



## Welcome, Heather!

*Our new Priest-in-charge joins us this month*

**Nick Wells, Chair of the Trustees of Christ Church, writes:**

The Christ Church community eagerly awaits the licensing of our new Priest-in-charge, the Revd Heather Smith, by Rt Revd Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton, on Tuesday 4 February at 7pm, and extends a truly warm welcome to Heather and her husband Jeremy as they join us.

Heather introduces herself in the Order of Service for the Licensing and Installation, writing:

I'm delighted to be joining the community here at Christ Church and looking forward to working together to further God's Kingdom.

I come to you from the benefice of Rowde and Bromham, two villages in Wiltshire where I have served as Associate Priest for five years. This was a self-supporting post and I have worked alongside it as a writer and editor, both of business documentation and as Managing Editor for Church of England publisher Hymns Ancient and Modern. There I am responsible for their portfolio of small periodicals – a part-time role I will continue for the time being.

I'm excited by the Christ Church open and inclusive approach, as well as by the fabulous music tradition. My wider interests include interfaith work, peacebuilding, working with those who are disadvantaged, and encouraging creativity as a way of encountering God.

I hope our journey together will

be full of joy, as we learn from each other about the God we strive to know better and work to serve our community.

Please do join us on 4 February (or online) to share in this joyful occasion.

■ *On Tuesday 4 February at 7pm, the Service of Installation and Celebration of a New Ministry will be live-streamed at [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath/live](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath/live) and [www.youtube.com/@ChristChurchBath1798/streams](https://www.youtube.com/@ChristChurchBath1798/streams)*



*Revd Heather Smith, our new Priest-in-charge.*

# Our welcome to children

## **Emma Elliott writes:**

If you have been in the St Michael's Chapel recently, you may have noticed a new prayer station. It has been put there with the children in mind, but all are welcome. The children call St Michael's Chapel *The Dragon Chapel*, because of the image in the stained glass, and you may spot their own dragon, who lives in the chapel as well!

In our prayer for Junior Church in our Family Communion Service, we are regularly reminded that Jesus invited the children to come to him, and spoke of their special place in the kingdom of God's people. Children have spiritual needs, just like adults. They want to understand who they are and what their purpose is. They need to feel loved unconditionally, by God and by those around them, who nurture them as they grow in their faith. They are learning to have courage, and at times may feel the need for healing. We

often describe our church as like a family. It should be a place of safety, where children can be surrounded by a community of love and grow in faith as they start out on their journey through life. Some say that the children are the church of the future. This may be true, but they are also the church of today.

At a recent meeting, the Church Council discussed our welcome to children at Christ Church. We have had a welcome card to give parents of children for some time, but this was put in front of Council for their endorsement, and Council discussed how we could make its message more widely known to the congregation in addition to those who attend with children. As well as practical information, it sets out to provide a warm embrace to children and their parents, and it sets out our ethos. A copy of our welcome card is pinned at the back of the church. Please take a look.

As a church family, we are not here to judge one another. We aim to support, celebrate, encourage, and pray for each other: whether young or old, tired or full of energy, confident or unsure, leading worship or coming to church for the first time.

The card ends with this prayer:

*God our creator, we thank you for the gift of children, and we pray for those who nurture them. May we serve them so that through our welcome they may come to know your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



*The children's prayer station in our St Michael's chapel, with at least one dragon watching over it. Photo courtesy of Jane Nicholson*

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## Lore's sermons

There are still some copies available of the selection of Lore Chumbley's sermons titled *Stories from Julian Road*. Suggested donation £10 per copy, by cash or card. If you can't get to Christ Church to buy a copy, please get in touch. Many thanks to Mornay Davison for sponsoring this project.

# Lent theme 2025: “Living Hope”

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, falls on 5 March this year. The Church of England’s Lent theme for 2025 is *Living Hope*.

In Lent we journey with Jesus on the difficult and thorny road that leads all the way to the cross on Good Friday – and beyond, to the transformation of Easter Day.

God invites us to bring to Him our own journey through everyday life. In the disappointment of daily setbacks and the pain of deeper hurts, we discover that God is present with us. And God promises a future where all things are healed and made new.

*Living Hope* offers us the opportunity to deepen our hope in God and be part of what God is doing to bring hope in the world.

The readings and reflections explore how we can have hope in times of frustration or uncertainty; the hope found in joining with others; the invitation to notice signs of hope

around us; the courage to face reality and pursue a hopeful future; and the ways God transforms death into life at Easter.

There are resources available for churches, schools and individuals, including webinars for Lent and Easter, downloadable activity sheets for children, and more. You can sign up to receive daily e-mails with Lent reflections, Bible readings and prayers linked to daily themes, or read and listen to daily Lent reflections from 5 March through the Everyday Faith app, the new daily devotional app from the Church of England. For details of all these, visit <https://bit.ly/living-hope-2025>.



## Synod to consider structure of safeguarding

Safeguarding is often – and often has to be – a largely unseen process, and this may mean we fail to recognise and acknowledge the dedicated work of people such as our own safeguarding officer, Virginia Knight. Thank you, Virginia, for all you do!

On a larger scale, General Synod, meeting in London on 10–14 February, will consider two possible models for delivering and scrutinising safeguarding for the Church of England.

In one of the models, safeguarding officers currently working in dioceses, cathedrals and the national Church would transfer to work for a new organisation. In the other model, diocesan and cathedral officers would remain with their current employers but most national staff would move to a new body. In both cases safeguarding work would be scrutinised by a second external body.

Synod will also be asked to approve new safeguarding codes of practice including guidance on managing allegations.

The Bishop of Stepney, Dr Joanne Grenfell, the C of E’s Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, said:

“The proposals on safeguarding independence are the product of a huge amount of work and feedback from across the Church, including from victims and survivors.”

Synod will also consider the wider use of prayers for blessing same-sex couples, racial justice, and the role of sport in Christian outreach, among other matters. Find out more at <https://bit.ly/synod-safeguarding-2025>.



Bishop Joanne Grenfell addressing General Synod last February. Photo: Geoff Crawford/Church Times

## Caring for community

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

Community is at the heart of who we are, a gift from God that calls us to live in relationship with one another. At its best, community reflects God's love – where people come together, share burdens, celebrate joys and support one another through life's challenges. Our faith inspires us to look beyond ourselves. It reminds us that true strength lies in the bonds we build with one another, guided by God's presence among us.

At Christmas more than 300 people from all parts of the rural community of Exmoor came together to celebrate as one. Singing in the Ring at Exmoor Farmers Livestock Market was a celebration of Christ's birth but also an opportunity to give thanks for all who are part of their community, and the support and care they offer one another.

Revd David Weir, Rector of Exmoor Benefice, helped organise the event. "The cattle market is a very significant place for people here on Exmoor," he said. "Week in, week out, people gather to buy and sell cattle and sheep. Singing in the Ring is a lovely opportunity to gather in a different way and celebrate all the life that gathers around the market. It is about mutual support for the agricultural community, a very special community."

In a world that often feels fragmented and isolated, community offers us a sense of belonging and purpose. As we walk this journey of life, we do so hand in hand, reflecting God's love and sharing His light with the world.



*Singing in the Ring at Exmoor Farmers' Market.  
Photo: Leanna Coles / Diocese of Bath & Wells*

## Parish Giving Scheme

As Mark suggested in his sermon on 26 January, one expression of community is how members contribute, giving of their talents as well as financial resources in response to God's incredible generosity. On the financial side, he mentioned that it is now possible to give to Christ Church through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS).

Giving by individuals is essential to secure our church's ability to serve its community and share our faith and God's love with those around us. For our church to grow and plan for the future, we rely on your regular gifts. How much you give is a matter for your personal and prayerful reflection, as we respond to God's grace and generosity. Money takes up a lot of time in admin. If you use PGS, more of your money and our volunteers' time can be devoted to God's mission.

Through PGS you can give one-off amounts or give monthly, quarterly or annually by Direct Debit, and even give anonymously. You can set up regular giving online at [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk), by phone, or using a form available from our Treasurer, Zoë Bushell.

Whichever way you choose to sign up, you will need the following information:

- your personal bank account details
- the church's name: Bath Christ Church
- the PGS code for it: 010601241

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can simply tick the relevant box to add Gift Aid to your giving, which amounts to a significant extra. You can also opt to increase your gift each year by inflation (subject to your confirmation each year), which helps maintain its value to the church without any effort on your part.

You are in total control of the amount you give, and Christ Church will receive 100% of your gift and associated Gift Aid – the admin costs of the scheme are covered by the diocese. PGS means a regular income stream for the church, which aids efficient planning, with reduced administration for us, particularly in claiming Gift Aid.

A leaflet is available from the church with more information about PGS, or you can find out more at [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk).

# Diocesan Message for February

*Reflecting God's love*



**From the Very Revd Toby Wright,  
Dean of Wells**

Someone once asked the great Anglican monastic theologian Herbert Kelly this question: "How do we know what the will of God is?" He famously answered, "We don't. That's the joke."

Kelly is right: we can't know precisely what God's will is in a certain situation. But we can open up opportunities for God to "come through" our actions, and building community is a key way of doing this. In any situation we can try and tune our lives a bit more to God. And across our diocese, our commitment to our communities is key to this.

So, when we meet people, a simple smile shows the person before us that we see them as a friend. This is not to suggest ignorance or naivety. We are not unaware of the limitations and imperfections of a person, but we are prepared to focus more deeply, to the depths of the heart in each person, to seek out the goodness that only love and trust can bring to birth.

As a Cistercian writer recently put it: "Let us welcome each person as Christ, because in all truth it is Christ whom

we welcome. 'As you did it to the least of my brethren, you did this to me' (Matthew 25). Let us look for the beloved face of Christ in each person, for each is His true face."

But why start our focus on community, with those around us, and not God? Good question. Perhaps it is best explained by a lovely saying from John the Dwarf, one of the Desert Fathers of the early Church: "You don't build a house by starting with the roof and working down. You start with the foundation."

They asked, "What does that mean?"

He said, "The foundation is our neighbour whom we must win. The neighbour is where we start. Every commandment of Christ depends on this."

**Very Revd Toby Wright**

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## Bath Half coming

Make a note: the Bath Half this year takes place on Sunday 16 March. Roads along the route and access to city car parks will be closed from 9am to 4pm (and Royal Victoria Park from 6am to 6:30pm) and parking on those roads – *including disabled parking* – will be suspended from 6am until the roads reopen (which may be earlier than 4pm).

Once again this year the start and finish are on Royal Avenue (in front of the Royal Crescent) and additional parking restrictions apply on a number of roads including Lansdown Road. Traffic is likely to be heavier than usual on the diversion routes, which in the past have included Julian Road, so you might wish to allow extra time to get to and from Christ Church.

Watch for further details and a map in next month's *Link*, when they have been released.

# February charity: Bath Welcomes Refugees

*The loose collection in the plate on the second and fourth Sunday of the month – 9 and 23 February – will go to Bath Welcomes Refugees. (Donations in collection envelopes will continue to go to Christ Church.)*

At this time of year, when most if not all of us enjoy warmth, security and freedom from persecution, it's timely to remember those who do not have those blessings or who have fled to this country to escape hardship of many kinds. We remember too that the Holy Family fled persecution when Jesus was still an infant and became refugees. So our charity this month is Bath Welcomes Refugees (BWR).

Founded in 2015, BWR became a registered charity in 2017, and is staffed almost completely by volunteers. They believe that ordinary people can make a difference and they harness the goodwill of the Bath community to help refugees and asylum seekers feel welcome, access resources and find a new home and community.

BWR activities include the delivery of integrated social support; help and protection for physical, mental and financial hardship; befriending; fundraising; tuition, particularly in relation to English language support; the finding, furnishing, and renovation of homes and gardens; the protection of data and every aspect of safeguarding; and the enhancement of the lives of those it supports.

As a group BWR has no religious or political affiliations. It relies upon donations, goodwill and the funds it raises locally. BWR is committed to aiding and relieving the plight of refugees both in the city and beyond. Its "Beyond Bath" team focuses on the wider refugee situation and regularly sends donations and volunteers to Calais.

Find out more about the charity and its work at [www.bathwelcomesrefugees.org.uk](http://www.bathwelcomesrefugees.org.uk).



# Charitable giving 2025

These are the charities we will be supporting over the remainder of this year. Most are now local so that we can engage with them more directly. Each will receive our giving over two months, meaning there is time to publicise the charity to the congregation effectively and a more substantial amount reaches these smaller charities.

■ **March/April: FOCUS**, a local charity offering free counselling to those unable to access it privately or through the NHS. The charity has a Christian foundation as it started in the crypt of St Michael's Without. They work with both young people and adults.

■ **May/June:** a charity to be chosen by our Junior Church.

■ **July/August: USPG Malawi Project.** This is a commitment we have made over recent years to support USPG's work among women and girls in developing education, health and in economic self-sufficiency in poverty-stricken Malawi.

■ **September/October: Peggy Dodds Centre**, a Bath-based charity that supports people living with dementia, and those caring for them. They run a daycare centre as well as a home visiting service.

■ **November/December: Genesis and Julian House**, local charities for the homeless and those in need, which we have supported at this time of the year for several years, recognising it is a time of peak need.

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## Pilgrim Group meeting

The Pilgrim Group, our ecumenical discussion group, will meet in the Lower Mews on the following Thursdays: 13 and 27 February, 13 and 27 March, 10 April. All are welcome! To find out about topics for discussion or other details, please contact Brenda Wall.

# Christ Church calendar Feb. 2025

**2** Sun *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)*  
10am Eucharist

4 Tue 7pm Licensing and Installation of Revd Heather Smith

6 Thu 11am Eucharist

7 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**9** Sun *The Fourth Sunday before Lent*  
10am Eucharist

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

14 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**16** Sun *The Third Sunday before Lent*  
10am Eucharist  
4:30pm Choral Evensong

20 Thu 11am Eucharist

21 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**23** Sun *The Second Sunday before Lent*  
10am Eucharist  
5pm Iona Contemplative Service

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

28 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**Mar** 1 Sat *David, patron of Wales*

**2** Sun *The Sunday next before Lent*  
10am Eucharist

5 Wed *Ash Wednesday*  
7:30pm Eucharist with Ashing

6 Thu 11am Eucharist

7 Fri Cedar Tree café, 11am – 1:30pm

**9** Sun *The First Sunday of Lent*  
10am Eucharist

**Our Sunday 10am Eucharist, and other services as advertised, continue to be live-streamed at** [www.facebook.com/christchurchbath/live](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchbath/live)  
**and** [www.youtube.com/@ChristChurchBath1798/streams](https://www.youtube.com/@ChristChurchBath1798/streams)

# Prayer Cycle for February 2025

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>1</b>	For our bell-ringing team
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>2</b>	For the ministry of our Junior Church
<b>Monday</b>	<b>3</b>	For shopkeepers and shop workers
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>4</b>	That we may hunger and thirst after righteousness
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>5</b>	For the work of Genesis
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>6</b>	For our link Dioceses in Zambia
<b>Friday</b>	<b>7</b>	For those who have been forced to flee their homes
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>8</b>	For the chaplaincies at Bath's Universities
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>9</b>	For Heather our Priest-in-charge
<b>Monday</b>	<b>10</b>	For those who work in the transport industry
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>11</b>	We give thanks for our blessings
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>12</b>	For peace
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>13</b>	For our Pilgrim Group, meeting tonight
<b>Friday</b>	<b>14</b>	For the unemployed
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>15</b>	That we may have grace to forgive
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>16</b>	For our Diocese of Bath and Wells
<b>Monday</b>	<b>17</b>	For those who work in financial services
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>18</b>	For our charity of the month, Bath Welcomes Refugees
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>19</b>	We give thanks for the wonders of creation
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>20</b>	For those who live or work in care homes
<b>Friday</b>	<b>21</b>	For the ministry of the Cedar Tree
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>22</b>	For those who have lost their faith

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>23</b>	For our Lighthouse young adult group
<b>Monday</b>	<b>24</b>	For those who work in medicine
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>25</b>	For those who organise and attend events at Christ Church
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>26</b>	For those on our long-term prayer list
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>27</b>	We give thanks for those who enrich our lives
<b>Friday</b>	<b>28</b>	For those who are persecuted for their faith

## Long-term Prayer List

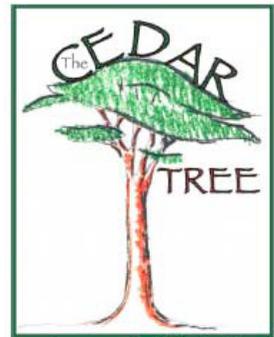
*Please remember those we've been asked to pray for...*

Geoff	Chris & David
Daniel	John
Milo	Win
Naomi	Chris
Frankie	Ken
John & Sheila	Christine
Margaret	Larry
Sheila W	Joanna
John & Jean	Kat
Stewart & Lillian	
AJ	

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

## Cedar Tree is open

The Cedar Tree community café is open every Friday from 11am to 1:30pm. All are welcome! If you live or work in the area, do consider dropping in for a chat, a cup of coffee, home-made cake or a light snack, to support this important part of our outreach to the local community. If you can help on a Friday or make a cake we can sell, then please contact Jenny Hesketh. Your offers will be very gratefully received.



*"Under it every kind of bird will live"*

Bath  
**Julian Road**

# Rotas for February 2025

*Readers and readings, Sunday 10am Eucharist*

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
<b>2 Feb</b> Candle- mas	<b>Robin Kerr</b> Malachi 3:1-5	<b>Peter Bowes</b> Hebrews 2:14-end	<b>Nick Wells</b> Luke 2:22-40
	Intercessions: <b>Beryl Bowes</b>		
<b>9 Feb</b> Fourth Sunday before Lent	<b>Alex Soboslay</b> Isaiah 6:1-8	<b>Jude Bishop</b> 1 Corinthians 15:1-11	<b>Rachel Preston</b> Luke 5:1-11
	Intercessions: <b>Mark Elliott</b>		
<b>16 Feb</b> Third Sunday before Lent	<b>Graham Reaper- Brown</b> Jeremiah 17:5-10	<b>Angela Soboslay</b> 1 Corinthians 15:12-20	<b>Richard Gabe</b> Luke 6:17-26
	Intercessions: <b>Georgina Bowman</b>		
<b>23 Feb</b> Second Sunday before Lent	<b>Isobel Powell</b> Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-end	<b>Brenda Wall</b> Revelation 4	<b>Robin Kerr</b> Luke 8:22-25
	Intercessions: <b>Peter Bowes</b>		
<b>2 March</b> Sunday next before Lent	<b>Beryl Bowes</b> Exodus 34:29-end	<b>Mark Elliott</b> 2 Corinthians 3:12 – 4:2	<b>Djemila Cope</b> Luke 9:28-36
	Intercessions: <b>Simon Tatton-Brown</b>		

# Who's who at Christ Church

**Priest-in-charge** Revd Heather Smith

**Supporting clergy**

Revd Canon Simon Tatton-Brown  
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Revd Beryl Bowes  
Revd Dr Peter Bowes

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**Churchwarden** Jane Nicholson  
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**Churchwarden** Jonathan Stead  
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**Verger** Angela Soboslay  
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**Chair of Trustees** Nick Wells  
07774 104584  
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**Treasurer** Zoë Bushell  
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**Safeguarding officer** Virginia Knight  
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christchbathsafeguarding@gmail.com

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weekly notice sheet**

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concerts@christchurchbath.org  
notices@christchurchbath.org

**Deanery Synod Reps** Brenda Wall  
Pauline Swaby-Wallace

**Tower Captain,  
Ringing Master** Will Willans

**Tower Secretary** Maggie Willans  
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maggiewillans@hotmail.com

**Steeple Keeper** David Guy

**Cedar Tree café organiser**  
Jenny Hesketh  
jenny.hesketh@me.com

**Junior Church** Emma Elliott

**Laity rotas** Judith Bishop

**Prayer cycle** Virginia Knight

**Charitable Giving co-ordinator**  
Jonathan Stead

**Mission to Seafarers** 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) – *Suspended while we are in Vacancy*
- 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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