

Week ending 14 March 2026

Connect

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



Bishop Michael's Easter pilgrimage

Across our Diocese of Bath and Wells, churches are preparing to celebrate Easter, this most important day of our Christian calendar. Throughout Holy Week and on Easter Sunday there will be sunrise services and church services, community meals and coffee mornings with hot cross buns, and so much more.

During Holy Week, Bishop Michael will be witnessing many of these activities as he undertakes a pilgrimage walk through Exmoor and the Quantocks, calling into many churches along the way.

He says, "During this year of 2026, as a diocese together, we are having an especial focus on prayer. Pilgrimage is one of the most ancient ways that Christians have prayed, come closer to God and learned how better to walk with the Lord throughout their lives. I'm so excited that during Holy Week I'll be making this pilgrimage, meeting members of our churches, praying with them, and experiencing God in the beauty of His creation that's all

around us. It's going to be an inspiring journey that I look forward to sharing with many different people.”

Find out more at: bathandwells.org.uk/bishops-pilgrimage



Join us to discuss money matters!

We were delighted to welcome many of you to our first Money Matters Q&A this week hosted by members of our Finance and Giving and Funding teams.

It was very inspirational, with treasurers sharing success stories and concerns. One treasurer shared her experience of securing small grants and highlighted the success of digital giving, noting a 60% increase in donations since introducing contactless machines.

If you missed it, don't worry, there are three more sessions planned for 2026 and they are for anyone with a question about church money. You will find out how other parishes are tackling similar challenges and making the most of new opportunities, or just get the answer to a question you have about anything church money related. You can submit your questions in advance, or during the sessions.

The Wednesday sessions will take place via Zoom between 12:30 and 13:30 on:

- 3 June
- 9 September and
- 4 November

So come and join the chat. More information is available [on the Bath and Wells website](https://bathandwells.org.uk).



Full-time diocesan lead for mission development

Jonathan Philpott has been confirmed as the full-time Mission Development Team Leader for Bath and Wells. Jonathan has filled the role on a part-time basis since May 2025, alongside a part-time role with the diocesan Giving and Funding team.

Julia Hill, Head of Mission Support and Ministry Development says, "I am delighted that we have been able to appoint Jonathan into this role on a full-time basis. As we seek to grow our churches and transform our communities, effective support for our parishes in this area is vital and Jonathan has already made a significant impact in the role. With his background in parish ministry, and his recent work as giving and funding adviser, he brings a wealth of valuable experience and understanding which I know is appreciated by those he supports, whether in parishes or chaplaincies."

Jonathan will continue to work closely with the Giving and Funding team, who now sit under the Finance team, to support parishes with their mission in ways that enable them to flourish into the future. The Giving and Funding team will review how best to use their funding from the national church to continue to support parishes across our diocese.

We are really pleased to be able to offer a new grants section on our website. This pulls together information on available grants for mission and, soon to follow, Net Zero, Buildings and Accessibility as well as access to Cornerstone which is a huge grants database. Information can be found [here](#).

Please have a look at these pages to see if you have any projects that might be eligible. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing how we can help support the mission and ministry of the local churches across our diocese as much as we can.

New Giving and Grants web pages



Update on the closure of Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has, as of 18 February 2026, closed the [Listed Places of Worship \(LPW\) Grant Scheme](#), as the funding for 2025-6 has now been fully allocated.

The DCMS (see link above) confirms that no further applications will be accepted, and existing applicants still awaiting an outcome will hear by 15 April 2026. It also confirms that the new Places of Worship Renewal Fund (PWRF) will open for applications in due course. The national church buildings team is working with the DCMS and Historic England, which will administer the new Fund, to help shape it. We will share the details of what the new Fund means to churches and cathedrals as soon as we can.

If you are still hoping to apply for a grant to reimburse VAT on your project, the team at the national church would be grateful to know so that they can include this in the broader understanding of the geographical need.

Please send the following information to churchbuildings@churchofengland.org:

1. The total value of your project.
2. The total amount of eligible VAT (bearing in mind the £25k cap in 2025-2026)
3. (optional) The postcode of the place of worship. We would not publish any identifiable information.
4. (optional) Anything else you would like to share about your project with the national church buildings team.



Year of Prayer

Our prayer boxes are touring the diocese during our Year of Prayer, and recently spent a week at St Aldhelm's school in Shepton Mallet.

During the week, Revd Gill Sakakini led worship with the children. They took turns to delve into the box and draw out an object out before discussing what it might mean to them. Teachers observed that while doing this the children were very thoughtful and moved to express thanks to God.

Revd Gill recommends the prayer boxes and said, 'The Prayer Box activities brought fresh and fun ways to think about prayer, embracing both quiet personal talking with God and interactive ways of praying in groups in embodied ways. The blow up globe was particularly inspiring and memorable!'

If you would like to use one of the prayer boxes, [please visit the prayer pages of the Bath and Wells website](#) for more details on how to book them, and don't forget you can share your prayers, videos and pictures [on the online prayer wall](#).



Global Learning and Partnerships Advisory Group

We have recently relaunched what was previously known as the World Mission and Global Justice Governance Group under a new identity and with a new focus. Including work supporting our diocesan Zambia Link, we also want to look at what we can learn from the global church and other Christian organisations in a much more mutual working relationship. We hope to discover and share learning from across the global church that can help inform our own faith journey, see issues of justice in a global perspective and gain a global understanding of what it means to be a missional church; living and telling the story of Jesus. We are really excited about this, and if you are excited too we would love to hear from you. There are spaces available on the advisory group itself and in the future we would love to explore developing a wider network of people who feel excited about what might come out of this. For more information please email [Jonathan Philpott](mailto:Jonathan.Philpott).



From Lament to Action

The From Lament to Action Group is working to help our diocese build on the findings of the [Independent Racial Justice Report](#) released earlier this year, and to guide us as we seek to be a diocese that values and cherishes everyone: one where the voices and gifts of people of all ages and backgrounds are noticed, welcomed and enabled.

We are delighted to share that, thanks to a national grant, we have been able to appoint Anira Khokhar as our Diocesan Racial Justice Adviser. She will work with the From Lament to Action Group to explore how we are living out the fourth mark of Anglican mission, and to help guide and support the diocese as we continue to develop and embed our commitment to racial justice.

In the coming weeks, it is hoped that new volunteer members will also join the group, bringing their diverse perspectives, lived experience, and specialist skills. They will offer vital insight, challenge and encouragement as we pursue meaningful and lasting change, helping to ensure that our commitment to racial justice leads to practical, sustained action and that everyone's gifts and voices are recognised and enabled.

Equipping for ministry

Upcoming learning and development opportunities for lay and ordained ministers

- Spiritual landscapes Tues 24 March
- Exploring preaching Sat 18 April
- Pathway to LWA: Part 1 of 2 Thurs 23 April
- Liturgy day Tues 28 April

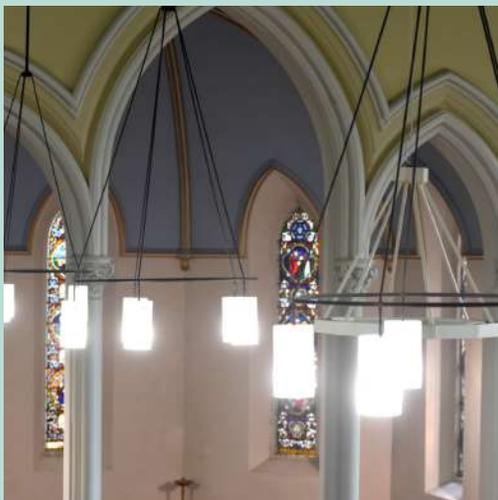
For more information visit bathandwells.org.uk/learning-development-programme



Online Church Service for Mothering Sunday

We're delighted to share that this Sunday's online service for Mothering Sunday comes from St John's Church in Glastonbury. The service will be available to watch on [Church of England Facebook](#) page and on the Church of England [YouTube channel](#) from 9am on Sunday.

Here Revd Alice Watson, Vicar of Glastonbury St John's and St Benedict's with Meare tells us more.



Do you need help with LED lighting?

Donate-A-Light CIC, is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company. The company repurposes unused surplus LED lighting from manufacturers to provide sustainable, energy-efficient



Ethical Easter at Flourish House

The Diocese of Bath and Wells is committed to the Ecochurch pathway and being a Fairtrade Organisation. Staff at Flourish House recently showed how our aim of reducing our personal impact

lighting solutions for charities, care homes, hospices, and other non-profit organisations, who don't have the funds to upgrade.

Their mission is to reduce energy costs, improve lighting quality, and enhance safety for those in need, while simultaneously reducing environmental waste. [Read more on their website.](#)

on the environment and making ethical choices can be fun, by sharing ethical Easter chocolate! Sara Emmett, Climate Justice and Environment Adviser said, "We enjoyed a selection of products from companies that scored well on Ethical Consumers website and which were bought from Ethical Superstore and the Co-op."

Intercultural Mission Conference

Anglican Intercultural Mission Conference: The Primer, takes place in Wolverhampton on Saturday 21 March 2026 (09:30–16:00). The day is practical and designed for clergy and lay leaders, parish teams, and diocesan colleagues who want to move from goodwill to workable steps in local church life. [Book your tickets online via Eventbrite.](#)

In the video below The Rt Revd Dr Tim Wambunya, Bishop of Wolverhampton and Founder Chair, Anglican Network for Intercultural Churches (ANIC), shares an invitation and more information about the event.



Director of Education meets Schools Minister

Did you know that the Diocese of Bath and Wells education department supports 182 schools across our diocese?

Last week, Ed Gregory, our Director of Education, along with directors of education for other Church of England dioceses, met with Georgia Gould MP,



Schools Minister, and Andy Wolfe, interim CEO for the National Society of Education. The meeting follows the launch of the schools white paper and SEND consultation, recognising the Church of England's strategic role as a provider of education, discussing ways to strengthen partnership working between dioceses and the Department for Education with flourishing of children and young people at heart.



Running retreat for women

Would you like to join a small group of women for a weekend of reflective running with time and space to connect with yourself and God in the beautiful Dorset countryside?

There will be two gentle guided runs, individual spiritual direction sessions, shared meals and shared reflective time, along with the opportunity to engage in activities or explore the area alone. For more information [check out the website.](#)



Join the fun at Family Max

Family Max is a fun day out for children of clergy households at Mendip Activity Centre for under 11s. Taking place on Saturday 6 June this year. Thanks to the generous support of the Clergy Support Trust, we are able to offer a subsidised price of £6.50 per person and free for under 3's.

More information about the day and how to book your place, [is available on the diocesan website.](#)

- The beauty of butterflies and why they matter - at Flax Bourton Church on Friday 27 March 7-9pm. Speakers are Jonathan Bradley, a local writer and university academic who has authored several books, and Yealand Kalfay an a retired doctor who devotes much time to wildlife photography. Tickets are £5 and free for under 18s. Search 'the beauty of butterflies' on Eventbrite or contact barrowflaxchurchtreasurer@gmail.com
- Lego Serious Play Remix Workshop, Wednesday 18 March, 13:30–15:30 at Bagley Baptist Church. Led by Ben Mizen, a Creative Consultant, Founder of Ideas Alchemy and a former diocesan youth ministry adviser. £5 per person. [Please book](#)
- AChurchNearYou.com: How to use the platform as your church's free website webinar. [Watch this extended webinar](#) to gain confidence editing an individual church site and a benefice site. This webinar is repeated live monthly.
- Benefice features on AChurchNearYou.com: Demo and Q&A webinar. Find out about the new options for people who edit multiple churches on AChurchNearYou.com. [Watch this webinar recording](#) to find out more about the new benefice sites and features.

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



A creative approach to Bible study

During 2024-2025 a number of people met weekly at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Bridgwater to study Old Testament history and the stories associated with it. As part of the Bible study, participants recreated the stories into individual quilts. These quilts are now going to go on display in the church to showcase not only the work of those who created them, but as a different way to see, understand and think about the stories in the



Learning lifesaving skills

The team from All Saints' Church, Wrington have liaised with Wrington WI and coordinated CPR training via the British Heart Foundation's 'RevivR' program.

It follows an earlier fund raising campaign undertaken by members of the church to buy a community defibrillator. The team at All Saints began to think about offering training after an elderly man became unwell in church. Sue Lamburne, a trained



Quiet Day of prayer and contemplation

A Quiet Reflection Day held at St John's Church, Wellington on 6 March offered a welcoming and peaceful space for people to pause, pray and reflect.

The day was open to people from across the area. Together they spent time using a range of reflective activities, including creative materials to help deepen their prayer and contemplation.

Fiona Brown, from St John's, organised the

Bible. Revd Catherine Carlyon, Vicar of the Benefice of St Francis of Assisi, Bridgwater, who developed the idea for the quilts, explained how the Bible study combines storytelling and quilting. The participants would listen to a Bible story and discuss it, and then take the quilt pattern, which Catherine designed, together with fabric of their choice, home to make the quilt square and the following week return with that story completed. [Read more.](#)

An exhibition of this work is planned for Saturday 21 March (10am -4pm) at St. Francis Church, Bridgwater. If you would be interested in using the patterns for your church, Catherine is happy for you to get in touch email her at vicar@stfrancissaxongreen.org

nurse, and member of All Saints, set about organising training and, as that was successful, she began fund raising for a defibrillator.

Now the team is continuing that work and has set about encouraging more people to be trained - the latest step being the RevivR training program. It is free, online and easily accessible. To date, 50 people have undertaken the training with another date planned in March.

The team has highlighted the importance of knowing how to perform CPR and use a defibrillator through a poster campaign in Wrington.

day. She says, "People came and stayed for the morning who might not come to a traditional retreat day. It offered a healing sanctuary space, and a space for replenishment to some who usually serve. We hope this will have sown a seed in the mind of people unable to come, that they may want to join other Quiet Reflection days in the future."

St John's Church was used for Morning Prayer, Midday Prayer and private prayer, while the adjoining hall hosted the quiet reflection activities. Everyone was invited to bring a packed lunch and share a relaxed social hour together afterwards.

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

Sharing The Lord's Prayer

As part of the #YearOfPrayer we are sharing The Lord's Prayer as a video each week. This week Revd Farhad Chermahini, Assistant Curate, Holy Trinity, Yeovil, prays with us. If you would like to record the Lord's Prayer, please contact the Comms team comms@bathwells.anglican.org



Diocese of Bath and Wells

The Diocese of Bath and Wells Flourish House, Wells
United Kingdom

Our mailing address is:

comms@bathwells.anglican.org

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