

OUTREACH

JANUARY 2021



CHRIST CHURCH CHELTENHAM

ONLINE ISSUE NO. 10

THE PARISH OFFICE IN OUR CHURCH COMPLEX IS OPEN PART-TIME AND HAS AN ANSWERING MACHINE. FOR URGENT MATTERS CONTACT THE VICAR OR CHURCHWARDENS.

Vicar: Rev Simon Heron 515983 (Day off 6pm Fri-6pm Sat)

Churchwardens: Barbara Lucas 228616/07912 345056
Sarah O'Meara 513067

Licensed Readers: Andrew Judge 07813 401685
David Laszlo 581593
Angela Smith 238232
Amanda Thiselton 690319 (Home Groups contact)

Pastoral Co-ordinators: Tina Benney 512246
with Anne Chapman & Chris Eddershaw

Weddings Administrator: Angela Smith 238232

Youth & Children Team: Anna Laszlo 581593

CHRIST CHURCH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL (Voluntary Aided):
Head Teacher: Mrs Kerry Pope 523392

Church Complex Manager: 578163
Parish Administrator: 578163

Safeguarding Officer: Mandy Whitefield 511919

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Lay Vice-Chair: Ian Kirkwood 581883

Treasurer: Philip Whitefield 511919

Secretary: Jennie Preece 518048

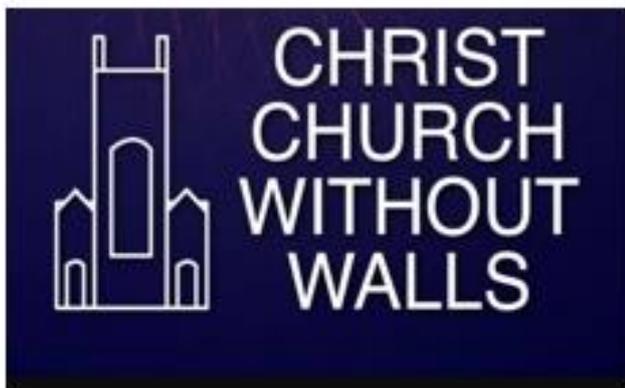
Electoral Roll Officer &

Vicar's Secretary: Virginia Mullan 231006

Church Flower Secretary: Penny Kirkwood 581883

Outreach Magazine Editor: Shirley Collins 696094

**ADDRESS: Christ Church Parish Office, Malvern Road, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire GL50 2JH**



Join Andrew Judge for
Morning Prayer weekdays
from 9am on Zoom.
For details
Tel: 07813 401685 or Email:
andrew.judge50@gmail.com

The people are here when the Church is closed.

Website Services: <https://www.christchurch-cheltenham.org/>

Public: <https://www.facebook.com/Christchurchmalvernroad/>

Private: <https://ps-af.facebook.com/groups/123108727771269/>

OUR COVID-19 SUPPORT TEAM

Christ Church has a small group of volunteers who help vulnerable and self-isolating parishioners in a variety of ways – from shopping and collecting prescriptions to phone support and sending letters. Some of these volunteers are from the congregation whilst others have contacted Christ Church, keen to do all they can to assist people during this time of crisis. To request help, please contact :

Tina on: 01242 512246

Sara on: 07974 355845

or email: christchurch-covid19-outreach@outlook.com

CHRIST CHURCH OPENING TIMES

On Wednesdays 10-11am, Christ Church is open for individual prayer. Please wear a face covering unless you are exempt from doing so. Social distancing needs to be observed so look out for signs showing the direction of travel inside the Church and places where you can sit.

VICAR'S WRITES: GOD IS THERE WHATEVER WE FACE



While hunting for the deadly great white shark in Steven Spielberg's Oscar winning masterpiece *Jaws*, the hero of the film, Police Chief Brody, gets his first look at exactly how massive the killer shark truly is. Standing on the deck of the small fishing vessel that has taken him out to sea, Brody turns to the ship's captain, and completely off-script utters the now famous line: "You're going to need a bigger boat."

I read an article recently about how this, and a good number of the great lines in cinema history, was ad-libbed rather than following the original script.

There are undoubtedly times in our lives which seem to be more about improvising than following a pre-determined path.

Not so many years back, young men would follow in their father's footsteps. If dad was a baker, you would be too, and so would your son and grandson and so on. Even now, for many people their path from GCSEs to A-levels to university to job to relationship to children to retirement, seems a well worn pattern that follows relentlessly on.

Despite all this preparation, when we are faced with unusual or unexpected situations, our past experience and training can count for nothing. Sometimes it feels as if we're making it up as we go along. We end up going completely off-script. If ever there was a year that proved this completely, 2020 gets the prize!

As we take our first few steps into the beginning of another new year, there will be determined resolutions, firm pledges and resolute intent, to change one thing or another about the way we are. Giving something up, laying down an old habit, or starting something new.

It's just as certain that despite our best intentions, we will find unforeseen hurdles and challenges in front of us. We may find ourselves unsure, uncertain what to say or do.

However in the midst of this is an unchanging God, who as the prophet Isaiah puts it, is always doing something new.

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

(Isaiah 43:19.)

But God doesn't ad-lib. He doesn't improvise. He doesn't go off-script. We can hold on to Him. The God who will be there for us: whatever we face.

Rev Simon Heron



KEYS PLEASE: SECURITY REQUEST

We are in urgent need of spare keys. If anyone has Church/Hall Complex keys which are no longer in use, please return these in an envelope to the Office/through the wall letterbox (by the side gate), marked for the attention of Tony White, with a note of the sender's name. Never pass keys to a new job holder without letting us know.

GIVING TO CHRIST CHURCH

If you normally make a regular gift via the collection plate, you may still do so if attending Christ Church in person. You can also give by:

- Texting CHURCH, plus the amount you would like to donate (up to £20), to 70450. So to give £5, text CHURCH 5 to 70450, or to give £20, text CHURCH 20 to 70450. This service costs your donation plus your standard message rate.
- Posting or putting a gift by cheque through the Church letterbox (in the wall by the side gate) which is being emptied regularly by staff.
- Visiting the Christ Church, Cheltenham Website and following the Online Giving link on the Home page to *Give.net*.

Thank you.

CHRISTMAS DAY CAROLS OUTSIDE

After the 10.30am Holy Communion Service on 25th December everyone had the chance to sing Christmas Carols outside and the sun, for once, was shining. Photos by Amanda Thiselton.



COVER STORY: PAM – SOMEONE WE ALL KNEW

The Cremation Service for Pamela Rose Jenner was held on 30th December 2020 at Cheltenham Crematorium. It is available to view online until 8th February via: <https://www.obitus.com/> Username: Soxa7175, Password: 268062. Notes from the event follow below.



Rev Iain Hoskins led an uplifting Cremation Service for Pam Jenner, with input from her three sons Alan, Charlie, and Brian, and daughter-in-law Sue. The music included *How Great Thou Art*, *O Jesus I Have Promised*, and *Flocks In Pastures Green Abiding*.

Having supported various missions over the years and regularly attending OMF conferences in Swanwick, Derbyshire, it was noted that Pam had visited Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Morocco, and the USA, and that people from many parts of the globe will be watching this Service online.

The family home had been at Pitchcombe. Pam's father suffered lung damage through inhaling mustard gas in World War I, was sent from London to Gloucestershire to recuperate, and thereby met his future wife. This is how Pam came to be born in the Stroud area.

After her own marriage she lived in Denmark Road, Gloucester, raising her sons and enjoying being a "mother hen" and "good storyteller". She had a habit of telling her offspring what they needed to know, not always what they wanted to hear.

She often saw things not noticed by others, but kept her own counsel. This would make her a useful member of the team at the counselling service Listening Post, where she kept the accounts in order. It was at the Mariners Church in Gloucester that her faith really took off, followed by attendance at Brunswick Baptist Church, and then more recently Gas Green Baptist Church and Christ Church: having latterly lived in Cheltenham.

Rev Hoskins said: "Pam – someone we all knew," was like "indelible ink" whose effect, "will never be washed from our lives." The overall message was that our sister in Christ Pam would be telling mourners not to be sad, but to rejoice with her that she is now with her Lord.

CHRIST CHURCH CHOIR AND ORGANISTS: PART 8

Ed O'Meara joined the Choir at the age of 9, in 1991. When he realised we are currently compiling a history of music at Christ Church, he retrieved an 18 page project he had written as a boy, and kept. Two extracts are shown below. Well done Ed, hopefully you were duly rewarded for your studies at the time.

Tony White

3. The Sunday Service is what we mostly practise for. We arrive quite early and go straight to the choir vestries where we change into our robes and then do a quick practise. Then we line up in two lines called Cantoris and Decani and wait while the vicar makes any special announcements. Then we process up the central aisle, the Cantoris on the left (all girls) and the Decani (all boys) on the right singing a hymn. When we reach the choir stalls we go straight past them and bow at the altar, turn back and walk into the stalls. We keep on singing, then sit down. During the sermon younger members of the choir and children of the congregation (from 7-11 years old) go out to do some activities with the Explorers, the older ones to Pathfinders (11-14 years old). Here we learn about Jesus, sing songs and do other things. Then we return to church receive a blessing kneeling along what is known as the Doris Pike (in memory of that lady) and on odd occasions we kneel around the Altar. Then we sing our anthem, then the final hymn and then process out. The Vicar says a prayer with us all in the entrance lobby, then we go and get changed and go home.

(Cont'd...)

Lichfield Cathedral

On Saturday the 22nd of February 1992 the choir went to Lichfield Cathedral. We set off at 12:15pm and were back at about 8:15pm. When we got there I was very tired and was glad to get off the coach! Mr. Derrett gave us 20 minutes to look around. When I looked across to see the Cathedral I was amazed it was so big and beautiful had scaffolding around one of the towers. I went in and could hardly believe my eyes. There are other cathedrals that are very big but not very beautiful. This one had both qualities. We walked right to the back where the Lady's Chapel, which we used as a changing room. We had a practise which I enjoyed because of the echo. Before Mr. Derrett said it wasn't very nice to sing in because of a glass screen which blocked the sound out but I didn't notice anything. Later on Mr. Derrett gave us an hour and 15 minutes for lunch. My brothers and my brother's friend and his mum and I went to Mc. Donalds where we found most of the choir there along with Mr. Derrett and his family! At Evening Song everything went smoothly to the relief of Mr. Derrett. On the way back the coach was very hot but Mr. Derrett handed out drinks. Going to Lichfield has been one of my greatest experiences in the choir.



LOCKDOWN BIBLE STUDY: LUKE 12: 13–21

Jesus tells the parable of a wealthy farmer, living the good life, when God says: *“You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?”*

It is a very relevant story, as this man’s expectations of the future took no account of God, or unexpected interruptions to the life he had planned.

During this current pandemic, one of the dominant emotions being felt is disappointment. It comes out of our expectations of life, even as people of faith. We expect life should be long and healthy; we can become anything we want; we can have perfect families, homes, holidays and retirement. No wonder we’re disappointed when things don’t work out like this.

If we pay more attention to how Covid-19 restrictions and problems upset us, we can discern where we have set our hearts. What life story are we really living for? What are our expectations for work, family and friends, health, church or God?

At the end of the parable, Jesus offers this challenge: *“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves, but is not rich towards God.”*

At the beginning of a New Year, are we ready to align our future more to God’s plans for us? Reflect on this parable, asking how God can be at the heart of our life story.

If you are disturbed by the actions of those who have not observed Lockdown, and who have put the lives of others at risk by their behaviour, compare this with the words of Jesus on the cross: *“Father, forgive them, they don’t know what they are doing.”* (Luke 23:34.)

‘Following In His Footsteps’ – A Prayer by Saint Francis of Assisi:

Almighty eternal, just and merciful God, grant us the desire to do only what pleases You, and the strength to do only what You command. Cleanse our souls, enlighten our minds, and inflame our hearts with your Holy Spirit, that we may follow in the footsteps of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

PLOUGH MONDAY



The first Monday following Epiphany traditionally marks the resumption of agricultural work after the Christmas festivities. Known as Plough Monday, this year it falls on 11th January.

In some areas of England it was common in past times for the farm labourers to tour the villages with their plough in a money-raising trip, perhaps in costumes with Mummers, singing and dancing. It was also common for church ceremonies involving blessing the plough to take place either on Plough Monday itself, or the Sunday immediately before. In 2013 the Church of England revived this tradition, publishing a set of prayers. These include the following:

*O God, who gives each of us work to do for Your sake,
Bless this plough, together with the machines that enable us
To do our work upon the land,
And bless all those who use them.*

*Prosper throughout the year
The work done on our local farms.
Bless all who work with the world's resources
And enable them to be good stewards of Your creation;
Fulfil the farmer's hopes in a plentiful harvest;
Feed Your people with wholesome food;
And may town and country, united in gratitude to You,
Be drawn nearer to the understanding
And true service of each other;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

AUCTION TASTER

Our online auction in aid of missions and charities will take place when current shopping restrictions are lifted. The varied lots include a framed print of sports personalities, a prayer stool, and a sewing machine. The catalogue will be sent out when an auction date has been set. Contact the Editor: artseccles@googlemail.com if you would like a copy and do not currently receive the weekly Christ Church email.

CHALKING THE DOOR FOR EPIPHANY

Our Vicar produced a Facebook film inviting people to mark their front door for Epiphany. If you missed Simon's post or would like a more formal version, see the explanation and format below. It is not too late to take part.



Epiphany is an appropriate time to ask for God's blessing on your home and on those who live in it, or visit it. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest, part of our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows, especially during these difficult and challenging months.

While we are spending so much more time indoors and seeing fewer family members, friends and loved ones, let us keep faith and hope alive in our homes and our hearts.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk to write above the entrance door. It can also be written somewhere inside the home: +20 C M B 21+

The letters C, M, B, have two meanings. They are the initials of the names of the Magi, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. And they are an abbreviation of the Latin words *Christus Mansionem Benedicat* meaning, "May Christ bless this house." The + signs represent the cross and 2021 is the year.

A suggested format for the blessing follows.

Lead: Peace be to this house and to all who dwell here, in the name of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Reader: The Gospel according to Matthew, Chapter 2: 1-12:

"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.' When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. (Cont'd...)

'In Bethlehem in Judea' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.'

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."

This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Using chalk, write on the outside of your house, or inside, above the front main entrance, above or next to an entrance, as shown in the photo.

Lead: Lord God of heaven and earth, You revealed your only begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who live here and all who visit. May we be blessed with health, kindness of heart, gentleness and the keeping of your law. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our love for each other may go out to all.

May the peace of Christ be with all who enter this house, watch over and protect in these difficult times of the pandemic. Keep us free from sickness, danger and restore to health those have contracted the virus. May we be signs of your healing presence to one another as we welcome You, Saviour of us all, into hearts and homes.

May the love of Christ, bring hope to all whose lives have been compromised in any way by the pandemic, especially the unemployed, the homeless, the poor and those whose lives are in danger. Keep us safe from all that might harm us in any way and fill us with a deep and abiding trust in your loving presence.

All: The Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

EDITOR'S ROUND UP: KEEP THE LIGHT SHINING



During World War II the whole of the UK was literally a dark place for several years. Blackout rules meant no lights could be displayed at night. My aunt Marjorie told me how, after working long hours in an armaments factory by day, she spent many evenings on patrol as a civilian ARP warden, ensuring households had closed curtains. It was vital that enemy plane crews should not identify important buildings during bombing raids.

One of Vera Lynn's songs at the time, looking to the future, contained the words: "*When the lights go on again*" and it was recognised that the dark streets contributed to a low morale amongst the general population.

We are currently fighting an enemy which cannot be heard in the skies above, and there are no restrictions on the amount of light coming from our homes. Some people have therefore decided to keep their Christmas decorations up until Candlemas, on 2nd February.

For Christians, this is not only a way of spreading good cheer throughout the dark winter nights, to the point where daylight lasts until teatime; it also serves to remind us that Jesus Christ is the true light and Saviour of the whole world.

And, as disciples, it is up to us to encourage others out of spiritual darkness, into His light.

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it."
(John 1: 5.)

Shirley Collins

If you have something to say, a poem to share, or story to tell, do be in touch. Email: artseccl@googlemail.com or leave your item marked for the Editor at the Parish Office. Deadline for the February issue of *Outreach* is 24th January.

ORGANISATIONS AND LEADERS

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:

Playgroup: 9am-3pm Monday to Friday } 243021/
christchurchplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk } 07989 124492

Crèche: Sundays from 10.20am Alstone Porch
Sunday Morning Children's Groups }
Youth Nights Last Friday monthly } Anna Laszlo 581593

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS:

Rainbows: Thursday 5pm Bayshill/Lansdown}
Brownies: Thursday 6pm Harwood Hall }
Guides: Thursday 6.15pm Bayshill/Lansdown} Maureen Jones 517183

FOR ADULTS:

Baby & Toddler Group for Mums & Dads with pre-school children
Monday 1.30-3.15pm Harwood Hall Sarah O'Meara 513067

Coffee Morning
Wednesday, 10am-12noon Alstone Porch Dee Rice 231764

Friendship Club Lunch Club & Afternoon Tea Meetings
2nd & 4th Wednesdays Harwood Hall Mandy Whitefield 511919

MUSIC FOR WORSHIP

Director of Music: Tim Ingold 01452 524199

Choir: Friday, Music Room 7.30-9pm

Worship Group: Beck Donaldson 01451 860561

ACTIVITIES EXCEPT PLAYGROUP ARE SUSPENDED. CONTACT LEADERS FOR LATEST NEWS/ZOOM MEETINGS.

OUR MISSION PARTNERS:

The Matilda Project, Wendy Phillips, matildaproject@gmail.com
Mission Without Borders, Jos Downey, jdowney@mwbuk.org

**“HAPPY NEW YEAR”
FROM ALL AT GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL**



SUNDAY JANUARY 31ST 6PM

Candlelit Service to mark the end of Christmas and Epiphany season.
Sung by the Cathedral Choir.

All are welcome to access online:

<https://www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk/worship/services/services-live-stream/>

Please check beforehand to ensure details for this event have not changed: <https://www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk/>

