

# Connect



DIOCESE OF  
BATH & WELLS

Changing Lives, Changing Churches for Changing Communities

## A Church of England Academy for Bath & Wells

As a diocese we are undertaking an exciting education initiative as the lead sponsor for a new Church of England academy in Taunton. While the Church has already led the development of academies in other parts of the country, this will be the very first academy in the South West beyond Bristol. It is due to open on 1 September 2010. The academy will offer a broad range of courses and opportunities for students aged 11-19, but with two specialisms: Science (with a focus on Health Science) and Sustainability.

### What are academies?

Academies are state-funded independent schools which are established and managed by sponsors. While the diocese is the lead sponsor for the academy in Taunton, Somerset Local Authority has elected to be a co-sponsor. This reflects the very positive partnership that the Diocese has had with Somerset over many years. Academies are for young people of all abilities and are supported by key partners. We're delighted that the following organisations have committed to the development and long-term enrichment of our academy:

Somerset College, Taunton: a further education college, offering an exciting range of opportunities, particularly in health and sustainability, including routes to higher education and the Peninsular Medical School.

Queen's College, Taunton: a high-achieving independent school in Taunton with a Methodist foundation, offering a broader range of pastoral and learning programmes, including those for gifted and talented young people.

NHS Somerset: bringing expertise in

community health, with training and employment opportunities.

The (Roman Catholic) Diocese of Clifton: continuing the established church school partnership of St Augustine's.

Viridor Waste Management: contributing expertise in sustainable environments, activities and employment routes.

The academy will also work in collaboration with other educational establishments in Taunton, including local primary and secondary schools and Richard Huish College.

### Who is the academy for?

The academy will primarily serve the community of north Taunton. It will be formed from the closure of the existing Ladymead Community School and the St Augustine of Canterbury C of E/RC School. Our academy will serve an area with serious social deprivation – where we believe the church can perhaps contribute most. It will also be inclusive, serving those of all faiths and none. By bringing together a rich mix of support, resources, curriculum and wider opportunities, we endeavour to make a real difference to the life-chances of its young people, their families and the wider community.

### Where will it be?

The academy will initially open on the sites of the two existing schools. But by 2013 we expect a major investment of £15-20 million to provide new, remodelled and refurbished buildings. This will mean the academy can be accommodated on a single site, currently Ladymead, next to the Wellsprings Leisure Centre. An additional £1.6 million has been allocated for Information & Communications Technology (ICT).

### How is it funded?

The academy is funded by the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) at a level comparable to other local schools in the local area. Unlike some of the early academies, sponsors are no longer required to provide £2 million of initial investment, although there is the expectation that an endowment fund will be set up to support and enrich the opportunities of students who attend the academy.

### The journey

We have embarked upon a journey of transformation. The freedoms of the academy enable us to think differently, to go beyond expectations and, paradoxically, to think outside many current educational constraints. A new principal designate, Mark Trusson, has recently been appointed, but for the staff, governors, students and all to be involved, there is a journey of discovery – of what it means to be an academy community living Christian values in service to others.

### Why are we involved?

It's about the justice of bringing imaginative resources and opportunities to a neighbourhood, much as the pioneers of church education did in their context of the 19th century. It's about raising aspirations, looking over the horizon – well beyond Somerset, and providing a context where faith can be explored, nourished and lived amid the complexities of the 21st century. It's about changing lives, what it means to be 'church', and communities. We are grateful, as always, for your prayerful and practical support in our work together for the children and young people of this diocese.

Maureen Bollard

**Message from the editor** Welcome to November's Connect. In this issue, as well as the exciting news about our new academy, we have reflections on a recent visit to Zambia, plus thoughts on what makes a distinctively Christian value. We'd like to feature more news and inspiration from parishes, so do share your updates by emailing [comms@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:comms@bathwells.anglican.org). That's also the address for comment or changes to the distribution list. You can also call me on 01749 685111. Although Connect is an e-publication for environmental and cost reasons, remember we can send hard copies out. I look forward to hearing from you. *Gillian Buzzard*

## Reflections on Lusaka



*Bishop Andrew Sports, Lusaka*

**Our link with the Anglican Church in Zambia was established back in 1978. In October this year, Sue Bloomfield and Suzanne McDonald from the education team visited the country with Jeremy Key-Pugh, Chair of the Zambia Link group.**

“Rather a long service this morning, vicar.” An hour is just about the limit of concentration for us on a Sunday morning here in our little corner of the South West. But in Zambia, where time is a bit more elastic, a Harvest Service of three and a half hours at Lusaka Cathedral was considered short. It was a heady and colourful mixture: reverent but exuberant; prayerful yet chaotic. Somehow the joyful African singing from choirs, praise teams and the congregation of two thousand, sat

well with the formal Anglican liturgy of the Eucharist. Representatives from parishes in Lusaka Diocese processed up the aisle with their harvest gifts, including sacks of maize-flour and live chickens. All visitors were greeted and a special welcome was reserved for the worshippers from Bath and Wells.

The afternoon before we had watched the finals of the Bishop Andrew Sports in Lusaka. This is the second year that each of the five Zambian dioceses has organised a tournament with money raised in Bath and Wells in memory of Bishop Andrew Radford. At the Lusaka finals, over 500 young people turned out to support their parish teams at netball, athletics and football and there was a happy, carnival atmosphere. Some of the

teams had kit (usually an English football club strip) but most played or raced in what they were wearing; some had shoes, many didn't; the relay races used sticks for batons and “hand-over” areas had to be imagined. But it all took place in the most keenly competitive yet completely non-antagonistic spirit, especially the 100 metre race for clergy – even Archdeacon Lungu made speedy, if somewhat stately, progress to the finishing line.

*Sue Bloomfield*

*Does your parish have a link with a parish in Zambia? Why not keep them in touch with what's happening in Bath and Wells by sharing Connect by email or by post?*

## Early Christmas gift for retired clergy and widows in Zambia

This month, retired clergy and widows and widowers of clergy from Bath and Wells donated £4300.00 to their counterparts in Zambia. Thanking everyone who contributed, the Zambia Anglican Council said that the funds are ‘indeed a good Christmas present.’

Retired clergy of Bath and Wells send funds to their brothers and sisters in Zambia as often as possible. With so many Zambians dying from Aids every year, many retired clergy and widows of clergy remain the main caregivers and support for their families, so such donations are hugely helpful.

To learn more about the fund, please contact Jenny Humphreys, World Mission Advisor. Ph: 01749 685105. If you would like to make a donation, send your cheque, payable to Bath and Wells DBF, to the Old Deanery for Jenny's attention and referenced ‘Zambian retired clergy’.

## What makes a value distinctively Christian?

In the news recently, John Denham, the government minister responsible for public policy on faith, challenged the 'assumption that faith organisations alone were responsible for defining, shaping and transmitting values'. This poses interesting questions for what many of us hold and identify as Christian values.

### First, what is a value?

A google search on values gives 217 million sites! The Wikipedia definition is: 'A principle value is a foundation upon which other values and measures of integrity are based. Values are considered subjective, vary across people and cultures and are in many ways aligned with belief and belief systems.'

Types of values include ethical, ideological (i.e religious, political), social and aesthetic values. Common in all definitions is the notion that everyone has principles that influence both their thinking and actions; these principles can be defined as values.

### Values and schools

In my role, I work with church schools, of which we have 185 in Bath & Wells. Each school is subject to Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) inspections as well as Ofsted inspections. The SIAS looks at how distinctive and effective the school is as a church school and specifically explores how Christian values underpin the ethos of the school. This naturally leads to the question, 'what makes

a value distinctively Christian?' The Church of England National Society has created a website ([www.christianvalues4schools.co.uk](http://www.christianvalues4schools.co.uk)) that schools can use to explore Christian values. It identifies 15 values:

- Reverence
- Wisdom
- Thankfulness
- Humility
- Endurance
- Service
- Compassion
- Trust
- Peace
- Forgiveness
- Friendship
- Justice
- Hope
- Creation
- Koinonia (Fellowship)

People of different religious faiths and people of no faith may challenge or even object to the notion that these values 'belong' to the Christian faith. The fact that all these values can be identified as being at the heart of the Christian faith and found throughout the writings of the Bible may provide justification for their identification as being distinctively Christian. Equally, the commonality of these shared values in different religious and non religious traditions may also lead to the conclusion that they are distinctively Christian but perhaps not exclusively Christian.

*David Williams*

## Two very different events at the Cathedral

On 11 October 2009, a Festal Choral Evensong was held in Wells Cathedral to celebrate the ministry and retirement of The Revd Canon Russell Bowman-Eadie, Director of Continuing Ministerial Development/Canon Treasurer Wells Cathedral. It was a wonderful occasion attended by relatives, personal friends, clergy, readers, laity, who came from near and far. Russell came to the Diocese in 1984 as Director of Training. In those 25 years, several hundred people have enjoyed and learned from Russell's great knowledge and vision in ministry. We will miss Russell but we fondly bid him 'Adieu' and wish him a long and happy retirement though we

know it won't be quiet!

Later the same month, the cathedral reverberated with the sound of hundreds of children and helpers from all over the Diocese, who flocked to the cathedral to worship and celebrate Shining Lights, our 2009 Children's Festival. A picnic lunch was followed by activities including crafts, dance, games, music, science experiments, story and reflection. A highlight of the event was Bishop Peter Maurice leading a procession of light out of the cathedral as everyone waved their glow sticks – certainly a sight to brighten up a darkening October evening!

## Parish Share 2010 Update

Further to information provided in last month's issue, Diocesan Synod has now approved a 4.6% increase in the Common Fund for 2010.

For several years we have held the annual Common Fund increase to a rate 'broadly in line with inflation.' This is not possible for 2010 (although the increase is less than the 5% anticipated).

The normal inflationary increase to cover rises in stipends, housing costs and all other non pensions costs have previously been held to only 1.1%. That would have been the requested increase in the Common Fund, but for two factors:

- a 2% increase in the clergy pension requirement
- a requirement to reduce diocesan operating deficit by 1.5%

Your Treasurer should now have received individualised letters explaining your parish contribution. As you know, we do not apply a standard 4.6% increase across the board. Some parish shares will increase by more than the 4.6% others will increase by a lesser amount, according to means and ability.

We are pleased that, despite the current economic conditions, parish share payments for 2009 are holding up well. We trust this will continue in 2010 and thank all parishes for their hard work to ensure their contribution towards mission and ministry, locally and across the Diocese, is met.

A budget summary and analysis of the Parish Share calculations can be downloaded at [www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan\\_information/finance.php](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocesan_information/finance.php)

*Nick Denison*



*Shining Lights – 2009 Children's Festival*

## On the ground

'Take thirty minutes material and cram it into an hour.' That, I recall, was one woman's summary to me of most of the teaching seminars at a major Christian festival a few years ago. She also objected to many of the sessions which were branded seminars as they were, in fact, talks. But given all the bad press it gets, all the unfortunate reputations it confirms, why do those of us who speak or preach regularly go on for too long?

Now in some cases I can see an answer to that. A theological lecture. A verse by verse exposition. These things take time. But how many times have I been invited to training days that could have been mornings? I have lost count. And how many alleged three point sermons actually have seven if you count the introduction as one and finally, lastly and in conclusion as the second half

not the end? Hark at my cynicism. Been at it too long.

The simplest guide to preaching I ever heard was this three point pattern:

Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em  
Tell 'em it  
Tell 'em what you've just told 'em

Or what about, 'Preach about Jesus and preach about fifteen minutes?'

Neither is a bad guide. I have never been criticised for preaching too short a sermon. If you do need length you can earn the right by generally being brief enough.

I find it helpful, if I have been told how long to expect, to know where we are according to the schedule and, if we are

over-running, by how much, and why. I don't think I'm that unusual. I like to know where I am. If I've been given a timetable or running order I like to be able to trust it, or to be told what has slipped.

Brevity takes skill. Blaise Pascal once wrote, 'I have made this letter longer than usual, because I lack the time to make it short.'

So this week I am determined to take my thirty minutes material and pack it into fifteen. It will take time. Pray for me brothers and sisters.

*The Rev'd James  
North Somerset, November 2009*

*Any resemblance to actual people in the Diocese is unintentional.*

## Things you may not know

### New website

Our new website will go live in early December at [www.bathandwells.org.uk](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk). (same address as currently). Our aim is to offer a more appealing, user-friendly experience and a channel that can grow to be the hub of communications for all of us in the Diocese. Let us know what you think when you've had chance to try it out.

### Survey on rural challenges

The Plunkett Foundation has launched a survey of Parish Councils across England & Wales. The survey is to find measure rural communities' awareness of community-ownership approaches to rural challenges. Find out more and participate at: [www.plunkett.co.uk/newsandmedia/news-item.cfm/newsid/260](http://www.plunkett.co.uk/newsandmedia/news-item.cfm/newsid/260)

### 'Free range vicar' posts nurturing rural faith paper

Robert Barlow has posted a paper looking at Rural Faith & Spirituality. Find out more at: [freerangevicar.blogspot.com/2009/10/nuturing-rural-faith.html](http://freerangevicar.blogspot.com/2009/10/nuturing-rural-faith.html)

### From Apes or Angels?

St Mary's invites you to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Charles Darwin's 'The Origin of Species' with a service, refreshments and open discussion led by Dr. Julian Hector, biologist and broadcaster. 4pm, Sunday 29 November at St Mary's Castle Rd, Clevedon. Contact: Revd Noël Hector on 01275 873257.

### Swine flu update

The Archbishops issued updated swine flue advice on 30 October. Download the advice from the CofE website at: [www.cofe.anglican.org/info/swineflu/octupdatefromarchbishops.doc](http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/swineflu/octupdatefromarchbishops.doc)

### Advent Prayer – Advent Praise

The Diocesan Renewal Group invites you to this event at St Cuthbert's, Wells on 28 November. Guest speaker is Jane Holloway, National Prayer Director at the World Prayer Centre. For more details see: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/item.php?587](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news_and_events/item.php?587)

### Giving for Life dates

Archdeacons events are to be held in March 2010 on Giving for Life, the CofEs new stewardship programme. The aim is to help your parish encourage generous giving amongst your church members. 15 & 25 March (Bath), 16 & 22 March (Taunton), 17 & 23 March (Wells), 6.30pm start. For more information contact Sue Whitehead email [sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org)

### Stand Up record breakers

Thanks to all in Bath & Wells who 'stood up' against poverty as part of the global action from 16-18 October. You're record breakers – over 173 million people have now taken part, read more at [www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org)

### Stop climate chaos with The Wave

On Saturday 5 December in London, ahead of the crucial UN climate summit in Copenhagen, tens of thousands of people will demonstrate their support for a safe climate future with Tearfund's The Wave.

Find out more, including details of specially organised and priced transport from the south west at: [www.bathandwells.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/item.php?594](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/news_and_events/item.php?594)

### Advent countdown with a difference

A Jesse Tree is a great way to show and tell the story of the coming of the promised Saviour. Jesse Trees date back to the middle ages and were inspired from Isaiah 11:1, a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a branch will bear fruit.

At home, make your Jesse Tree by hanging ornaments onto a branch or your Christmas tree, or sew them onto a banner, reading the appropriate Bible passage each day as you hang a new ornament. Jesse Tree ornaments depict the "Messianic line of Jesus" from the Old Testament and tell the Redemption story. In church, you can use the Jesse Tree to focus on a different theme for each of the four Sundays of Advent – The Jesse Tree, God's People, Prophecy, and People at Jesus' birth. A downloadable version is available daily during Advent at [www.bathandwells.org.uk](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk)