

Connect



DIOCESE OF
BATH & WELLS

Changing Lives, Changing Churches for Changing Communities

Love for the Future



The Diocesan Lent Course for 2010 is currently in production. Produced by the Diocesan Environment Group (DEG), the DVD and study material will tackle many of the issues that we face as a society and as a planet, with particular emphasis on responding to the ecological crisis.

However this will not be yet another film about climate change. The course explores the way that different kinds of spirituality can help generate the approaches we need in order to face and influence the future. It recognises that to develop family and community life, respond to environmental problems, and work towards the Millennium Development Goals, we need respect, compassion, active justice, simplicity, repentance and hope.

"This is important because we as the church have to take our place in the reality of how we find it today and how we expect to be over the next 30 years. Either we

can take a back seat in all of this or we can be part of that which is a transforming activity. An activity that is in obedience to the God who came into the world because he loved it." +Peter, Bath & Wells

Drawing on the experience and insights of church members from across the diocese, of diocesan advisors and the bishops, the course suggests ways that we can allow God to develop these in us.

There are six 12 minute films usable for small groups or in services. The course can be used at any time, but is particularly suitable as a Lent Course. There will be group discussion materials with bible study, liturgy, and activities as well as pointers to other resources.

"One of the very simple stories that Jesus tells is the story of the man who built his house upon the rock and the man who built his house on the sand. We all understand at least at one level, but what does it really mean? As I seek to live as a 21st century Christian, living in a very complicated world, what does it mean for me to build my life on the solid rock of Christ? Love for the Future is a DVD series that we are seeking to promote for home groups and church groups to use next Lent. It explores some very important

themes for all of us, and our hope is that as we engage with the issues, not only will we be better equipped to serve Christ in his world, but we also discover more of what it means to build our lives on his rock. I hope you really enjoy it." Archdeacon Andy Pigott (Chair, Mission Forum)

Preliminary material for course planning will be available in Autumn 2009. Full materials will be available January 2010. Lent begins on 17th February.

David Osborne, Chair of the DEG, said "This an important resource to help parishes consider the many issues that our world faces, and offers tools to support them in living out their Christian faith".

Further information is available, including a short film, on the diocesan website (http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/changing_lives/mission/LOVEFORTHEFUTURElentcourse2010.php) or contact David Maggs, Diocesan Social Justice and Environment Advisor on 01749 670777 or at david.maggs@bathwells.anglican.org

Back to Church Sunday

Back to Church Sunday (27th September) is almost here. This year not only are churches in all English dioceses taking part, but also churches in Australia, New Zealand and Canada too, so this really is a global event.

If you haven't already collected your pack(s) from the Old Deanery please

contact Jan or Stephen on Reception who will be pleased to help, tel 01749 670777, email reception@bathwells.anglican.org.

We will be really interested to hear stories of your Back to Church Sunday and also to see any photos you may have. If you have any ideas you think would be helpful to others in the future we would love to

hear from you - perhaps you did something different this year that worked well, or maybe you feel the tried and tested way is best.

Whatever your views please get in touch with Helen Hickman, cfm@bathwells.anglican.org, or use the feedback form on <http://www.backtochurch.co.uk/index.asp>

Message from the editor

Well, this may be the last Connect I see published as I leave on 13th October, thanks for all your feedback since Connect started and please do continue to support the new internal communications officer,

Gillian Buzzard, with comments and content.

Please let me know if you wish to be added or removed from the circulation. We are encouraging electronic use of Connect to reduce costs and environmental impact but

hard copies can be sent to those unable to access email, the internet or receive a printed version from a colleague (Connect can be printed in black & white). Please contact Karen Bowers on 01749 685145 Karen.bowers@bathwells.anglican.org

New Book Reviews

These reviews of books new to the Resource Centre have been written by two of our Readers. Please contact the Resource Centre for more details of these and all the other resources available on free loan and with free delivery available to all parts of the Diocese. Tel. 01749 685129 or email resourcecentre@bathwells.anglican.org

Seeing & Believing – Praying with Paintings of the Life, Death & Resurrection of Christ - by Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St. Albans.

This series of 10 paintings and accompanying meditations are ideal for group or personal use. They would be appropriate for a Lent course, particularly the latter 5 paintings, which deal with the trial, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. They would be well suited to an alternative worship session, e.g. in place of Evening Prayer. In a home group setting, individuals could write prayers based on a single picture/portrait, or explore their feelings about the events in the pictures. The author provides advice and websites on sourcing the images from the internet if preferred. In some cases the Group Leader may want to produce a still image for each person in the group to look at,

also giving individuals something to take home to continue pondering/praying over. This is an excellent resource which many people will enjoy using.
Penny Devereux

Just As I Am by Ruth Etchells

My first reaction was oh no, not another prayer collection! However, this is an enriching, encouraging and helpful addition. Ruth finds making time for focussed daily prayer is not easy – an experience which most of us share! 'But', she says, 'this dialogue with God is the very oxygen of our spiritual bloodstream'. She provides Morning and Evening Prayers covering 31 days; prayers for Seasons and Festivals, and prayers for Times of Sorrow and Joy.

Throughout the book, woven in with Ruth's own prayers, are many others by a wonderful array of folk both familiar and new to me, including Thomas Merton, John Keble, Anselm, Thomas Fuller, Amy Carmichael and Karl Barth. The right hand pages are left largely blank for us to add our offerings to the treasures already there, in our ongoing 'dialogue with God'. This book has been around for 15 years, yet feels timeless. I shall use it, as its

subtitle says, in my 'Personal Prayers for Every Day'. No doubt many have already benefitted from using these prayers and I hope many more will do so.
Maurice Eveleigh

Joy in All Things, Franciscan Association of Great Britain

I thoroughly enjoyed reviewing this Franciscan Companion. It is a very beneficial read for anyone wishing to understand more about the life of St Francis and St Clare. The first half of the book is devoted to their history, and the second half incorporates prayers by both of these saints, what it means to be a Franciscan today and how to be a pilgrim. There is a glossary of Franciscan terms, along with a bibliography and websites for those who wish to follow in the Franciscan path.

This book would be most appreciated by those of an Anglo-Catholic or Roman Catholic background, as well as those who may be considering becoming Franciscans. Others may struggle with the Marian references in the prayers and the Catholic references to penance.
Penny Devereux

Mothers' Union News



It's not only Diocesan Synod that is beginning a new triennium! The Mothers' Union is in the process of appointing Trustees for their triennium from 2010 to 2013.

The newly elected Diocesan President is Jane Tibbs (the current Diocesan Members' Representative). For the first time, the President is in full time employment. Working as Children's Adviser for the Diocese, Jane supports, encourages and facilitates work with children in parishes. Already links are being forged between Union members and people who work with children, and many members are helping at events and clubs.

Having a working President means there will be a few changes. It is hoped Trustees' meetings will be at different times – some daytime, some in the evening and some on Saturday morning. This may encourage more working members to be more involved.

Jane can be contacted in the Old Deanery on 01749 685121. The MU office will continue to be staffed (Tuesdays & Thursdays) by Rosemary Tullett (tel 01749 685131 or email mu@bathwells.anglican.org)

Exploring Christianity

Increasing confidence in our faith lies at the heart of Changing Lives. Exploring Christianity, is for everyone wishing to deepen their commitment and knowledge about Christianity.

Now is the time to encourage people in your parishes to sign up for the course. New groups begin soon in many locations (details at http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/changing_lives/sof/exploring_christianity.php), if there is not a group near you let us know and we'll endeavour to get one going.

"This was not the dry learning of academe, with dead papers, and dead books, but a living, breathing, changing relationship that I had stumbled upon" (past student)

Participants meet in small tutor groups throughout the diocese and enjoy studying with others. The course is not trying to tell students what to believe but encourages them to reflect on what they believe. For more information, or an application form please contact me, tel. 01749 685115 or jennifer.cole@bathwells.anglican.org

Stand Up Take Action

God calls us to love our neighbour and to “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8). Faced with the challenges of extreme poverty and climate change, churches around the world are seeking to follow God’s command. They’re supporting practical projects, combating injustice and, through prayer and campaigning, pressing for policies to help create a fairer world.

Last year more than 100 million people worldwide took part in Stand Up. This year our bishops are asking every church congregation in the Diocese to stand up for one minute during a service on Sunday 18 October (Micah Sunday). You can recite a pledge, offer a prayer, or simply keep silence together. (If your parish has a link with a church in Zambia or elsewhere, you may wish to show your support through a linked Stand Up action).

Prayer and lectionary resources are available from Peter Merson, World Development Representative, peter.

merson3@btinternet.com Tel: 01278 662240. Please also let Peter know what your church will be doing for Stand Up.

Further Information and resources:

www.standagainstopoverty.org

The main website to register events

www.endpoverty2015.org

UN Millennium Campaign Website.

Details of the MDGs.

www.micahchallenge.org.uk

Micah Challenge UK is a coalition of Christian organisations and churches, united in their concern to fight global poverty. The website provides links to ideas and resources for Micah Sunday

www.bond.org.uk/pages/masslobby.html

BOND (British Overseas NGOs for Development) is the UK membership body for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in international development. The website provides details of the current campaign (The Great Persuasion), which aims to lobby MPs and candidates on development and climate change issues.

Good & God

On the first day of a 16 day cycling holiday, my bicycle chain started to break, though luckily it carried me as far as a bike store. So there I was on a sunny Sunday morning, squatting on the pavement outside Halfords, trying to fit a new chain. My wife, watching the black grease spreading up my arms, announced that she would go and buy some ‘wet wipes’. No sooner were the words spoken than a young mother, walking by with a pushchair, reached into her bag, drew out a handful of ‘baby wipes’ and gave them to me. And before going on her way she handed me another large bundle, “for when the job was finished”.

When I told the story to a Christian friend some time later her response was, “Oh, she would have detected the aura of Christ in you”.

I think not! I was hot, dirty and cross. Ten minutes earlier I had come within a hairs breadth of being knocked off my bike by a motorist. I’d been sold a chain that was too long and when I asked for it to be shortened, the only response was to sell me tool to do the job. The aura of Christ was certainly not coming from me at that moment. So I have to confront the truth that Christ was present in the young mother. She was the one who saw a need in another human, took the risk of getting involved, gave graciously and generously of herself, and left herself and her child seriously short of wet wipes for the next emergency.

This happened on July 5th, the day after Bishop Stephen Cotterell had addressed the crowds at Glastonbury Abbey, and it leads me question his concern about the “hoary English heresy that being good equals being Christian” (Connect 5). Where ‘doing good’ involves reaching out to the needy, taking risk, and sacrificial generosity, it seems to me that grace must be involved, recognised or un-recognised because Christians know that that lifestyle cannot be sustained without ‘gulps of grace’. Stephen Cotterell’s article, and the reflections by Bishop Peter, Suzi Mackenzie and Roger Medley on Peter’s Progress, all seem to be reaching towards a new language for, and a new recognition of the intrinsic understanding of God’s ways which some people have and to which they hold. *Stephen Rymer*

If you wish to respond to this piece, or anything In Connect please contact the editor Karen.bowers@bathwells.anglican.org

Who’s Who – Mission Forum

The Mission Forum Steering Group is made up of the Chairs and Advisors from the main constituent groups and has its own Chair, Executive Officer and two Liaison Officers (detailed below). It generally meets 4 times a year to share, develop overall vision, set budgets and plan events such as Open Forums. There are 2-3 Open Forums planned per year, to engage or promote various areas of mission or to address current issues. These are open to anyone in the diocese interested in the subject area. If you have any questions please contact cfm@bathwells.anglican.org

Chair:	The Venerable Andy Piggott, Archdeacon of Bath
Executive Officer:	The Revd Canon Roger Medley, Diocesan Missioner
Liaison Officers:	The Revd Matthew Frankum, and Mrs Suzi McKenzie
PA to Diocesan Missioner & Secretary to the Forum:	Mrs Helen Hickman
Ecumenical Mission Enabler:	The Revd Annie Naish
Healing Advisor:	The Revd Matthew Thomson
Renewal Advisor:	The Revd Keith Powell
Rural Life Advisor:	The Revd Robert Widdowson
Sedgemoor Rural Business Centre Chaplain:	The Revd Chris Keys
Social Justice & Environment Advisor:	Mr David Maggs
Disability Advisor:	Vacant
Bridgwater Community Chaplain:	The Revd Geraldine Kirk
Mental Health Advisor:	Miss Fay Wilson-Rudd
Multi-Faith Advisor:	The Revd Kevin Tingay
CUF Link/UPA Coordinator:	The Revd Bernard Joy
World Mission Advisor (inc Zambia Link):	Mrs Jenny Humphreys
World Development Representative:	Mr Peter Merson

On the ground

Some people got a bit uppity. They always do. Getting uppity might be our national sport and our church could provide half the team.

The Vicar had told us that the Diocese had told him that the Department of Health had told them that it was inadvisable to share drinking vessels during the swine flu pandemic. So we weren't going to get any wine at communion today. Or for a while.

Lack of faith, said the uppities. Jesus told his disciples they would be safe trampling on scorpions so we should be OK sharing a communion cup. Lack of faith.

Thing with the uppities is that you get ten of them in a room you get eleven opinions. Going to stop sharing the peace too? How

about the Vicar's hand-shake at the door? It's airborne this virus. They thought they were whispering but I heard them all.

I wondered, to myself, how stupid it would be to ignore the health advice from a Department of Health.

The I heard the Vicar explain what he was going to do. He would administer the bread as usual and then, when we had all returned to our pews, he would drink from the cup as if for all of us.

And when it happened I found it powerful. I'm not a theologian. The spell-checker just proved that. But I know how I felt. It was as if we had enjoyed a more poignant shared experience than when we queued politely to receive wine. And the Vicar

looked as if something special had happened to him too. Awed and humbled at the same time I would reckon.

In the intercessions we prayed for the Department of Health - for wisdom in advice and decision-making. And we prayed for those who had swine flu, especially the vulnerable.

When things come along to change our habits and routines you can either get uppity or make the most of them. I know what I think. You?

*Mr Johnson
Somerset, September 2009*

Things you may not know

Parish Share

The stipends and other costs of our priests are primarily paid from donations made by church members passed across to the diocese as Parish Share. £8.5m is budgeted to be received by the diocese in 2009. This equates to a contribution from the common fund of over £37,000 towards each priest's costs, which on average total £40,955). In 2010 this total will rise by about £1,000 primarily due to the impact of the recession on the Clergy pension fund. Full details of the calculations are here:

http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan_information/How_much_does_a_priest_cost_2009_final.pdf

2009 Review

Watch out for the 2008 Review document being sent out later this month, if you want any extra copies please contact the Accounts department, or it can be viewed here: http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan_information/finance.php

CFS

In the diocese over 95% of parishes that have contacted CFS have identified utility savings. To date, 25 have switched supplier, another one is 'in the pipeline', and a further 17 parishes will switch when their current contracts end. One has saved 40%. Contact: Noel Muddiman, Charity Funding Solutions. Tel: 01279 303414, Mob: 07764 790862, www.cfsolutions.ltd.uk

Autumn Forum

Somerset Churches Together Autumn Forum, on Saturday 17th October at Locking Castle Church, Weston Super

Mare. Keynote speakers, presentations, workshops and more. For details and a booking form contact Robin Dixon, email: sctog@blueyonder.co.uk

Vacancies

The diocese is looking to recruit a stewardship advisor and a church tourism person. For full details please go to: www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan_information/vacancies.php

Helping Local Families

Barnados Somerset are looking for people to help local families that need a bit of support with the day to day running of family life. This may mean spending time listening over a cup of tea or it may mean rolling up your sleeves and lending a hand! (1-2 hours pw). For more information please contact Lynne Johnston, Volunteer Co-ordinator, tel 07786 703014

Review of Diocesan Services

Please remember to return your questionnaire. Details of drop in sessions are on the website: http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news_and_events/item.php?567

Church Buildings Conference

Crossing the Threshold – A Community Development Approach to the use of Church Buildings, 19th November, 2009, Royal National College Hereford. This conference will include inspiring case studies, an update on 'Building Faith in Our Future', and advice on partnership working. For more information contact Joanne.j.gibbon@hereford.anglican.org

Web Resources

Resources on the website: harvest resources reviewed here http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news_and_events/item.php?564 and downloads for world mental health day here: http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news_and_events/item.php?566

'Teatime for the Soul'

The Anglican and Methodist Churches in West Camel have launched 'Teatime for the Soul', a new way of church. Attendees gathered at the parish hall to enjoy tea, cakes and explore what it means to begin a journey with God through music, drama and craft. This is the third Fresh Expression within the Cam Vale Benefice. If you are interested in trying something similar do contact The Rev'd Dr Mike Perry, email mikepqc@me.com

Does God WORK Here?

A conference to energise Christian impact at work, 14 November 2009, for more information visit: www.transformworkuk.org

Diocesan Synod

Reports of Synods can be found on the website, including a summary of July 2009 http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan_information/DiocesanSynodmatters.php

'Flu update

Updated guidance from our Bishops is on the website, together with the latest from the Archbishops http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news_and_events/item.php?571