
Week ending 27 June 2026

Connect

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



An apology to those impacted by historical adoption practices

Last week, the Church of England issued an apology to those impacted by historical adoption practices, together with a report on its research into the practice.

Bishop Michael said, “I would like to extend my apology to anyone who has been adversely impacted by the role of the Church of England in the Diocese of Bath and Wells in historical adoption practices. Whether that was in the setting of a mother and baby home or as a result of the influence the church and its ministers had in a society which, at that time, understood compelling mothers to give their babies up for adoption to have been acceptable, and even beneficial.

“Having had the privilege of meeting with some local people impacted by historical adoption practices recently, it is clear that all those so affected need to receive a proper,

heartfelt apology that goes to the heart of their suffering and their rightful desire for acknowledgement and justice, that acknowledges the lifelong impact on so many lives and relationships, and that gives space for lament." [Read more here.](#)



Ordination of our new deacons and priests 2026

This weekend, we will come together to celebrate the ordination of our new deacons and priests. Ordination services take place on Saturday at 14:00 in Keynsham and Taunton Minster, and at 16:00 at All Saints Church, Weston-super-Mare. On Sunday our deacons will be ordained at 10:30 in Wells Cathedral.

Read more about [our ordinands online.](#)



Thank you all!

Lay worship assistants, lay pastoral assistants and spiritual directors were welcomed to the third of four gatherings happening this summer to thank and acknowledge those who undertake these roles for all that they give and do.

Those who came took part in evensong in Wells Cathedral led by the Vicars Choral and Girls' Choir.

Then they returned to the Bishop's place for refreshments and a wonderful evening together. On behalf of our whole diocese, Bishop Michael thanked everyone who came for all that they give, do and make possible.



Moving up celebrations

Last Wednesday the 2026 Moving Up Celebrations began in Taunton with back to back services at Taunton Minster attended by over 800 students from 33 schools.

An almost full Minster was full of life and colour, a theme that ran through all of the celebrations this year as those leaving Church of England primary and first schools came together in three locations. There were moments of discussion, reflection and prayer as students considered what is ahead for them and what the Bible story of Peter getting out of the boat in faith teaches us. Prayers were led by local secondary school students and each celebration concluded with candles being presented to each school – a reminder of God going with us as we continue our journey.

Other venues shown here are St Paul's Church Weston-super-Mare and Wells Cathedral. Read more about these lovely services [here](#).

Week of prayer for children and young people

Starting on 6 July, we will be having a diocesan week of prayer for children and young people. You can find out more and download a special prayer guide [here](#).



West Mendip benefice-to-be is holding a series of summer prayer walks in Crook Peak, Axbridge, Shipham and Rowberrow - starting this weekend!

Each Sunday, the walk leader will identify routes and any particular focus for prayer. Some people will stay and pray in church and others will go out for around 20-30 minutes, walking in twos or threes, praying for the community.

After meeting up again to share some brief feedback, there will be a closing prayer.

For more details and the walk schedule, [click here](#).



Summer Sunday prayer walks

Get involved!

Don't forget during our year of especial focus on prayer, that we have lots of resources, including our prayer boxes. If you would like to get hold of the prayer box in your deanery, please contact your Archdeaconry Assistant.

- Bath Archdeaconry - email: tamsyn.richardson-aiken@bathwells.anglican.org
- Wells Archdeaconry - email: stephanie.smith@bathwells.anglican.org
- Taunton Archdeaconry - email: alison.cruickshank@bathwells.anglican.org

[Watch our 'What's in the box?' video](#)

to find out what's in the box and start planning how you can use it.

[Find out more about our Year of Prayer](#)

And don't forget to share your photos and stories by emailing them to our [Communications team](#)!



We are delighted to welcome Jason Selormey who is the newest volunteer member of the From Lament to Action Group.

Jason brings with him a vast amount of knowledge and experience. He is the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at Weston College in Weston-super-Mare, and lectures on anti-racism and intersectionality.

Jason also works closely with Race Equality North Somerset (RENS) and Refugees Welcome North Somerset, to enhance anti-racism in the area. [Read more about Jason.](#)

Welcome

Congratulations to Caroline Boddington, DL. Prebendary and Senior Non-Executive Member of Wells Cathedral, who was recognised in the King's Birthday Honours list for services to the Church of England.

Caroline has been appointed Order of the British Empire (OBE).

We thank Caroline for all the work she has undertaken for the Church, and for all she continues to do today.



Congratulations

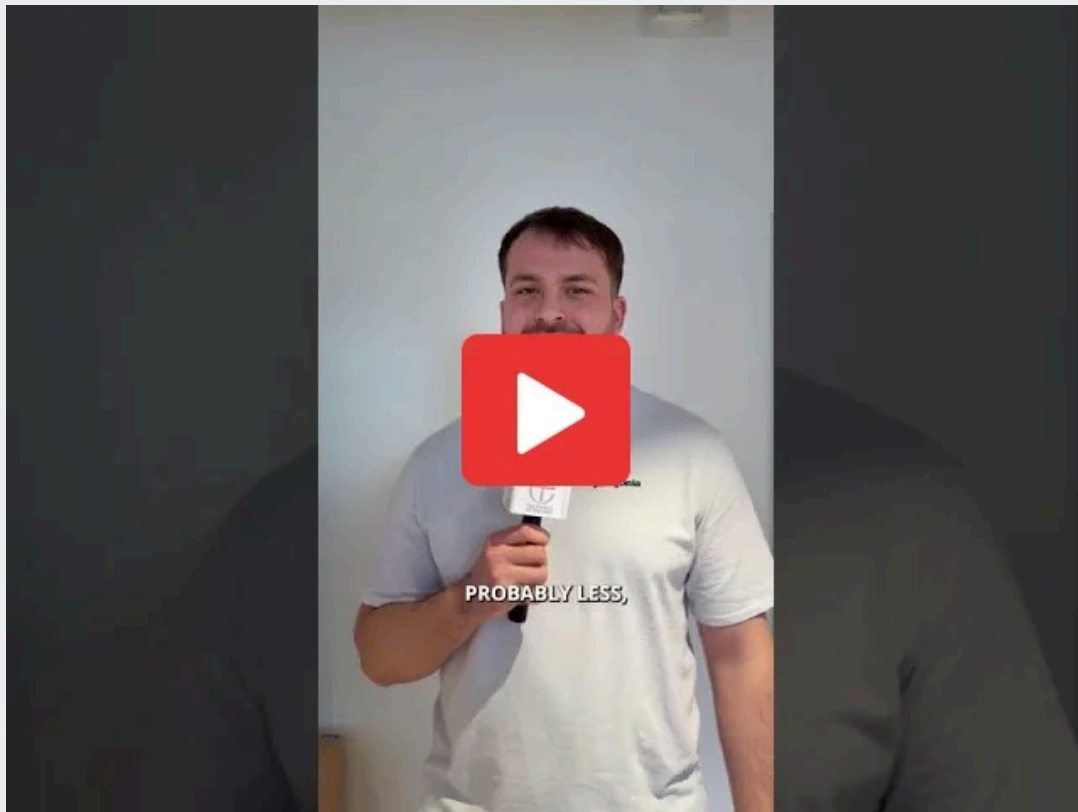
Elections for new General Synod members in 2026

"Everyone's really welcoming."

Help shape the direction of the Church of England and ensure the views of your community are heard. New clergy and lay members are being elected to General Synod

this year – and you are invited to stand as a candidate.

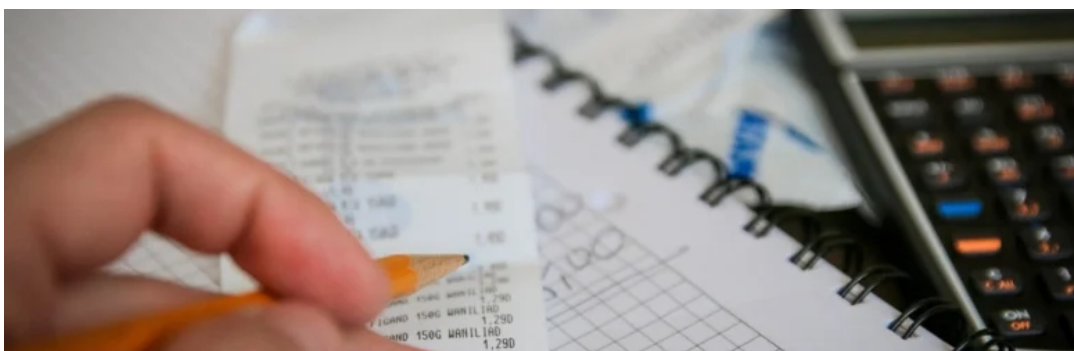
If you are interested in standing, visit cofe.io/StandForSynod for more information, key dates, and an eligibility checker.



Windrush Service at Christ Church Bath

A special Windrush Reflection Service was held at Christ Church, Julian Road, Bath, bringing together people from across the community to honour the legacy of the Windrush generation and reflect on themes of migration, faith, family, and belonging.

The service offered space not only for remembrance, but also for gratitude, learning, and renewed commitment to justice and hospitality. Revd Narinder Tegally, Interfaith Adviser Diocese of Bath and Wells, has shared a reflection on the service, in which she speaks about the importance of remembering the Windrush generation and why taking time to pause, reflect and honour their experiences and contribution remains so significant. Read more [here](#).



Parish Giving Scheme

For churches curious but not yet registered with the Parish Giving Scheme we are offering two opportunities to join a Zoom webinar to find out more about PGS. Local Giving Adviser, Kate Mayo, will explain what PGS is, how it works and how simple it is for churches to register. More than 100 parishes in our diocese are discovering the numerous benefits offered by using the scheme and we invite and encourage all churches to adopt PGS as their prime method for regular giving.

All Treasurers, Planned Giving Promoters, Stewardship Secretaries, Vicars and other parish officers interested in finding out more about it are welcome to register below to join one of the webinars.

Alternatively, please email pgsregistrations@bathwells.anglican.org or book a call using [this link](#) to discuss with Kate how using PGS could benefit your church.

Webinar dates: Wednesday 22 July 16:00-17:00: [Register in advance](#) for this meeting.

Tuesday 8 September 12.30-13.30: [Register in advance](#) for this meeting.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



Easyfundraising - get your free pack now

Easyfundraising is a free, easy, and accessible way for your clergy and congregation to raise funds for your church. Simply shop online with favourite retailers, including eBay, Booking.com, Tesco, Trainline, Argos, Amazon, M&S, and 8,000 others via the easyfundraising website or app and the retailer you shop with will send a donation to your church.

This month, they are offering 250 exclusive church fundraising packs to churches in our diocese. [Get yours online.](#)

If your church is already registered with easyfundraising (we know lots of you are), you can also get a pack by [booking your call here](#)



Fundraising vicar on a bike!

Jane Durham thought that her long distance cycling days were over, but thanks to the grace of God, healing and a battery, she has discovered the joy of electric assist cycling!

Jane says, "I'm doing this because Keinton Church wants to be more accessible, for wheelchairs and pushchairs alike, and versatile, enabling us to host events and services for the community and congregation. So this one vicar will cycle 275 Somerset road kms, visiting 15 St Mary Magdalene Churches!"

If you'd like to find out more and sponsor Jane, [click here](#).



Latest episode of Low Carbon, Higher Power is out next week

The next episode of our Net Zero podcast is released on Tuesday 30 June, featuring Paul Gilligan, CEO of Pure Leapfrog. In this episode, we explore the exciting potential of community energy - what it is, how it works, and how churches, schools and communities can benefit from locally generated renewable power.

We also discuss our South West Net Zero Hub-funded project, in which we are partnered with Pure Leapfrog, which is helping us explore how church-owned/influenced assets could support community energy across the diocese. From reducing energy bills to supporting local resilience and unlocking new opportunities for Net Zero, this conversation looks at how practical partnerships can help turn ambition into action.

Do you want to find out more about community energy and how your building and your community can be involved? Save the date and enjoy the podcast!

You can watch the latest episode, and catch up with all the episodes in the series, here: [Low Carbon, Higher Power Podcast - Bath and Wells Diocese](#). Follow us on Facebook

and YouTube for short clips from the episode over the coming weeks - [diocesebathwells](#) - [YouTube](#) // [Facebook](#) .



EFT deadline is the end of June!

There's not long to go until the deadline for completing this year's Energy Footprint Tool, which is due at the end of the month. The tool is quick and easy to complete through the Parish Returns website and helps your church understand its energy use, carbon emissions and opportunities to reduce bills.

Completing the EFT can also help churches access grant funding, receive professional Net Zero advice and identify practical next steps. Churches across the diocese, including Holy Trinity Church, Frome (see below), have already benefited from completing the tool and receiving support to reduce their energy use and costs.

Complete the Energy Footprint Tool here: <https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/>
If you are unable to do it before the deadline, please get in touch with dan.wills@bathwells.anglican.org and send through your energy bills - he can complete it on your behalf.



Case Study

Holy Trinity, Frome

For Holy Trinity Church in Frome, completing the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) was a turning point. The church already knew its energy bills were high, but the EFT revealed just how significant its gas use was compared with other churches. That insight helped the church start important conversations, access support and take practical steps to reduce energy use and save money.

Headlines



7 tonnes
CO2 saving



25%
Reduction in carbon emissions



£1.1k
Financial savings



£18k
Net Zero Carbon programme funding

Benefits

- It helped the church understand how its energy use compared with others.
- It opened the door to practical advice and funding.
- It helped the church begin making informed decisions about heating.
- It supported a wider journey towards Net Zero Carbon.





Living and telling the story of Jesus





Case Study

Holy Trinity, Frome

Before the EFT

Holy Trinity knew its energy bills were high, but the church did not have a clear sense of how serious the issue was in comparison with other churches. Like many churches, it was dealing with a large and complex building, and energy use had become an ongoing concern.

What did the EFT show?

Completing the EFT helped Holy Trinity understand the scale of its energy use. The results showed that they were paying disproportionately higher bills and using far more gas than other churches with similar usage patterns.

Was it difficult to complete?

Easier than you may think, according to the churchwarden for Holy Trinity, Sue Marshall - "The key is to keep your meter readings and energy information organised through the year - then completing the EFT becomes much more straightforward."

What happened next?

The EFT became much more than just a form. It opened the door to helpful conversations, practical advice and support.

The church used what it had learned to begin talking more seriously about heating levels and energy use. This led to the installation of smart controls for the underfloor heating system, helping reduce unnecessary gas use.

The church was also identified through the EFT as one of the higher energy users in the Diocese, which helped it access an £18,000 Demonstrator Church grant.

What difference has it made?

The church has already seen clear benefits. In 2024, Holy Trinity's gross carbon footprint was 29 tonnes per year. By 2025, this had reduced to 22 tonnes, with around £1,900 saved in gas costs. The work has also helped the church think differently about energy use and its responsibility to care for creation.

"Managing energy use is not just a practical responsibility but is a very tangible way of caring for creation."

Sue Marshall, Churchwarden of Holy Trinity Frome

Top Tips

- Complete the EFT, even if you are not sure what it will show.
- Keep regular meter readings or your energy bills in one place.
- Don't think of the EFT as "just another form" - it can open the door to support.
- Get in touch with your diocesan team to access technical advice and funding support.

Next Steps

- Holy Trinity are continuing to work through their Demonstrator Project as they explore the best route towards a long-term Net Zero Carbon solution for the church.
- They are continuing to optimise their current heating system, building on the savings already achieved.
- They have already completed this year's EFT return and would encourage other churches to do the same.



Living and telling the story of Jesus

To complete this year's Energy Footprint Tool, head straight over to <https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/>



People's Emergency Briefing Film - St Andrew's Church, Chew Magna

Currently showing in community spaces across the country, the film looks at the growing climate and nature emergency. The filmmakers highlight that most people have never been fully briefed on what it means for our lives, our economy and our future, so it sets out the risks and the credible, positive responses available. There will be a discussion afterwards as part of the evening which takes place at St Andrew's Church in Chew Magna on 15 July from 7.30-9.30pm.



Interfaith pilgrimage to Tbilisi

Earlier this year a group of eight members of the Bath Interfaith Group travelled to Tbilisi and spent time with Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili, who has created a Peace Cathedral, supporting minority communities and marginalised people in the Georgian capital.

As well as a Christian Church, the Bishop has built a synagogue and a mosque behind the East end. There is also a Buddhist prayer space, and he has plans to create a room for interfaith discussion. The church is the cathedral for the Evangelical-Baptist Church of Georgia, one of the many smaller



Wedding Dresses to raise the roof

Attics, lofts, wardrobes and drawers under beds around Drayton, near Langport, Somerset, have all been raided in search of outfits which take their owners back to a big day when they said "I do".

In a significant exhibition of style and fashion, more than thirty wedding dresses went on display in St Catherine's Church, Drayton. The exhibition was the brainchild of local historian Jacqui Price as part of a programme of community engagement events designed to raise awareness of the church's 'Raise the Roof' project, which has been supported by a £90,000



Scones and Stones fundraising

A collapsed churchyard wall at Holy Trinity, Norton Malreward, has sparked an extraordinary wave of generosity from the local community and a neighbouring church, with almost £30,000 raised to help rebuild it.

Clare Tibbs is the Churchwarden at Holy Trinity. She said, "We had a retaining church wall collapse in January. Our churchyard is a good eight feet above the bridle path around the outside of the church, so when the wall came down it blocked the footpath and created all sorts of challenges." However, what could've become a major setback and

denominations in a country where the Georgian Orthodox Church dominates. [Read the full story here.](#)

grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to replace the north slope of the nave roof for the first time since 1897.

financial headache has instead become a story about community support and generosity. [Read it here.](#)

In Brief

- The July editions of the [Prayer Calendar](#) and [Manna](#) are now available to download from the diocesan website.
- [Ripple Effect](#) Harvest resources. This year's theme, Behind Every Meal is a Journey, invites congregations to consider the journey of food to our tables. It works alongside farming families in rural Africa, to help build the skills and resources needed to grow enough food, earn a sustainable income and strengthen their resilience in the face of a changing climate.

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

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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