

# manna

From the Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells ☩ October 2020

## From lamentation to hope

**A**n online service from Wells Cathedral will pray by name for all those who have died during the Covid pandemic in Somerset.

Families of the bereaved are invited to send in names of those they have lost during the pandemic, and candles will be lit and their names read out during the filmed service.

The Bishop of Taunton, Rt Revd Ruth Worsley, will welcome people to the online service. She said: "So many people weren't able to attend funerals or grieve properly when their loved ones died in the last few



months, because of restrictions imposed by the pandemic. We hope this service will offer people a chance to come together and mourn their loved ones by name, alongside others who have also been bereaved."

The service will include music from members of the Music Foundation of Wells Cathedral, and prayers will be said by some of Somerset's hospital chaplains. There will also be a reflection from someone who survived Covid following weeks in intensive care.

The service will be available to watch on the [Wells Cathedral](#) website and the website of the [Diocese of Bath and Wells](#) from Wednesday 30 September.

Those who wish the names of their loved ones to be included should send them by email to [comms@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:comms@bathwells.anglican.org) by Monday, 21 September.

## News in brief

### Tackling modern slavery together

Volunteers are being trained up by Hidden Voices Somerset (HVS) to support victims of modern slavery and exploitation in Somerset.

HVS is facilitated by the Diocese of Bath and Wells with The Clewer Initiative. It's a local response to modern slavery and exploitation concerned with the provision of victim support and building a self-sustaining anti-slavery network across Somerset.

To find out more about the issue of modern slavery visit [www.theclewerinitiative.org](http://www.theclewerinitiative.org) To find out how you can play your part in challenging it locally, including volunteering and local training opportunities, contact [david.maggs@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:david.maggs@bathwells.anglican.org) ■



### Double eco silver awards

Two more churches in Somerset have been awarded silver Eco Church awards, Wells Cathedral and Holy Trinity, Yeovil. The awards are made by Christian charity [A Rocha](#), who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. Both churches are working on further eco improvements ■

### Petertide ordinations

With the Covid restrictions in place, ordination services for those being made new deacons or priests may have been delayed, but following a series of services across the diocese during Petertide we now have 18 new deacons and 12 new priests.

The ordination of the deacons took place at Wells Cathedral, with the priesting taking place in three parish churches, one in each archdeaconry. With only 30 people able to be present at each service, it was still not the usual gathering of friends and family, but many were able to witness the joyful event online ■

# A time to listen

By **Bishop Ruth**.

I was expecting to be on sabbatical as I write this but of course you will all now be aware that Bishop Peter is receiving treatment for leukaemia and thus I am back in the diocese. He is as cheerful as ever and very much values your care, thoughts, prayers, cards, flowers and so many warm messages. Thank you! Please keep praying for him, Jane and the family.

Coping with the 'unexpected', whether it is news about health, the pandemic or a personal diagnosis like +Peter's; or a change of plan such as my sabbatical, can set us in a spin. We don't always know how to respond. It requires

us to adapt, to change, to rethink how we will live.

I'm reminded of the story of Elijah who felt overwhelmed by the circumstances around him. A national drought both from rain and faith left him feeling vulnerable and alone. And although God made Himself very evident in the events of Mount Carmel, Elijah still felt under siege and fearful, wanting to die rather than face the wrath of Jezebel. And so he ran! And in the book of Kings we find God meets with him. First of all bringing him refreshment of body and mind through sleep and food. And then, when his well-being is restored, he discovers the voice of God, not in the



strength of storm or wind but in a 'still small voice'.

I wonder where and how you might hear the voice of God? Across the diocese we are entering into a listening project to hear what God might be saying to us, in and through the strange times in which we now live. We welcome your thoughts so please do share them with us.

Praying God's blessing on us all

Bishop Ruth

## Faith and farming

Farmer **Rob Walrond** is the diocese's rural affairs adviser and Churchwarden for St John the Baptist, Pitney.

How does faith and farming connect for you?

Around 30 years ago my faith reignited and I gained a greater understanding of creation and my place in it. I came to acknowledge that the success or failure of my business wasn't a reflection on how good a person I was or how successful I was.

Why do you farm organically?

As my respect for creation grew I felt my role as a steward of creation changed. It was not about what I could get out of the land but more about how I could work with the land.



Rob Walrond, rural affairs adviser (left)

Does your faith help you with farming?

I still get mad when it rains just before harvest or if I am up to my knees in mud, but my faith helps me look at things with a wider perspective.

Has the pandemic created any particular problems for farmers?

Most have coped really well, but with so few social opportunities the closure of markets and agricultural shows has had an impact. Farmers are used to working in isolation, but we all need social contact.

Do you think people's view of farmers has changed?

One farmer said: "We've gone from being an unwanted nuisance to being key workers." If we can get a greater appreciation of our food, the work that goes into producing it and the provision and generosity from God in providing the harvest, that would one of the good things that comes out of Covid.

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