wonderful occasion. We hold you all in our prayers as you celebrate. Sending our very best wishes!”

“A joy and great pleasure to accept.”

“We look forward to this wonderful occasion.”

“Have a wonderful festal eucharist. Sadly we are unable to attend. Thank you so much for the lovely invitation.”

“Dear friends at Christ Church, thank you so much for your kind invitation. Unfortunately I am unable to be with you as I am celebrating my 90th birthday with family. Sending you as always my love, thoughts and prayers.”

“Thank you for the kind invitation to Christ Church. We are unable to attend sadly as I have a service to take on that day.”

“It was a privilege to be at this special occasion. Each generation has made its way of serving God and the wider community, and the present church community with the leadership of Revd Lore has that at the heart.”

## *Christ Church* **225**

“All looking lovely and ready. Christ Church at her very best.”

“Thank you. The flowers are beautiful and you can be very proud of the church building and people.”

The words of gratitude, of love and appreciation flowed, to be remembered, to be included, to be welcomed. Amen.



*Some of the splendid flower arrangements that decorated the church for our 225th anniversary celebration. Photos courtesy of Jane Nicholson*

# Make it an Eco Advent

## **From the Diocese of Bath and Wells:**

This year across Bath and Wells, church and school communities, as well as families, are being encouraged to have an Eco Advent. You can join in and combine the spirit of Advent with a commitment to the environment as you enjoy an eco-friendly journey to the manger... from the comfort of your own home.

Every day, as the countdown to Christmas continues, you can explore ways to reflect on and appreciate God's creation and share simple actions to take care of it better. Through Eco Advent, each day leading up to Christmas can be meaningful, both spiritually and environmentally.

"More and more people are aware of the environmental impact of Christmas and as Christians, of course, we are committed to caring for creation," says Ruth Slade, Growing Faith and Everyday Faith Adviser. "We wanted to offer a fun resource to both celebrate our journey to Christmas and at the same time reflect on our duty to care for this beautiful world that God has gifted us.

"We are offering daily Bible verses, prayers and reflections. In addition, everyone can join us in our Advent journey by first setting up a starry spiral path to a manger, and follow the daily tasks we are sharing on our website and social media channels. In true eco-fashion, there's no need to buy any special resources, just use what you have to hand to craft what you need to create your starry spiral and manger."

A helpful guide to joining in with Eco Advent is available to download from [www.bathandwells.org.uk/eco-advent](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/eco-advent), where you will also find the daily Advent tasks. They will also be shared on the diocesan Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) feeds.



# Christmas invitation

Last December, thousands of churches extended "The Great Invitation" from the Church of England to *Follow the Star* to their local church in person once again. Helped, of course, by a return to a more normal Christmas, 2022's *Follow the Star* saw significant growth in engagement across a wide range of indicators.

This year's theme – *Follow the Star: Join the Song* – highlights how singing can help draw us closer to God and each other through the journey from Advent to Epiphany.

*"The shepherds were astonished to find the night sky filled with angels singing God's praise. And before long they were singing, too... Centuries later, singing is still central to how many of us celebrate Christmas.*

*"We invite you this Christmas to follow the star, journey to the manger, join the song and come into the presence of Jesus Christ."*

– Archbishops Justin Welby  
and Stephen Cottrell

A range of resources is now available to help churches, choirs, singing groups, schools and communities to take part, including a Reflections Booklet, Prayer Bookmark, Family Prayer Card and Advent Calendar from Church House Publishing, plus family activities, pop-up nativity plan and online Advent reflections for all ages via the Follow The Star app, which is now available for iOS or Android, along with more information, at the website at <https://bit.ly/follow-the-star-2023>.



# Bishop's Message for December

*A unique story*



**From the Rt Revd Michael Beasley,  
Bishop of Bath and Wells**

When I speak to my Mum on my birthday, she often recalls to me the events that surrounded my arrival in the world. These include nearly being born in the hospital lift, my older brother being smuggled in to see me under my dad's overcoat and of various aunts sneaking onto the maternity ward out of visiting hours by wearing their WRVS uniforms.

Each of us has a unique story about our birth. At Christmas we'll be recounting once again the story that we share about another birth – the birth of Jesus. Across the world we'll be retelling and re-enacting what happened in Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago. We'll recall the journey of Mary and Joseph, the birth in the stable, the arrival of the shepherds, the song of the angels, the visit of the Magi.

Our own birth stories are unique to each of us. Jesus's is common to us all. And not just because we all know about it. For in our recollection of the birth of Jesus, we'll also be remembering that in him, God came to be at one with us. In Jesus God arrived to share fully in

our humanity, experiencing complete solidarity with every aspect of our human condition. Jesus is "God with us" – in trenches in Ukraine, bomb shelters in Israel and Gaza, in hospital wards where loved ones die, in relationships where there is conflict and distress.

Just as much as he is with us in our greatest joys and our deepest woes, Jesus is also for us. One of the earliest teachers of the Church said this: "He became what we are so that we might become what he is." The baby born in Bethlehem stands with us not only in all that we experience. This child also comes to offer us the possibility of opening every part of our lives to the transforming power of God's life of love and joy and peace. He comes so that every day we can become a little more like him.

This is the good news of Christmas, and may it be yours this year.

A very Merry Christmas to you all.

**+Michael**

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## Our seasonal services

- Advent Carol Service – 6:30pm,  
Sunday 10 December
- Eucharist with Nativity Play – 10am,  
Sunday 17 December
- LGBT+ Affirming Carol Service – 7pm,  
Sunday 17 December, Oasis Church Bath
- A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols for  
Christmas – 6:30pm Saturday 23 December
- Candlelit Crib Service – 4:30pm,  
Christmas Eve, Sunday 24 December
- Midnight Mass – 11:30pm,  
Christmas Eve, Sunday 24 December
- Christmas Morning Eucharist – 10am,  
Christmas Day, Monday 25 December

# Christ Church calendar Dec. 2023

1 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**3 Sun** *The First Sunday of Advent*  
10am Eucharist

7 Thu 11am Eucharist

8 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**10 Sun** *The Second Sunday of Advent*  
8am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10am Eucharist  
6:30pm Advent Carol Service

14 Thu 11am Eucharist  
Pilgrim Group meeting, 7:30pm

15 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**17 Sun** *The Third Sunday of Advent*  
10am Eucharist with Nativity Play  
4:30pm Choral Evensong (TBC)  
LGBT+ Affirming Carol Service, Oasis Church, 7pm

21 Thu 11am Eucharist

22 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

23 Sat 6:30pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas

**24 Sun** *The Fourth Sunday of Advent / Christmas Eve*  
10am Eucharist  
4:30pm Candlelit Crib Service  
11:30pm Midnight Mass

25 Mon *Christmas Day*  
10am Eucharist

26 Tue *Boxing Day / Stephen, the first martyr*

27 Wed *John, Apostle and Evangelist*

28 Thu *The Holy Innocents*  
11am Eucharist

29 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**31 Sun** *The First Sunday of Christmas*  
10am Eucharist

**Jan** 1 Mon *New Year's Day / The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus*

4 Thu 11am Eucharist

5 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

6 Sat *The Epiphany*

7 Sun *The First Sunday of Epiphany / The Baptism of Christ*  
10am Eucharist

**Our Sunday 10am Eucharist, and other services as advertised, continue to be live-streamed at** [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath](http://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath)

**Got an event you want to let everyone know about? Send an e-mail with all the details to [magazine@christchurchbath.org](mailto:magazine@christchurchbath.org). For the weekly notice sheet, e-mail [notices@christchurchbath.org](mailto:notices@christchurchbath.org)**

## This month's charities: for Bath's vulnerable

*The loose collection on the second and fourth Sundays of this month – 10 and 24 December – plus other collections at services this month as notified will be divided between Julian House and The Genesis Trust. (Donations in collection envelopes will continue to go to Christ Church.)*

As a Christian charity, Genesis works with local churches and volunteers in the wider community in Bath and the surrounding area to help disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and families to change their lives. Offering immediate practical help with food, clothing and furniture, as well as long-term opportunities, training and work experience, Genesis supports people on their journey from crisis to independence.

For more information on the charity's activities, visit <https://genesistrust.org.uk>. For

more about its Christmas appeal, plus links to ways to donate and ways to buy the Genesis Christmas cards or Calendar, visit <https://genesistrust.org.uk/about/christmas-page>.



Julian House is a Bath-based charity working across the South West supporting vulnerable and at-risk individuals including men, women and young people experiencing homelessness, women and children escaping domestic abuse, adults with learning difficulties and people who need support after leaving prison.

The charity says: "Homelessness doesn't take a break, especially during the festive season. For our Christmas appeal we want to raise awareness of the reason why the people we support have fallen into difficult circumstances. These can include domestic abuse, mental health issues, family breakdown, childhood trauma and addiction." Find out more or donate online at [www.julianhouse.org.uk](http://www.julianhouse.org.uk).



# Prayer Cycle for December 2023

<b>Friday</b>	<b>1</b>	For the unemployed
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>2</b>	For those who work in the hospitality industry
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>3</b>	For all clergy taking services at Christ Church
<b>Monday</b>	<b>4</b>	For those who work in the emergency services
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>5</b>	For the ministry of hospices
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>6</b>	For our own personal witness
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>7</b>	For countries which have experienced storms and flooding
<b>Friday</b>	<b>8</b>	For our neighbours at St Mary's Catholic Church
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>9</b>	For those who are persecuted for their faith
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10</b>	For Jane and Jonathan our Churchwardens
<b>Monday</b>	<b>11</b>	For scientists and engineers
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>12</b>	For peace
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>13</b>	For those who are confined to their homes
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>14</b>	We give thanks for the wonders of creation
<b>Friday</b>	<b>15</b>	For those who use and run food banks
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>16</b>	For the Trustees of Christ Church
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>17</b>	For the ministry of our Junior Church
<b>Monday</b>	<b>18</b>	For those who work in local government
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>19</b>	For those on our long-term prayer list
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>20</b>	For those who have suffered from terrorism
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>21</b>	That we may have the gift of faith
<b>Friday</b>	<b>22</b>	For the sick and suffering
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>23</b>	For our charities of the month, Julian House and Genesis



<b>Sunday</b>	<b>24</b>	For our servers and others who assist at the altar
<b>Monday</b>	<b>25</b>	Thanksgiving for the Incarnation
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>26</b>	For Colin and all clergy spouses
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>27</b>	For those preparing for marriage or recently married
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>28</b>	For those on holiday
<b>Friday</b>	<b>29</b>	For those who are unable to keep warm
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>30</b>	For carers
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>31</b>	We give thanks for the blessings of the past year

## Long-term Prayer List

*Please remember those we've been asked to pray for...*

Chris  
David  
Hui Tao Ling  
Jean and John  
Joyce K  
John and Sheila  
Kat  
A J Kninchi  
Roger and Francis  
Evelyn  
Mary Elizabeth Bull  
Natalia Bull  
Sheila  
Win

Jon and family  
Margaret  
Doug

**Want to add a name to the prayer list, long-term or short-term, or remove one? Please use the lists at the back of the church, or speak to Lore, the Verger or one of the Churchwardens.**

## A unique step of faith

It was a joyous day in Wells Cathedral on Saturday 4 November when 86 people of all ages and from all parts of the diocese were confirmed by Bishop Michael, Bishop Ruth and Bishop Christopher.

“What an amazing afternoon,” said Bishop Michael. “It has been such a privilege to be with so many different people, each with their own story, each taking their unique step of faith and looking forward to the future.”



Photo: Diocese of Bath and Wells

# Rotas for December 2023

*Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist*

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
<b>10 Dec</b> Second Sunday of Advent	<b>Jonathan Stead</b> Isaiah 40:1-11	<b>Judith Bishop</b> 2 Peter 3:8-15a	<b>Robin Kerr</b> Mark 1:1-8
	Intercessions: <b>Peter Bowes</b>		
<b>17 Dec</b> Third Sunday of Advent	<b>Brenda Wall</b> Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	<b>Angela Soboslay</b> 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	<b>David Bishop</b> John 1:6-8, 19-28
	Intercessions: <b>Georgina Bowman</b>		
<b>24 Dec</b> 4th Sun- day of Advent / Xmas Eve	<b>Peter Bowes</b> 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16	<b>TBC</b> Romans 16:25-27	<b>Morny Davison</b> Luke 1:26-38
	Intercessions: <b>Jonathan Stead</b>		
<b>24 Dec</b> Midnight Mass	<b>Judith Bishop</b> Isaiah 9:2-7	<b>Simon Tatton- Brown</b> Titus 2:11-14	<b>Jonathan Stead</b> Luke 2:1-14
	Intercessions: <b>Mark Elliott</b>		
<b>25 Dec</b> Christmas Day	<b>Jane Hoe</b> Isaiah 52:7-10	<b>Mark Elliott</b> Hebrews 1:1-4	<b>Zoë Bushell</b> John 1:1-14
	Intercessions: <b>Simon Tatton-Brown</b>		
<b>31 Dec</b> First Sunday of Cristmas	<b>Simon Tatton- Brown</b> Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3	<b>Georgina Bowman</b> Galatians 4:4-7	<b>Peter Bowes</b> Luke 2:15-21
	Intercessions: <b>Kara Maylor</b>		
<b>7 January</b> Epiphany	<b>Emma Elliott</b> Isaiah 60:1-6	<b>Angela Soboslay</b> Ephesians 3:1-12	<b>Kara Maylor</b> Matthew 2:1-12
	Intercessions: <b>Jonathan Stead</b>		

# Who's who at Christ Church

<b>Priest-in-charge</b>	Revd Lore Chumbley 07595 294146 lore.chumbley@me.com	<b>Organist and Assistant Director of Music</b>	David Winters david.winters@christchurchbath.org
<b>Curate</b>	Revd Kara Maylor	<b>Deanery Synod Reps</b>	Brenda Wall Pauline Swaby-Wallace
<b>Supporting clergy</b>	Revd Canon Simon Tatton-Brown 01225 835404 simon@tattonbrown.myzen.co.uk	<b>Christ Church Link editor</b>	Alex Soboslay 07769 655927 alexs@christchurchbath.org
	Revd Beryl Bowes Revd Dr Peter Bowes	<b>Tower Captain, Ringing Master</b>	Will Willans
<b>Reader, Director of Music</b>	Mark Elliott 01225 445360 mark.elliott@christchurchbath.org	<b>Tower Secretary</b>	Maggie Willans 07773 244024 maggiewillans@hotmail.com
<b>Churchwarden</b>	Jane Nicholson 07990 552413 jane@janemnicholson.com	<b>Steeple Keeper</b>	David Kelly
<b>Churchwarden</b>	Jonathan Stead jonathanstead20@gmail.com	<b>Cedar Tree café organiser</b>	Jenny Hesketh jenny.hesketh@me.com
<b>Verger</b>	Angela Soboslay 01225 333297 angela.soboslay@christchurchbath.org	<b>Junior Church</b>	Emma Elliott
<b>Chair of Trustees</b>	Nick Wells 07774 104584 chair@christchurchbath.org	<b>Laity rotas</b>	Judith Bishop
<b>Treasurer</b>	Zoë Bushell zoe.bushell@christchurchbath.org	<b>Prayer cycle</b>	Virginia Knight
<b>Event/concert bookings, weekly notice sheet</b>	Judith Bishop 01225 858816 concerts@christchurchbath.org notices@christchurchbath.org	<b>Charitable Giving co-ordinator</b>	Jonathan Stead
<b>Safeguarding officer</b>	Virginia Knight 07896 916840 christchbathsafeguarding@gmail.com	<b>Mission to Seafarers</b>	Sylvia Ayers

## Christ Church Link

This magazine is published on the first Sunday of each month. Please send any contributions of news and articles by the 15th of the preceding month to the editor; Alex Soboslay, or by e-mail to [magazine@christchurchbath.org](mailto:magazine@christchurchbath.org)



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

# About Christ Church

*We're a liberal, inclusive and open church,  
seeking God through beauty in our worship, honesty  
in our faith and doubt, and support in our community*

Christ Church has an unusual history, out of which has developed a distinctive ministry. It was founded at the end of the 18th century by a group of socially concerned clergy and lay people for those excluded from worship through the system of pew rents. It was probably the first church in England since the Reformation to provide seating for all free of charge. Early supporters included John Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, and William Wilberforce, the great evangelical and campaigner against slavery. We must recognise, however, that much of Bath's wealth at the time derived, directly or indirectly, from the trafficking and exploitation of enslaved human beings, so that inevitably some of the funds donated ultimately derived from this source.

Christ Church is not a parish church and does not have a full-time vicar. This has led to the development of a shared ministry where clergy and laity both make important contributions to worship and church life.

Christ Church is part of the Anglican diocese of Bath and Wells, although it still sits outside the Church of England

parish system. We see ourselves as a traditional and liberal Anglican church. Worship is led by our clergy, and music is provided by our robed choir and organist. New singers of all ages are always very welcome.

As well as worship on Sundays and Thursdays, there are many other activities going on in our community, including our weekly community café every Friday. Our ecumenical Pilgrim Group provides a space for exploration and discussion of faith in an open and non-judgemental setting. Visit the website to check service times and events.

## Regular Sunday services

- 8am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) – *On the second Sunday of every month*
- 10am Sung Eucharist with Junior Church activities for children and young people – *Every Sunday – also streamed at [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath](http://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath)*
- 4:30pm Choral Evensong – *Usually on the third Sunday of each month*
- 5pm Contemplative Quiet Service (Iona) – *On the fourth Sunday of every month*

Baptisms, marriages and funerals by arrangement – please contact us!

## Contacting us

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