

# OUTREACH

MAY 2020



**CHRIST CHURCH CHELTENHAM**

**ONLINE SPECIAL NO. 2**

**THE PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.  
IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT SOMEONE URGENTLY PLEASE  
TELEPHONE ONE OF OUR CHURCHWARDENS AS BELOW**

**Vicar in Waiting:** Rev Canon Simon Heron *Relocating from Essex*

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

**Licensed Readers:** Andrew Judge 236930  
David Laszlo 581593  
Angela Smith 238232  
Amanda Thiselton 690319

**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:** Cherie Skidmore 578163  
**Parish Administrator:** Rev Julia Hook 578163

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

**Lay Vice-Chair:** Ian Kirkwood 581883  
**Treasurer:** Phil Whitefield 511919  
**Secretary:** Jennie Preece 518048  
**Electoral Roll Officer &  
Vicar's Secretary:** Virginia Mullan 231006

**CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER:** currently vacant

**FLOWER SECRETARY:** Penny Kirkwood 581883

**MAGAZINE EDITOR:** Shirley Collins 696094

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

# A 'DIFFERENT' CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 10<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> MAY

## Christian Aid (Cheltenham) Appeal “Virtual” Christian Aid Week 2020



*You can support our Virtual Christian Aid Week appeal by making your donation in any of the following 4 ways:*

### Just Giving Page

To give online, using credit or debit card, including *Gift Aid* if eligible. Just follow the link below:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ChristianAidCheltenham>

Your donation will be received directly by Christian Aid.

### Internet Banking (BACS)

Our account details are;

**Christian Aid (Cheltenham) Committee**

Sort code: **20-20-15**

a/c no.: **30239623**

If eligible, email your payment reference and *gift-aid details* to [hartlett20@hotmail.com](mailto:hartlett20@hotmail.com)

### Cheque

Please send cheques and, if eligible, your *gift-aid details* to;

Mr Howard Bartlett  
Treasurer, Christian Aid (Cheltenham)  
20 Withyholt Park  
Charlton Kings  
Cheltenham, GL53 9BP

### Text Giving

To give £5, text **BIBLE** to 70460

To give another amount (£1-£20 in whole pounds), for example to give £18,  
text **BIBLE 18** to 70460

This will cost your donation plus one standard rate message.

You may add *Gift Aid* by following the instructions in the receipt message. Your donation is to Christ Church Cheltenham, who are running the text appeal for us, and will pass on the full amount raised to Christian Aid.

### *Gift-Aid it!*

To be eligible for us to add 25% to the value of your donations you must pay at least as much Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax as the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all your donations in that tax year. Otherwise it is your responsibility to pay any difference.

For us to make the claim we need the following *gift-aid details*:

**Name, House name or number, Post code, Amount paid, Date of payment.**

*(Note: you cannot click on the web addresses shown here: please go to the sites.)*

Mandy Whitefield, Chair of World Mission

*Our new Vicar Rev Canon Simon Heron writes on the subject of time:*

## CALENDARS

The creation of calendars – the practice of finding a way to keep track of the passing days as well as larger divisions of time – has been around for more than 10,000 years.



Originally focussed on the lunar and solar cycle, various cultures attempted to come up with a useful system that would regulate how society could operate. The Sumerians, the Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Elamites all used their own arrangement of dates, with varying degrees of complexity.

The Babylonian calendar had a year consisting of 12 lunar months which sounds quite familiar. But as the lunar cycle doesn't fit with the time it takes the Earth to travel around the Sun, it didn't take long for them to realise the calendar was not accurate enough. By the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC they had tweaked it to include a cycle taking into account both the Moon's phases and the time of the solar year. This meant the calendar was regulated by a system that lasted 19 years and equalled 235 months, and where a shortened additional month had to occasionally be inserted to make the days add up. Very much like February 29<sup>th</sup> in our leap years, but far more elaborate and intricate!

Although calendars are useful for planning activities, keeping a track of events, marking festivals and anniversaries, there are situations where they do little more than mark the passage of time. When one day looks very much like the previous one, which in turn is the same as tomorrow, the date on the calendar might be the only thing that changes.

In a time of lockdown, when our way of life has altered in some cases beyond recognition, it can be hard to find a rhythm to our lives, when our familiar pattern of meetings with friends, journeys to see family and trips to the cinema is non-existent.

The writer of the Psalms had time on his mind when he penned Psalm 90. He understood that God sits in a very different place to us, where days, weeks, months, and years, make no difference to him: *“Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”*

God is not governed by a calendar.

Although we are still very much looking forward to our move to Cheltenham, owing to the current worldwide health emergency, we, like so many others, find ourselves in a state of uncertainty. It will happen, but the actual date when it will occur is something of a mystery!

As we all look to a future that is unclear and uncertain God still calls us to put our time into his hands.

Yours in Christ

Simon

## **SLOWING DOWN**

Slow me down, Lord,  
Ease the pounding of my heart  
By the quietening of my mind.  
Teach me the art of slowing down,  
To look at a flower,  
To chat to a friend,  
To read a few lines from a good book.  
Remind me each day of the fable  
Of the hare and the tortoise,  
That I may know the race  
Is not always to the swift,  
That there is more to life than  
Increasing its speed.  
Let me look upward into the branches  
Of the towering Oak,  
And know that it grew great and strong  
Because it grew slowly and well.  
Slow me down, Lord, and inspire  
Me to send my roots deep into  
The soil of life's enduring values,  
That I may grow towards  
The stars of my greater destiny.

Amen.



## OUR COVID-19 SUPPORT TEAM

Christ Church has assembled a small, flexible group of volunteers to 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 others during this time of crisis.

Whilst we are a small group, we are open to serving people within the whole Cheltenham area.

To request help, please contact :

Tina on 01242 512246

Sara on 07974 355845

or email: [Christ Church Covid-19 team](#)

## SOUTH WEST ECUMENICAL CLUSTER GROUP



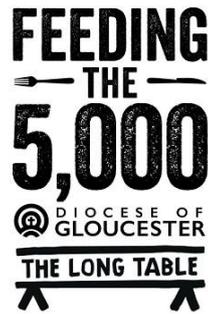
*The annual May Anniversary Weekend for Gas Green Baptist Church has been postponed until Autumn this year.*

*For more information and current news please visit their Facebook page.*

Christ Church is part of an active team of churches on this side of town, known as the 'cluster group'. They had a Zoom meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April and report positive news of how local Christians are coping in the current worldwide crisis. Like Christ Church, St Mark's Methodist, Gas Green and Salem Baptist churches are all managing to get Services out by IT means. St Andrew's URC has been producing weekly hard copy material: *The Pew Sheet Without Any Pews*. It will not be possible to organise a walk to the top of Leckhampton Hill on Ascension Day due to social distancing laws.

Brian Jenner, our Cluster Rep.

# CHURCH OF ENGLAND RESOURCES



The Diocese of Gloucester has resources for praying as a household including some short films by Bishop Rachel, and news of how you can help to feed local vulnerable people, as well as a weekly news bulletin. Visit: <https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/>

The national Church of England website has worship times online, plus useful service sheets and prayers which can be printed off, in particular for those who are unable to attend the funeral when a loved one has died. Visit: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

This prayer is taken from those resources for the bereaved:

Dear God,

Thank you for *[Name of person who has died]*  
and for all that he/she meant to me and to others.

I so wanted to say goodbye.

Help me to know You are there,  
holding all my hopes,  
holding all those I love,  
especially *[Name of person who has died]*  
and holding me this day too.

Be close to us all this day,  
with your peace and hope.

Amen.

## CONNECTING WITH CHRIST CHURCH:

*A familiar face and member of the congregation for some 35 years, Maria Poldervaart writes about her life and activities*

I come from a Dutch family, but both my sister and I were actually born in Indonesia as my father was working there for Phillips at the time. However, after two years our family moved back to Holland when I was about 18 months old and my sister was six months, so no memories of Indonesia remain. Apparently it was partly my fault we had to move as I was wilting in the heat: still do! Our doctor said I would be better in a cooler climate.

During our time back in Holland one of my brothers was born and I attended nursery school of which I just have a few flashback memories. One was of mum getting on the bike with me sitting behind and the bike tipping over. She was taking me to nursery but couldn't persuade me to get back on the bike again that day. Another was just before we came to the UK, when the nursery teacher asked me if I was looking forward to the move, and I said I didn't know as I had never been to England before. I remember thinking that was a stupid question.

It was in 1955 when I was four that we moved to Surrey, as my father was offered a job with Phillips in London. Also my other brother was born at that time. Mum in particular during the early years got rather homesick. So, for the first few years we swapped houses with a Dutch family during the summer holidays for several weeks. It meant we saw a bit of our relations and I remember I learnt to roller skate and ride a bike in Holland. In later years we enjoyed some family camping holidays in the south of France and one in Switzerland.

My sister and I started primary school after we moved to the UK and, of course, we had to learn English. Later I attended a secondary modern. We started off spiritually by going to the C of E church across the road from us and then when I was about seven years of age we joined a large and very lively Baptist church. There I went to junior church in the morning and later when I was older to the evening services as well, which were always full of young people. I remember going on a couple of youth getaways which were good fun.

[Cont'd...]

After Dad retired from work my parents went back to reside in Holland. But I chose to stay and worked in a children's day nursery here in Cheltenham.

I used to take in my recorder and sometimes my flute, and play and sing with the children when I did group times with them. They were very good at *Guess The Song* when I played a well-known tune to them.



Since I retired in 2013 I have carried on with the different activities that I enjoy. These include playing with a local wind band and singing with the Cheltenham Choral Society. I have also been involved in theatrical productions, and taken worship services at local care homes, with Arts Ecclesia.

At Christ Church, which I attend regularly, I enjoy playing with the Worship Group and singing with the Choir. I am also on one of the Open The Book teams from Christ Church that goes into Gloucester Road School once a fortnight, where we tell and act out Bible stories. The children love it and are always very keen to take part. I help with the church's Family Time too.

At the moment, of course, all these activities have sadly stopped. I have appreciated the Christ Church Online Services in recent weeks, and in terms of secular music, joined Gareth Malone's virtual choir.

Right now we are all living in a very strange time period, but hopefully that will soon pass, God willing, and some good will come out of it.

Maria Poldervaart

*"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28*

## OUR HISTORIC HOUSE



*Brian and Sue Jenner took on a real challenge when they opted to buy a 300 year-old property.*

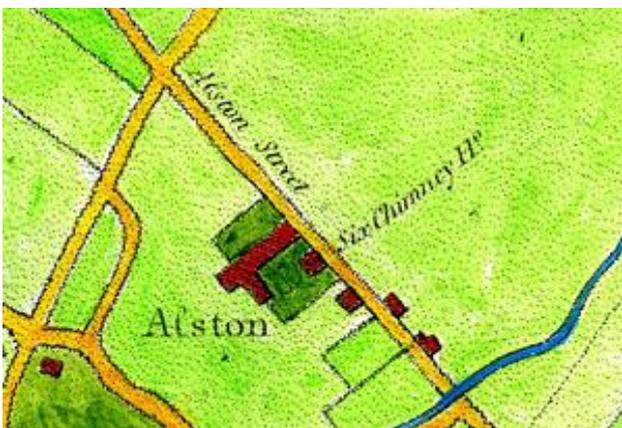
*The oldest house in the Parish, and built before most of the town came into being, it is not only their home, but also a slice of history.*

*Sue gave Outreach more details in a telephone interview:*

Tucked away at the end of Arle Avenue, Alstone House (formerly Lower Alstone House) looks quite majestic, but is hardly noticed by shoppers hurrying along the nearby footpath which leads to Tesco.

Sue says: “We have been here 20 years and originally had our three daughters, plus a German student living with us. We have eight bedrooms. Now there is just myself, Brian and his Mum Pam, who helped us with our finances. We sold our previous home and so did she, to be able to afford to buy Alstone House.”

It is now thought to be Cheltenham’s only surviving Queen Anne period property. She explains: “We know the exact age has never been decided, 1693 or 1703 have been suggested. The Deeds are currently with the local Council – they own adjacent land.”



*Detail from an 1806 map shows the house as the last property in Alston Street, close by the River Chelt, marking the boundary of Christ Church Parish. The area was then mainly fields, farmland and allotments.*

[Cont'd...]



“This road used to be called Six Chimneys Lane, named after a manor house which was the largest dwelling around here, and in the 1800s it was known as Alston Street.”

In coming here the couple had a threefold criteria, which Alstone House was able to meet: “We needed more space, but had to choose a larger house we could afford, and wanted to stay within the Parish. We are right on the edge of the Parish boundary of Christ Church, defined by the River Chelt which is close by.”

“We bought the house knowing it was a wreck,” Sue admits, “and have renovated it ourselves with no help from any grant making trusts. It is Grade II listed and permission has to be gained for alterations and works to happen. There is always something needing to be done. If anyone knows of a builder who charges reasonable rates and likes working on old properties, please let us know!”

*From the Editor: We are keen to have more articles like this in Outreach. If you have an interesting and uplifting story to share please contact me at: [artseccles@googlemail.com](mailto:artseccles@googlemail.com). Deadline for the June 2020 issue is 24<sup>th</sup> May.*

## THE EDITOR THINKS ABOUT RISING UP



I do love a bit of science fiction. Ever since I discovered Superman and other heroes in DC Comics as a child, my imagination has been stirred by thoughts of gravity defying feats of courage.

That could be why I have never had a problem in believing the New Testament accounts of Jesus appearing to the disciples after his death, and on Ascension Day rising up into the cloud filled sky, to return to his own dimension.

That was the last time they saw him, and it was a rather spectacular exit.

The Lord had just delivered a major set of instructions to his followers, as to what they should do in the future. These ended with Jesus telling them to go all over the world in his name: a statement which has become known as ‘the great commission’ in church circles.

Then he said: *“I am with you always, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20), before lifting off from the ground, and disappearing.

But, unlike E.T. He did not mean a memory of him would be right there in their hearts. Rather, that through God’s power, He would actually remain alongside them no matter what the circumstances might be.

In all the Bible versions I have read, his words in that sentence begin *“I am”* and not *“I will be”*. I believe this has a dual meaning, relating to the fact that the Almighty was first revealed to Moses, as *“I am”* (Yahweh or Jehovah being translated names/derivatives we have become familiar with). So Jesus here was confirming his divinity. God with them forever.

That is one heaven of a promise. And it can be just as true for us today, and help us to rise above anything the world throws at us.

Shirley Collins

## A BIBLE FULL OF PROMISES

How well do you know Scripture and do you use it in your daily life? The Bible is full of God's promises which can be a great source of comfort and strength. The next two pages are full of helpful verses. If any of these 'jump out' at you or seem important right now, we suggest you print off or write these down, keep them close by, and say them out loud. The remainder you could use in a 'Promise Box':

Cover a small empty box with colourful paper and decorations. Print off or copy the promises onto card or paper, cut into small pieces, with one promise on each piece. Put them inside the box. Take one out when you feel the need, or on a regular basis as a thought for each day.



"I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20

Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4

His compassion never ends. It is only the Lord's mercies that have kept us from complete destruction. Great is his faithfulness; his loving-kindness begins afresh each day. Lamentations 3:22-23

"I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten." Joel 2:25

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst." John 6:35

Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shall you dwell in the land and be fed. Psalm 37:3

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

"I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:19

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”  
Matthew 7:9-11

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32

“No weapon formed against you will prosper and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the Lord's servants and their vindication is from Me,” declares the Lord.  
Isaiah 54:17

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” 1 John 5:14

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.  
Deuteronomy 31:8

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3

He replied, “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.” Luke 17:6

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you, wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.” Psalm 91:14

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you.” Isaiah 41:10

The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever. Psalm 37:29

But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.” Mark 10:27

The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who are upright. Psalm 84:11

## ORGANISATIONS AND LEADERS

### FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:

**Playgroup:** 9am-3pm Monday to Friday } 243021/  
[christchurchplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk](mailto: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 Tina Benney 512246

### MUSIC FOR WORSHIP

**Director of Music:** Tim Ingold 01452 524199

**Choir:** Friday, Music Room  
6.30-8pm Trebles, 7.30-9pm Adults

**Worship Group:** Beck Donaldson 01451 860561

### OUR MISSION PARTNERS:

The Matilda Project, Wendy Phillips, [matildaproject@gmail.com](mailto:matildaproject@gmail.com)  
Mission Without Borders, Jos Downey, [jdowney@mwbuk.org](mailto:jdowney@mwbuk.org)

***ALL ACTIVITIES ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE***

## WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH

### ***Sunday***

8am **HOLY COMMUNION** - a said service  
1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays (Prayer Book) 2nd &  
4th Sundays (Common Worship)

10.30am 1st Sunday **PARISH COMMUNION** CW  
2nd Sunday **FAMILY SERVICE**  
3rd Sunday **PARISH COMMUNION** CW  
4th Sunday **MORNING WORSHIP**  
5th Sunday **MORNING WORSHIP**

Children are in church for the first few minutes of each Service,  
and then leave for their Sunday teaching groups:

***Scramblers (Key Stage 1), Explorers (Key Stage 2) and  
Pathfinders (Years 7-9)*** meet during each 10.30am Service  
except Family Service.

**CRECHE** available each Sunday morning for the under 3s.

6.30pm Choral Evensong is held once a month, often on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday.

### ***Monday to Friday***

8.45am **MORNING PRAYER**

A wonderful way to start the day. Newcomers welcome to join the group who  
enjoy the benefits of Morning Prayer. We meet for about half an hour.

### ***Wednesday***

10.30am **HOLY COMMUNION** BCP

**HOME GROUPS for Bible Study & Fellowship**  
meet regularly on different days of the week.  
Newcomers are always welcome

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