

Week ending 3 May 2025

Connect

The bulletin for clergy, lay leaders and all who are the Church in the Diocese of Bath and Wells.



Celebrating Easter across our diocese

It was such an incredible Holy Week and Easter across our diocese. From dawn services to Passover suppers, and Easter vigils, right across Bath and Wells churches celebrated Easter together with their communities. Many took part in a Walk of Witness on Good Friday, Family Services offered a warm welcome to all, and children and young people took part in creative activities to explore the Easter message, as we shared in the hope and joy of Christ's resurrection together.



Registration open for diocesan Budget Consultation 2025

From 9 June to 9 July there will be an opportunity for people from the parishes to attend a session to discuss the plan for a three-year budget for the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF).

Diocesan Secretary, Jenny Hollingsworth says, “By setting a three-year budget we will give both the parishes and the Diocesan Board of Finance greater clarity and stability.

During last year’s consultation on how our benefices and parishes pay into the common fund, people expressed a desire for greater transparency and understanding about how the diocesan-wide budget is constructed and spent. I gave an undertaking to do that and I hope this consultation will help us continue our conversation and help us consider together, as we are charged with growing our churches and transforming our communities, how does our budget support that, for both the parishes and the DBF?

“We have arranged for meeting dates in morning, afternoon, evening, in person and online and in different parts of the diocese. We want as many people as possible to attend so we can garner the wisdom as widely as possible from across our diocese.”

Members from the Support Services teams – Secretariat, Finance, Mission Support & Ministry Development and Education – will attend the sessions and be available to answer questions.

[You can now register to attend one of the following sessions.](#)

Interested in Church Money Matters?

Why not come along to one of our Church Money Matters gatherings? They are for anyone interested in church finances and there’s one taking place in Wells Archdeaconry 10:00 to 13:00 on Friday, 23 May at Flourish House, Wells.

Further sessions are planned to take place in Bath Archdeaconry (14:00 to 17:00 on Monday, 15 September) and Taunton Archdeaconry (18:00 to 21:00 on Tuesday, 14 October). [Find out more and register.](#)

Looking to review your approach to giving and fundraising?

We would love to invite you to be a part of the next Cornerstone cohort!

Cornerstone is an online tool, developed to help your church on its journey of generosity. It breaks down each area of activity into more manageable steps, based on the unique needs and experience within your own context, all with ongoing support from the Giving and Funding team. [Find out more.](#)

£1,000 Funding from Tesco and easyfundraising

Tesco and easyfundraising have come together to help churches this May by offering five £1,000 funding pots.

To take part follow these simple steps:

- Make sure your church is registered with easyfundraising using the link below.
- Ask everyone connected to your church to sign up and to try it out with a Tesco shop.

[Find out more and register online now:](#)

A portrait of Bishop Ruth, a woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a white clerical collar, smiling. The background shows the interior of a church with stone arches.

The logo for the Diocese of Bath & Wells, featuring a cross and the text "DIOCESE OF Bath & Wells" and "Living and telling the story of Jesus".

Loving God, we pray for Bishop Ruth as she begins her new role as Interim Bishop of Liverpool.

Fill her with wisdom, courage and compassion as she leads your people. May she be a source of unity, hope, and encouragement, and may Your Spirit guide her in all she does.

Prayers for Bishop Ruth

We pray for Bishop Ruth whose Welcome and Commissioning Service takes place at [Liverpool Cathedral](#) on Saturday 3 May 2025 at 15:00.

This special service marks the beginning of Bishop Ruth's ministry in the Diocese of Liverpool.



Clergy Day 2025 - registration open!

This year's Clergy Day takes place on Monday 16 June 09.30 - 16:00 at the Canalside Conference Centre, Bridgwater TA6 6LQ.

Bishop Michael will reflect and lead discussions around the diocesan vision, and we are delighted that Revd Sue Cooke, National Director of [Leading your Church into Growth](#), will be our key note speaker. There will be lunch and refreshments, an opportunity to chat, make connections, share ideas, and meet with members of the wider diocesan support services.

You should have already have received an email invitation. Please ensure you RSVP by midnight, Sunday 1 June, to confirm your place [using this link to the online form](#).



Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse – An update on safeguarding training from the Safeguarding team

The National Safeguarding Team has updated the training requirements for the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse online course accessed online via [the Church of England training portal](#).

Previously, this course had been a requirement for all clergy, licensed ministers, PSOs and PCC members. The national team have now updated this requirement so that anyone working with children, young people or vulnerable adults will be required to undertake the online course within 6 months of beginning a new role (or within the next 3 years if previously recruited). [Please read more about the updated training requirements.](#)

We are deeply grateful for the dedication of volunteers and staff across the diocese, and recognise that these changes in requirements may have an impact on many. The diocesan Safeguarding team are here to support you. If you have any questions or need further guidance, please do visit the [Safeguarding section of the Bath and Wells website](#).

Safeguarding Leadership courses

Safeguarding Leadership courses in May are fully subscribed and places for training in June are filling up quickly. The Safeguarding team has added additional courses for the summer period. [Find out more about the courses on offer.](#)

New Mission Development Team Leader and Chaplaincy Adviser

We are delighted to announce that following interviews Jonathan Philpott has been appointed as Mission Development Team Leader and Richard Kelley has been appointed as Chaplaincy Adviser. Both posts have been vacant since Mike Haslam moved to a new role in November 2024 and we have keenly felt the gap in the team. Both roles will be part-time, with the Chaplaincy Adviser post part funded through the generosity of the St Matthias Trust. [Read more](#) about Jonathan and Richard and their new roles.



80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War

On 8 May 2025, the nation is marking the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE Day). Around the country, events will be taking place to pay tribute to those involved in that conflict, as well as reminding us to pray and work for peace in our communities and in the world. You can find out more about the commemorations taking place for both the anniversary of VE Day and also the 80th anniversary of VJ Day on 15 August 2025 [on the government's dedicated website](#).

On VE Day, churches sounded their bells to signify the end of the war. This year on 8 May at 6:30pm, church bells will ring out once again in thanks for the peace that so many sacrificed their lives for. Prayers and resources for VE Day can be found on the [Church of England website](#).

Ecclesiastical also has guidance for those who may be planning an event to mark VE Day.

- [Responsibility For Church Organised Events | Church Insurance Made Simple | Ecclesiastical](#)
- [Self-Assessment for Churches | Risk Management](#)
- [Bell ringing in Churches | Risk Management | Ecclesiastical](#)
- [Beacons | Church guidance | Ecclesiastical](#)
- [Food safety for churches | Risk Management](#)



Welcoming communities and racial Justice

The latest edition of [Raising Young Voices](#), the blog dedicated to sharing the thoughts, ideas and experiences of children and young people, discusses welcoming communities and racial justice. For this blog, Cesca visited primary and secondary schools to ask pupils, 'What does a welcoming community look like to you? Does your school take racial justice seriously? Is it okay to be different?' [She shares what the children and young people had to say.](#)



Intentionally intergenerational

Saturday 11 October, 10:00 – 15:00 at Flourish House, Wells. A free day conference exploring worship and ministry across the generations. The Go Team and leaders from a variety of contexts and traditions will share stories and top tips. Exploring: Why intergenerational? How do we start? And much more.

[Book your place online.](#)



Healing Forum

Monday 14 July 2025, 10.00 – 12.30.
Flourish House, Wells.

This Healing Forum will be about encouraging a healthy culture and how we support those experiencing domestic abuse. The speaker will be the Revd Lucy Davies.

To book a place, contact:

Sue.whitehead@bathwells.anglican.org

01749 685272

Join the Celebration of Lay Ministry

Everyone is invited to the celebration at Wells Cathedral on 14 June.

[Sign up now.](#)

This year, Worship Leader Jay Cook from Bath will be leading worship in the Reflective Space - a quiet, area set aside for prayer, stillness, and personal connection with God. There will also be a dedicated team available to pray with and for you.

Jay shares how he hopes the event will be washed over in prayer.



Christian Aid Week 2025

Wells Cathedral is hosting a special Evensong service, on Sunday, May 11, as part of [Christian Aid Week 2025](#). There will also be an exhibition of Christian Aid posters to mark the organisation's 80th anniversary. Anyone can attend. The posters can also be seen at t Wells Methodist Church Sat May 10 from 10am-noon.



Sea Sunday Resources

14 July is a time when congregations can pray for the men and women who bring us more than 90 per cent of everything we own and use, and give thanks for their crucial work and the support they receive from maritime charities. The full range of resources are available to download from the [Sailors' Society website](#).



Awaken events

Young Adults weekend away, 20-22 June

Guests include Luke Wareham & Andy Arscott.
[Book online.](#)

An evening of worship with Graham Kendrick
Taunton

Saturday 10 May 2025,
19:30- 21:15

[Book online](#)

- **Wells Cathedral is seeking Committee Members.** Chapter are seeking volunteers with finance, HR or management backgrounds, particularly those with strong links across Somerset, to join the Finance, Audit & Risk and Nominations Committees. Further details can be found on the [vacancies section of Wells Cathedral's website](#). The closing date is 28 May 2025.
- **Diversity data collection focus group** The national church is running a project which aims to improve the diversity data it has. This work will allow it to monitor how diverse we are as an organisation, measure progress and demonstrate transparency. A series of 90-minute sessions are open to stipendiary clergy to share what barriers there might be towards this work. [Sign up using the online form](#) or email Jonathan.ako@churchofengland.org
- **Spiritual Walk** with Steven Wort, Hedgerow Chaplain. 20 May meet at Cothelstone Hill Car Park at 10:00am. The walk will be around 3.5 miles and take about 2.5 hours. To book please email stevenwort@hotmail.co.uk or 07557 958013 text or message.
- **May courses at Sarum College** Including:
 - [Slavery, Reparations, and Theology](#)
 - [Social Media for Parishes and Clergy](#)
 - [Rural Learning Lunchtimes](#)

If you have news to share, tag us on your social media channel or [email the Communications team](#).



Baptised in the village stream

On a spring day, a mother and her two sons were baptised in the stream that runs through the village of Rodney Stoke. Their decision to be baptised outdoors reflected both their growing faith and their deep appreciation for nature. Each was immersed in the water - symbolising the beginning of a new life of



Peace Doves bring town together

St John's Church in Keynsham has created a special peace project. The initiative brings together children, teachers, church members, residents of care homes, and community groups in a collective witness for peace, culminating in a dove-themed exhibition set to open in time for VE Day.



Generous giving as part of Gift Day

At St Paul's Church in Weston-super-Mare a community Gift Day helped raise around £100,000.

Revd Craig Philbrick Vicar at St Paul's explained, "Gift Day was about inviting people to respond to God's call. The day was planned months in advance. Six weeks ahead of the day St Paul's started to think

faith and relationship with God, and reflecting the spiritual transformation they are stepping into.

Though the water was cold, it did not distract from the significance of the moment, which was shared with family, friends, and members of the church community.

Revd Thea Oliver, Associate Priest St Andrew's Church in Cheddar, who baptised the family said, "It was wonderful. What a lovely way to be baptised. It was a very special and spiritual experience. There were about 25 family and friends, and a few passers-by stopped to watch or ask questions. The day itself was beautiful – a lovely sunny spring day. We even had lambs jumping about in the background."

Lesley Organ, Church Warden at St John's was inspired by her visit to the exhibition by sculptor Peter Walker at Wells Cathedral.

A £500 grant from the town council funded materials including hundreds of paper doves for people to decorate and a knitting pattern for those who wanted to make their own dove. Retired teachers from the congregation connected with local schools and church members reached out to local care homes, encouraging residents to share their reflections.

Knitted doves have been hung outside the church. Inside, paper ones will fill the nave. The exhibition opens to the public on 5 May, in the lead-up to VE Day commemoration.

[Find out more about the project.](#)

about what would take place and Craig began a series of sermons about money, discussing with the church community what their goal should be and encouraging people to pray about and plan their response."

Initially St Paul's set a cautious goal. Craig says, "We budgeted £25,000 because we were trying to make the budget work. Then we decided to double it to £50,000 just to see what would happen and we were amazed when it came in nearer £100,000."

The team at St Paul's also say it was important to them to talk about and share the stories of where people generously gave is making a difference so people can see the impact of their giving.

[Read all about Gift Day at St Paul's.](#)

Diocese of Bath and Wells

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