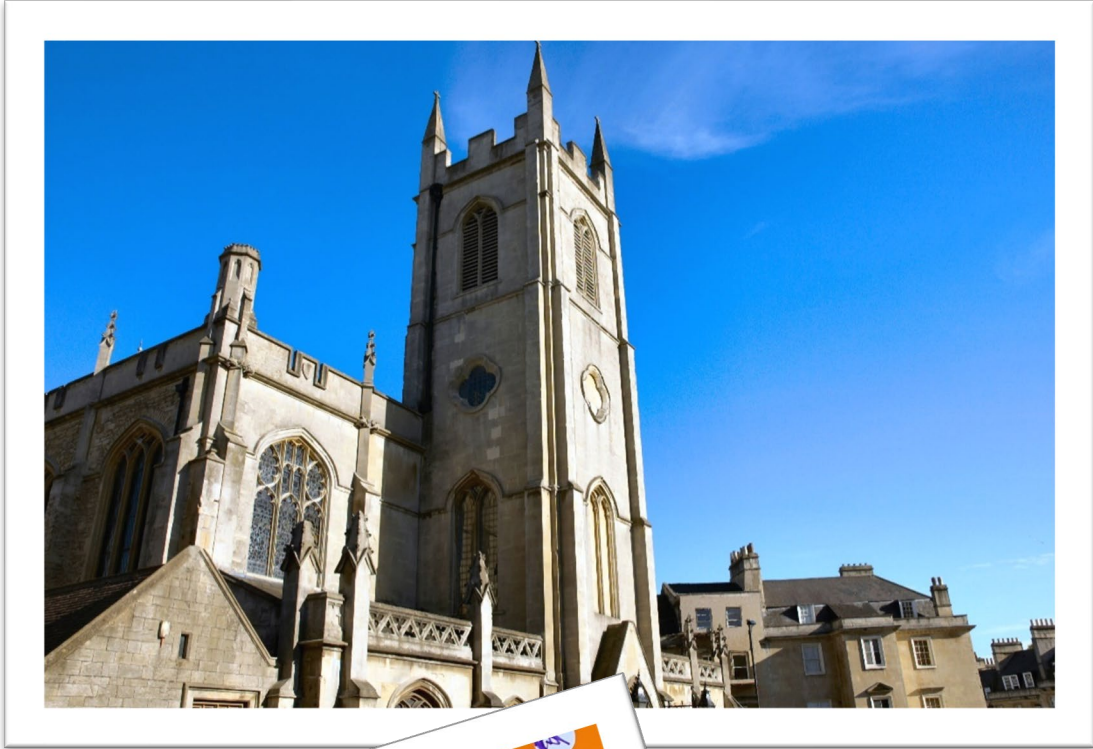




Christ Church Bath



Church Profile

2024

**Christ Church is a liberal
and inclusive church, seeking
God through:**

Beauty in our worship

Honesty in our faith and doubt

Service in our community



What are we?

Christ Church is one of a handful of independent proprietary chapels in the country, an extra-parochial place in the Church's parlance. Built in Bath at the very end of the 18th century specifically to be free to all worshippers at the time of pew rents, that early ethos of welcoming all continues to drive everything that we try to be.

The church is administered by a charitable Trust (registered charity 1055275) which for 225 years has been charged simply with employing its own clergy, ensuring that holy worship is conducted regularly, and maintaining the building in good order. Despite our nominal independence, we are close to and very much part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

To the congregation, Christ Church has the look and feel of any other Church of England church. Behind the scenes the Trustees, following the aims of the 1801 Trust deed, take on some of the responsibilities more normally associated with the Diocese (e.g. the Priest-in-Charge is employed and paid by the Trust), and of the churchwardens (e.g. ensuring the property is well-maintained). More details are in the box below.

The Trustees

Christ Church is governed by its charitable Trust deed of 6 May 1801, and it operates under a set of standing orders derived from the deed, which the Trustees review every year. There are currently ten Trustees including two *ex officio* members: the Rector of Walcot (in whose parish we sit geographically) and the Archdeacon of Bath. The *ex officio* Trustees do not always attend meetings but receive all agendas and minutes and are fully engaged with the Trust's work. The remaining Trustees are members (or in one case a former member) of the congregation elected by the Trustees for a six-year term which is renewable. Occasional vacancies are filled by election. The Priest-in-Charge (who as an employee of the Trust, will not themselves be a Trustee) and the Church Wardens are invited to all Trust meetings, and normally attend.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance of the church fabric, the appointment and payment of their employees (currently the Priest-in-Charge, the Verger, the Director and Assistant Directors of Music, and the Organ Scholar) and all legal responsibilities relating to them, and for managing the trust's assets, its property, finances and reserves.

It has been the Trust's choice that the week-by-week running of the church be managed by Christ Church Council; a group elected by and from the congregation. More details are in the box below.

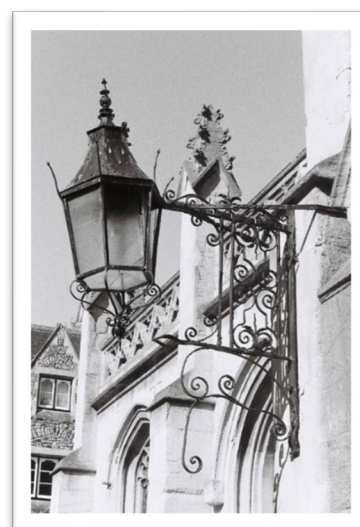
The Church Council

Church Council meets around eight times a year to manage the regular activities of the church community and to discuss wider topics about the future direction and vision for the church. It is normally chaired by the Priest-in-Charge, who together with the two churchwardens, two Deanery Synod representatives and the curate (if one is in post) are *ex officio* members. There are nine elected members selected by the Annual Church Meeting to serve a three-year term (with three positions being open for election each year).

Church income is generated from property and charitable giving from the congregation. For more details of our income and expenditure, please see the finance section towards the end of the profile. To a first approximation the charitable giving pays for the day-to-day running of church activities, all of which is administered through the Council, and a substantial donation is made to the Diocese. The Trust pays the Priest-in-Charge's salary and costs, manages all employment and governance requirements, including interfacing with the Charity Commission, and ensures the church and surrounding buildings are kept in good condition.

Trust and Council each has its own terms of reference, and there is a spirit of openness between the two groups, with cross-representation at meetings. As far as Christ Church's position as a proprietary chapel allows, the proceedings of Council and the Annual Church Meeting are guided by the Church Representation Rules. To be more responsive to urgent decision making, we also have a small Standing Committee which includes representatives from both Trustees and Council.

From the Priest-in-Charge's point of view, Christ Church offers a beautiful city church which has differentiated itself with its inclusive welcome to all, its high standard of traditional liturgical music, prayerful attention to formalised liturgy, and an enthused and thoughtful congregation who are ready and willing to participate in services.





We strive to be an inclusive and welcoming community in word and deed to all of God's people, irrespective of disability, age, social status, ethnicity, denominational background, mental or physical health, gender, identity, or sexuality. We especially seek to affirm and celebrate the gifts of those who have been marginalised and wounded by the church.

As part of an informal group of inclusive churches in Bath we help organise an annual LGBTQI+ Affirming Carol Service that is well attended from across the city. Christ Church undertook and fully participated in the Church of England's

Living in Love and Faith initiative, and recently the Christ Church Council has unanimously supported a motion to "opt-in" to prayers of blessing for same sex couples in committed relationships as approved by the Church of England.

Christ Church remains active in supporting both our Deanery and Diocese and considers it important to do so. Although we are extra-parochial we consider ourselves very much part of the network of churches throughout Bath and Wells. Our Deanery Synod representatives find meetings and worship with fellow Anglican Christians supportive and uplifting, and a pleasure to discuss the work of the church in our areas and to return hospitality at Christ Church.

The Priest-in-Charge is employed directly by the Trust, but we are very much part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells whose resources are available for the usual clergy support.





Who are the congregation?

Having no geographic parish to draw on, some of our worshippers live further away than normal, drawn by the distinctive worship style and ethos. Members come from different church traditions and hold different viewpoints but find a common value in our worshipping community. All are welcome, wherever they are on their journey of faith, and we relish doubt, discussion and debate.



The age range is large, from those in their nineties to pre-school children. In common with the Church of England as a whole, our average age is *probably* rising. However, we celebrate the fact that we have a number of children, teenagers and students within the congregation. On a normal Sunday morning perhaps 25% of the c. 60 members of the congregation present will be under twenty-five.

We have a small group of young children who are regular worshippers at Christ Church, and they are served by structured Junior Church sessions almost every Sunday as well as other events such as a Christmas social, a Nativity Play and the annual Easter Egg hunt. All services enjoy extensive lay participation, and the youngsters are no exception – they are encouraged to play an active role in the worshipping life of the church: singing in the choir or reading or occasionally leading intercessions in the main service.



Our Junior Church sessions acknowledge that not all the children who attend would describe themselves as Christian, and we encourage thoughtful exploration of belief in an age-appropriate way across our two regular groups. We have been especially blessed to welcome some new families recently and in common with most churches, we would love to find ways to reach out to more children and teenagers; something we would look forward to thinking about alongside our new Priest-in-Charge.

Being a university city we are well-aware that this can be an unsettling time for students who need support as they find out who they really are. Christ Church has a small but thriving young adult group who meet to have fun, pray together, and learn about life and faith, and in a general sense to get out of the student bubble and interact safely with the older generation. Members are currently doing the Alpha course. They are encouraged to get involved in the life of the Church council, music, liturgy and social events. Our hope is that this group will continue to grow with the continued support of the Priest-in-Charge.

Christ Church has been blessed with a long-standing relationship with the Caribbean community in Bath, and many members of the Windrush generation have been regular members of the congregation. Their contribution to the life of the church, including music and leadership roles, continues to enrich us deeply through subsequent generations. One member of the Caribbean community is currently a member of the Deanery Synod and participates in our church council.

We are an active congregation. In addition to assisting in the liturgy the church is blessed by many individuals who bring talents from their working lives including: our website management, AV and live-streaming, bell-ringing, the documentation of our church history, the dramatization of the annual Passion Gospel, the management of our concert bookings and other outside events, project management, and the monthly production of the church magazine. And even that list misses the many volunteers who keep the place running smoothly and create its welcoming style: sides-people, coffee-makers, singers, flower arrangers, those who quietly fix things around the building and those who arrange and cater for social events. So, we certainly do not expect our priest to take on every task within the church! We hope that by using our gifts, we leave them more able to exercise theirs.





Who will you find at Christ Church?

Here are just some of the people who perform key roles in the life of Christ Church, starting with those who work most closely with the Priest-in-Charge:

Churchwardens

Each year the congregation elects two churchwardens to represent them. Jane Nicholson and Jonathan Stead are currently in those positions, and they provide valuable support to the Priest-in-Charge in many different ways. These range from ensuring everyone gets a proper welcome, organising pastoral care functions, through to arranging logistics at services. Regular meetings between the churchwardens and the Priest-in-Charge allow them to alert him/her to issues raised by the congregation.

Jane and Jonathan are freed from the traditional churchwarden responsibilities of the fabric of the church and its finances. Those are handled by the Trust, enabling the churchwardens to focus more on the congregation's well-being.

Verger

Angela Soboslay has a part-time, salaried position. She works with great commitment to help ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the church, helping to prepare for services and performing a range of other tasks.

Director of Music and Reader

Mark Elliott joined Christ Church as Director of Music in 1997. He is responsible for maintaining the high standards of our music.

Mark undertook training and became licensed as a Reader in 2005, in which role he now regularly assists clergy in the planning of services and maintaining the high standard of our liturgy.

Organist and Deputy Director of Music

David Winters has been involved with the music at Christ Church since moving to the area in 2014. He has been in the salaried position since 2021. David was drawn to the Church by the style and high standard of its regular musical offering and the warm, welcoming atmosphere of the church. His professional career is as a Doctor in Emergency Medicine.

Chair of Trustees

Nick Wells has been a Trustee since 2018 and its Chair since 2021. His focus is on ensuring all is in good order regarding the buildings, finance and governance to enable the smooth-running of Christ Church and its outreach. Nick enjoys the varied cultural life available in Bath.

Clergy

We currently have three retired priests in our congregation whom we value greatly:

Beryl and Peter Bowes moved to Bath in 2019 following several years of retirement near York. They settled at Christ Church and have received permission to officiate in Bath and Wells diocese. They both preside and preach from time to time in Christ Church and are taking a number of services during the vacancy.

Simon Tatton-Brown enjoyed a rich and varied life in parish ministry in the dioceses of Manchester and Bristol. When he retired to Bath in January 2014 the style of worship and liberal ethos were among the factors that drew him to Christ Church. He sings in the choir as well as occasionally preaching and leading worship. Simon is also a Trustee and serves as their Secretary.

The Revd Prebendary Narinder Tegally is Lead Chaplain at the Royal United Hospital in Bath, and Interfaith Adviser for Bath & Wells Diocese. She is also the UKME Vocations Officer for the Diocese and sits on the National Minority Ethnic Vocations Group. Narinder worships at Christ Church whenever she can and presides and preaches here. She is supportive of all that Christ Church stands for.

Safeguarding

Christ Church fully recognises the importance of safeguarding and goes above and beyond what is required in this area, with particular concern for young people and the vulnerable. As an inclusive church we appeal to those who fear rejection by other churches, and this contributes to a relatively large safeguarding workload for a church of our size. Fortunately, there have been no incidents in recent years which have required the involvement of external agencies beyond the Diocesan safeguarding team.

The Trust maintains a safeguarding policy and procedure, agreed with the Safeguarding Officer who reports back (as far as confidentiality will allow) at Trust meetings. The policy and procedures are reviewed at least annually, and displayed in a dedicated, visible place in church. The Safeguarding Officer is in regular contact with the Diocesan safeguarding team. Currently there are twenty people associated with Christ Church who require DBS checks, to be renewed every 3 years.

Worship and Devotion



At its best we would characterise the worship at Christ Church as being in a spirit of relaxed formality, with a focus on beautiful music led by our robed choir, carefully planned liturgy, and observation of the rhythms of the liturgical year.

We see ourselves as sacramental and incarnational, celebrating the presence of Christ in the church and

in our community. The Eucharist is central to our worship, but we also place an emphasis on lay participation in the liturgy, with the congregation playing a central part in our services: serving as chalice assistants, leading intercessions and reading (including the gospel).

Regular Services

At our weekly sung Eucharist the president wears cassock, alb, stole and chasuble. For Evensong the priest wears cassock and surplice or cotta.

Our current pattern of regular worship is as follows:

Each Sunday:

10am Sung Eucharist with Junior Church (CW); attendance c. 70

2nd Sunday of the month:

8am Holy Communion (BCP); attendance c. 5 (in abeyance during the vacancy)

3rd Sunday of the month:

4.30pm Sung Evensong (BCP); attendance c. 15

4th Sunday of the month:

5pm Contemplative “Iona” service; attendance c. 15

Each Thursday:

Said Eucharist I Iam (CW); attendance c. 12 - 15

Most services are now routinely live-streamed on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

We believe strongly in allowing all those who profess faith in Christ Jesus to participate in communion. This includes welcoming children to communion before confirmation (following the General Synod regulations and their precursors). We are staunch supporters of the ordination of women and the consecration of women as bishops.



Music

Christ Church’s musical tradition is one of its major defining attributes and the reason many members of the congregation choose to worship here. The choir currently has around twenty-five members, including a committed and growing group of five children. The standard is high, despite our Director of Music maintaining an all-comers, non-auditioned approach to choir membership. This is made possible by his energy and passion, the support of a salaried organist and an organ scholar, and the choristers’ own love for the repertoire. The music is varied, embracing works from the renaissance to the recently composed.

Seasons and Festivals

Festival services are held as appropriate, with particular highlights being the Advent and Christmas Carol services, the Junior Church Nativity Play, and the service of music and poetry on Good Friday, along with other Holy Week and Easter services. These key points in the church year are occasions when we often include slightly different elements in our worship such as poetry and prose, dramatic sketches, an Agape meal or a vigil. We have welcomed opportunities to explore different forms of worship introduced to us by previous Priests-in-Charge, gifted members of the congregation and the clergy from our neighbouring churches.



Caribbean Links

Each year we co-host two vibrant services with the Caribbean community to celebrate their valuable (and often under-recognised) contribution to Christ Church and to Bath. These are the Windrush service in June, an exciting and exuberant occasion often enhancing our traditional music with a local steel band, and a Caricom service in October, attended by a Diocesan bishop and the Mayor of Bath.

Pilgrim Group

As an adjunct to formal worship the Pilgrim Group was formed as a forum where many of us deepen our theological knowledge and faith, widen our thinking, and question our beliefs and doubts. It has been part of Christ Church's life for over ten years and an important, supportive part of church life for many. The group meets every second week.

Originally intended as a Bible study group, it has broadened its reading to poets and theologians, suggested by members who all lead meetings in turn. The group has had three summer festivals when guest speakers spoke about "Taking Christianity out of the Church" "Spirituality" and "Spirituality on the Edge". Out of the Pilgrim Group has emerged early morning Zoom devotions throughout Advent and Lent.

Outreach and our Local Community

Cedar Tree

Sadly, Bath is not spared any of the modern inner-city problems, and dire social deprivation extends up the hill from the centre to the church's very doorstep, which looks out directly over an area of social housing with drug and alcohol abuse prevalent. We interact with this local community as much as possible, in particular by opening our community café 'Cedar Tree' in church every Friday. This initiative was set up some twenty years ago, offering tea and coffee and a basic meal to anyone in the local community, plus any visitors who drop in to look at the church. Some come simply to feel less alone, some enjoy a little quiet contemplation, some come to share their burdens while others simply enjoy a good chat in a safe and non-judgmental environment. We have a group of regulars who enjoy the food (particularly the home-made cakes) and hold enthusiastic games of table-top Jenga and have started creating gift cards, later sold for the benefit of the church. The regulars are very supportive of each other and welcoming to all. Payment is encouraged but food is free to anyone in need, though we do not hand out any money. Our ambition is to see Cedar Tree extended beyond one day a week.



BEMSCA

Through our Caribbean community we continue to have a strong link with the Bath Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens Association (BEMSCA), based close to Christ Church at Fairfield House, with whom we have been involved in fundraising for their important community work.

Pastoral Care

Our church community thrives on mutual support, and it is most important to keep in touch with any of our members who, for one reason or another, cannot attend services regularly.

Almost all services are streamed live and are available on YouTube and on Facebook but we also phone and visit older members at home or in hospital. We invite them to special afternoon services and tea parties several times a year where they can chat to old friends and continue to feel part of the church family, with cream teas and home-made cakes ensuring a happy atmosphere.

Local School

The neighbouring St Andrew's Church of England church was bombed in the blitz and demolished, but its eponymous school, just a few hundred yards from Christ Church, lives on. It sits within the parish of Walcot and is a member of the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust, with 239 pupils. Our involvement is seen as a welcome addition to the school's life. Currently one of our Trustees is a diocesan Foundation Governor and occasionally leads the weekly school assemblies. A diverse range of activities have been shared between Christ Church and the school, the most recent example being netball coaching. This variety of links enables us to continue the development of a warm relationship with both pupils and staff. In turn we have welcomed several families from the school to Christ Church for events and a couple of the children have joined our junior choir. A new permanent Head has recently been appointed and we look forward to welcoming them to Julian Road and continuing our association with the school.

Oasis Pantry

Oasis Pantries, run by our friends at Oasis Church Bath, are part of a network of affordable food providers in Bath, supplying low-cost, high quality, fresh, chilled and store cupboard food and toiletries each week to local residents. A number of the Christ Church community volunteer at the city centre Oasis Pantry nearby to help pack away the food delivery and set up each week, as well as to help members shop on a Thursday afternoon when the Pantry is open.

Bellringing

Christ Church is proud to have eight modern bells, hung in the tower in 2015, which had been silent for decades previously. This is one of the most public demonstrations of our presence in the community.



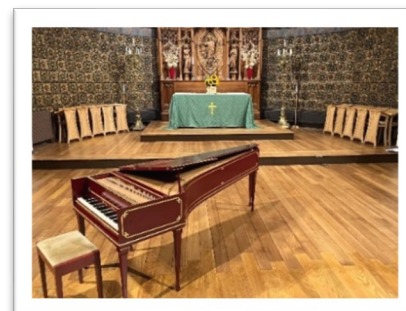
There is a weekly practice on Saturday mornings, after which the ringers enjoy the fellowship of coffee and cake together, usually in the church. On Sundays the service ringing starts with a prayer at 9.15, usually with a collect read by the celebrant. The ringers value the regular appearance of clergy in the ringing chamber, and they are very much part of the Christ Church community.

Those ringing regularly at Christ Church range in age from 10 to 85; some are learners, and some have decades of experience. Some worship at Christ Church or at other churches regularly, while others attend no services but are committed to keeping the bells ringing for services at churches in the area. Ringing is seen as an absorbing interest and a social occasion, especially when visiting other towers and having visits at Christ Church. It is a tradition of service to the church and the community and over the nine years since bellringing was restored it has become an important facet of Christ Church's presence in the community, and its links externally make it very much part of our outreach. The bells peal every Sunday and on most religious festivals and days of national importance.

Since we are in a residential area, the bell chamber has adjustable sound control, and ringers are mindful of the neighbours in determining when and for how long any additional ringing should occur. There is always the need for more trained ringers, so tuition for aspiring ringers, (currently 10-12 people), is given on 3 days a week by a qualified teacher. We are able to fully muffle the bells and use computer-simulated sound in the ringing chamber, so the neighbours are not disturbed when training.

Outside Events and Concerts

The various building projects inside Christ Church in recent years were all done with a clear vision of creating a flexible space suited to a variety of community uses as well as worship. The ambition was to make Christ Church an open and alive building at the very heart of the Julian Road community.





That work has been transformational and for years we have hosted many choral and instrumental concerts throughout the year and regularly host book-signings for a local independent book shop. We maintain that increasing footfall through the doors is valid outreach in its own right, putting us on the map and enabling us to meet many.

We estimate that we welcome somewhere in the region of a thousand people into our building in this way every year, many of whom do not 'go to church' and some of whom are entering the sacred space of a church for the first time. We try to use this opportunity to share sensitively something of our wider life and purpose. It all helps us to be a useful part of the local community - we may be defined as a proprietary chapel, but we are anything but private!



Hospitality and Socialising

Over the years we have organised social events open to all both in the church community and outside. In association with the neighbouring 'Bath at Work' museum, we have run two highly successful Julian Road street-parties in our grounds, and we are not averse to holding a dinner or a social event ourselves. Most recently we have held a couple of successful ceilidhs with supper, (yes, we have some talented folk musicians too), which have attracted fresh faces.



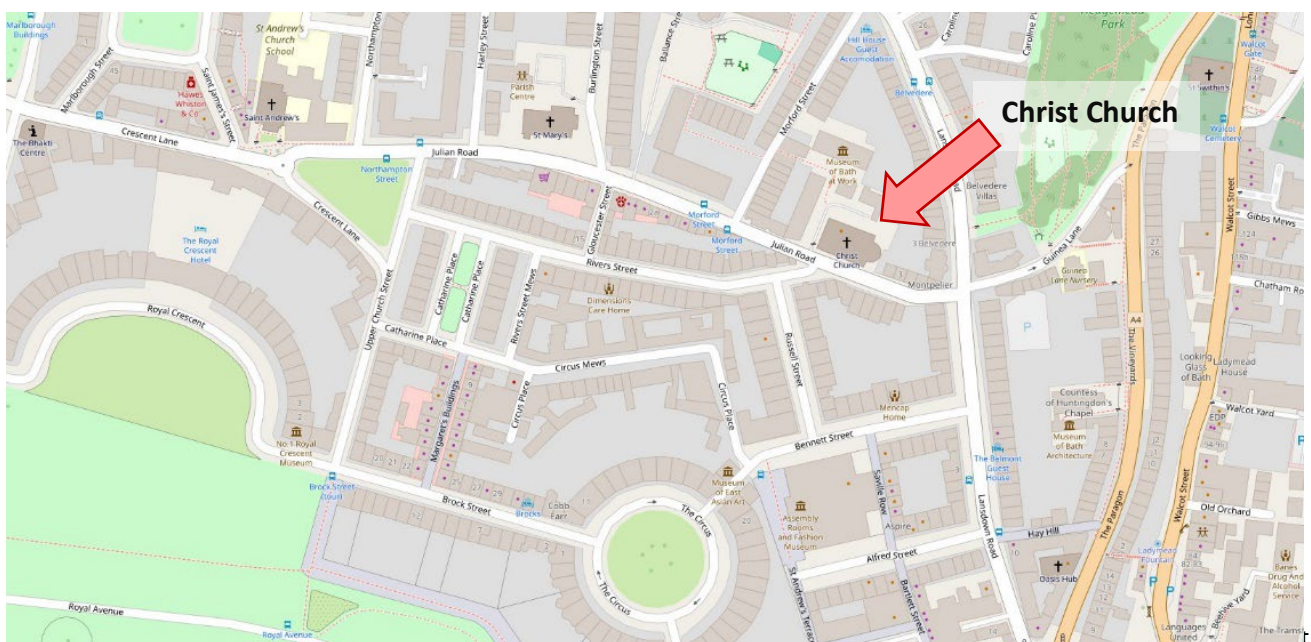


We are proud of our reputation for welcoming all people into Christ Church, whether current members of our community or new, whether young or old. Services end with fresh coffee and biscuits, making it a time for refreshment and fellowship with animated conversations and much laughter, and these times are used to mark major birthdays or other celebrations with cake and

a glass of wine, not forgetting mince pies and mulled wine around Christmas. We are blessed with a thriving volunteer catering team alongside willing helpers to deliver this service and to make sure we always celebrate in style.

Where are we?

We are on the north side of Bath on Julian Road, a known route since Roman times. The church sits exactly where areas of wealth and outstanding Georgian architectural splendour meet areas of poverty and deprivation. This balance point is reflected in our embracing of tradition and beauty whilst welcoming all, especially the less privileged.





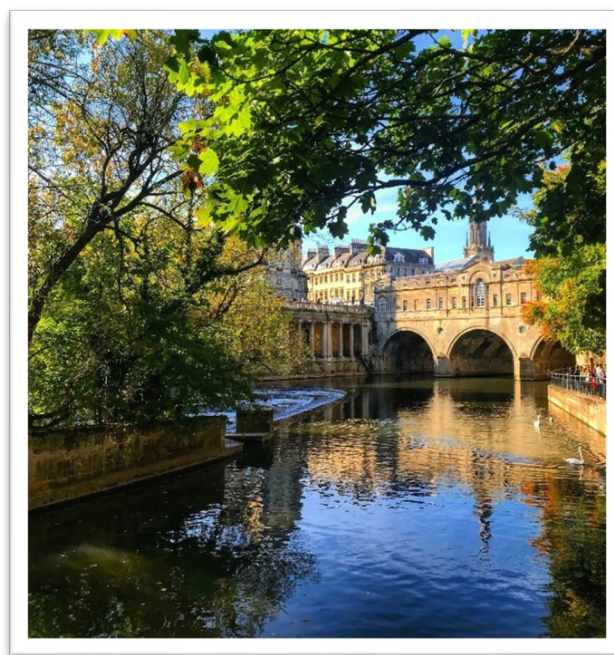
A view of Julian Road and Rivers Street near Christ Church
(Photo by Liv Cashman on Unsplash)

We are just a few minutes' walk from the Royal Crescent, the Circus, and the Assembly Rooms are a short stroll beyond that takes you to the Abbey, the Roman Baths, the Pump Room and the modern city centre.

Bath is undoubtedly a beautiful place in which to live and work. It has been known as a destination for relaxation and restoration since Roman times thanks to its natural thermal hot springs, and as such is recognised as a World Heritage Spa City.

Whilst it is full of history, Bath is also a thriving modern city. Its calendar is filled with festivals and theatrical, musical and sporting events. The popularity and success of the Theatre Royal, the Holburne Museum and Bath Rugby at 'The Rec' all bear witness to the high standards achieved in these areas. Its streets are overflowing with unique places to eat and drink, as well as offering some of the finest independent shops in Britain.

Famous for welcoming tourists, Bath also has a thriving student population with two universities and a further education college alongside a good range of primary and secondary schools in both the state and private sectors, and independent higher education and language schools.



Pulteney Bridge in central Bath
(Photo by James Shaw on Unsplash)

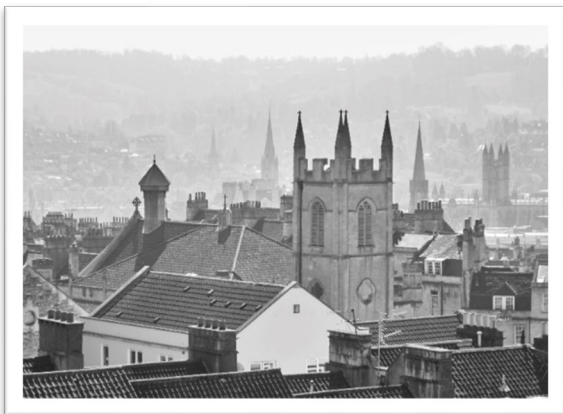
The city is well-connected. Bristol is as little as 11 minutes away by rail and London is also easily accessible in 80 minutes. Bristol Airport is just a 45-minute drive from the church and offers many direct flights to European destinations.



The Cotswold Way near Bath
(Photo by Sergey on Flickr)

Beautiful countryside is within easy reach, a landscape of low rolling hills and green river valleys begins within a couple of miles of the city centre. Bath is also the southern end of the Cotswold Way National Trail walking route, with The Mendips close at hand to the south.

The Building and its History



Christ Church was built in Bath in the late 18th century at the end of an intense period of growth that had created and established the Georgian City. Its population had doubled to over 30,000 in a matter of two or three decades, and the city limit had just been expanded north of Julian Road which previously had marked the northern boundary.

In the 1790s a group of enlightened churchmen were concerned that the system of pew rents was denying the poorer classes access to church worship. The Reverend Charles Daubeny took the lead to raise money for a free church to be built. The group of founders ensuring the new church's completion included William Wilberforce. Daubeny's story clearly struck a chord with monied folk as history tells us that his first sermon on the subject raised over a quarter of the funds needed, a remarkable feat given that by then the nation was overspending on its wars with France and Spain, banks had suffered major crises and the Georgian building bubble was coming to an end.



The church was designed by John Palmer, who was subsequently responsible for Lansdown Crescent and who as city architect had previously influenced the design of The Pump Room and Bath's Theatre Royal. It was built between 1795 and 1798 and Daubeny became its first Priest-in-Charge. We believe this to be the first pew rent-free church in the country, with paid-for pews only available in the gallery. The church comfortably seats two hundred people, with a theoretical seated capacity of around four hundred.

The property of Christ Church is vested in the Trustees. It comprises the church building, the churchyard/car park (there is no burial ground), the Mews and two Victorian cottages.

The Mews is a two-storey property to the north, built originally as a school. The lower half is used by the church as a meeting and function room and contains the priest's office. The upper floor of the Mews, along with the two cottages and several of our car parking spaces are all rented out, contributing significantly to our income. The church building is consecrated and therefore subject to Faculty jurisdiction. The church building is also Grade II listed and the whole site sits within a conservation area.

The original building was a conventional rectangular preaching chapel, galleried on three sides. The west end housed an organ from the early days, suggesting that music was expected to play an important role from the outset, and it is said that a performance of the Messiah to commemorate the opening paid the outstanding balance on the building costs.

Various revisions and extensions such as vestries were made in the Victorian era, of which the most striking and significant would have been the addition of the semicircular apse at the east end during the 1850s, today housing the

carved wooden reredos and the high altar. This was built at the expense of demolishing the most westerly of a row of fine Georgian townhouses next door, an action unthinkable in Bath today.

A series of major projects in the 21st century has seen a new kitchen, complete remodelling of the entrance porch under the tower, new toilet facilities, complete refurbishment of the peal of eight bells in the tower, extensive remodelling of the east end making it more appropriate for modern worship and secular events, a major rebuild and revoicing of the fine three manual organ, two new heating boilers and the creation of the St Michael chapel in the south east corner.

These modern projects, running to hundreds of thousands of pounds, have all been funded through the generosity and tireless fundraising efforts of the worshipping community and have all been completed without debt financing.

The building is maintained to a high if not perfect standard, and a rolling programme of works is set out and budgeted according to our church architect's Quinquennial Plan.



Finances

In financial terms Christ Church is entirely self-supporting, whilst also contributing financially to the Diocese.

Our main sources of income are

- Regular giving (around forty regular donors), one-off donations and congregational fundraising, all enhanced by GiftAid where possible,
- Rentals from two residential cottages, a commercial space on the upper floor of Christ Church Mews (the former church school), and car parking,
- Venue hire and ticket sales for events in the church.

Recent income figures have been:

	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Income	£149,000	£125,000	£127,000	£242,000

** Note: 2023 income included a significant legacy – excluding this the income stands at £162,000*

Key areas of expenditure are:

- Repairs, maintenance and refurbishment of the church building and the investment properties. The most recent Quinquennial Report was received in 2023 and a schedule and budget are in place to carry out its recommendations. There have been a number of large projects over recent years to improve the buildings and fabric, the most recent of which was the reordering of the east end which was completed during 2020 / 2021.
- Salaries of the Priest-in-Charge and other employees (Verger, Director and Assistant Director of Music & Organ Scholar), and the services of a church cleaner
- Regular running costs of the church
- Diocesan contributions – as a proprietary chapel we do not pay a standard parish share, but we do still make comparable contributions to the diocese. These are calculated to be approximately the value of our parish share were we liable to pay in full, less the costs of employing our own Priest in Charge. For 2023 this contribution was £16,500.

Recent expenditure figures have been:

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Expenditure	£193,000	£130,000	£117,000	£172,000

The balances as at the end of 2023 were:

Bank Accounts	£175,000
CCLA Investments	£37,000


The Trust does not make any outward giving itself due to the definition of its charitable objectives. However Christ Church is aware of the many needs in the community around us and each year we select charities to support through cash giving from the congregation. These are often organisations focussed on working with vulnerable children and teenagers, as well as those involved in preserving and protecting our natural environment. Each year our

Junior Church selects a charity to support by fundraising and congregational donations. We give preference to charities working in our geographical area so that Christ Church members can engage actively with them.

In summary Christ Church maintains a break-even or better position on average, with significant fluctuations from year to year due to timings of major expenditure on repairs and refurbishments. Half of its income comes from property, and its relatively healthy financial position is backed by significant investments.

Full annual accounts are sent to the Diocese and can be found on the Charity Commission website:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/1055275/accounts-and-annual-returns>



Our Thoughts and Aspirations

During February 2024, at the start of our vacancy, we asked the congregation to pause and reflect on what it was about Christ Church that defined us. Responses were gathered through a questionnaire in which people were asked the following questions. We hope this summary of the responses provides a good insight into what is valued by the worshipping community of Christ Church and will help you decide whether it is a place where you might be called to serve.

What first attracted you to Christ Church?

Many people talked about being introduced to the church by a friend or member of our clergy, or because of a current or previous geographic link to the area. The style of the liturgy and the high standard of choral music in particular were raised by lots of respondents alongside inclusivity and the warmth of the welcome. Cedar Tree (our Friday community café) and the bellringing were both mentioned as other ways that people came to join the congregation.

What do you love about Christ Church?

Similar themes appeared to those discussed in question one. Thoughtful and thought-provoking preaching came across as a strong theme. Friendship and fellowship are of key importance to many people and once again a deep love of the choral music and centrality of the eucharist were frequently mentioned. Involvement of the laity (of all-ages) was seen as a key part of our worshipping life. Inclusivity in its broadest sense was expressed as vital in a number of answers, specifically an affirming welcome for LGBTQI+ people. Appreciation of the opportunity to explore faith and ask questions in a safe environment was also expressed by several respondents.

What would you like to see developed?

A number of people responded to this by saying we should keep doing what we do, as we are a distinctive Christian presence in Bath. Other themes that featured in response to this question were related to numeric growth of the congregation, with many people mentioning attracting more children, young people and students in particular. More outreach to our immediate neighbours on Julian Road and to other marginalised communities (building on what has already been done) were both seen as important. Less frequently mentioned, but still a clear theme was the need to maintain our existing community, and the need to be realistic about the number of activities that can be sustained. Several people mentioned that a lot of the church activity rests with quite a small number of busy people, and they too need nurturing.

How would you sum up Christ Church in a sentence?

There were some very moving responses to this question, ranging from a single word to much longer sentences. Several people said our 'strapline' was a good summary for them "*A liberal and inclusive church, seeking God through beauty in our worship, honesty in our faith and doubt, and service in our community.*" Many of the same themes were repeated here as in questions one and two but these selected direct quotes give a good sense of the responses overall:

“A warm, welcoming, musical, joyous and caring community in a beautiful building.”

“A place where there is space for everyone to live and grow in faith, no matter where they are on their own journey.”

“Firmly inclusive: not pushy or particularly shouty about it – but absolutely, resolutely inclusive.”

“This has now become our second home.”

“Inclusive, welcoming, friendly and the opportunity to experience a greater depth of Christianity.”

“My loving church family.”

“A welcoming place where all people at all stages of life and faith can be held in the love of God.”

“A sincere and welcoming church with beautiful worship.”

“Christ Church is such a joy.”



What do we seek from our Priest?

We are an inclusive church at the heart of our community, working for its good in the city. We aim to be a place where everyone can flourish; where they are welcomed and accepted for who they are, and where everyone can discover the love of God.

In summary, we seek a priest who:

- Has a liberal and inclusive theology in word and deed,
- Can engage with an all-age diverse church community,
- Values the Anglican liturgy and appreciates the Anglican choral tradition,
- Is confident in exploring questions of belief through preaching and discussion,
- Is enthusiastic in working with committed lay people.

The full person specification and role description are set out in separate documents, which will be sent to all applicants.



What do we offer?

As a proprietary chapel with a Trust taking responsibility for buildings and finances, the priest can focus on worship and pastoral care.

We offer our new priest:

- A flexible part-time post working Sundays plus three other days. Alternatively, Sundays plus two days could be agreed by negotiation
- An enthused and thoughtful congregation committed to working alongside their priest
- Accommodation in the form of a characterful Nineteenth Century property close to the church, recently redecorated and improved, including off-street parking, with council tax and reasonable water bills paid. A housing allowance could be agreed instead by negotiation
- A priest's office, separate from the church and the accommodation but close to both
- A pensionable salary of £18,000p.a. (based on Sundays plus three days). Pension arrangements in line with current rules for auto-enrolment.



Learn more about us

We hope this document has given you a taste of our community and will help you in deciding whether this is a place where God may be calling you to live and serve.

You can find out more about us through many online routes, but you are also most welcome to visit us or get in touch if you have questions you would like to ask.

We are most active on Facebook, but our service streams appear on YouTube as well. We can also be found on X (formerly Twitter) and even occasionally on Instagram. In addition, you can read more about us on our own website:



www.christchurchbath.org



www.facebook.com/christchurchbath/



[@ChristChurchBath1798](https://www.youtube.com/@ChristChurchBath1798)



[@ChristChBath](https://twitter.com/ChristChBath)



[Christchurchbath](https://www.instagram.com/Christchurchbath)

We pray for ourselves and for you:

Heavenly Father, guide Christ Church through this vacancy and guide those seeking the right place for their ministry, that we may all discover your way for the future and see your kingdom grow. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.