

Bath Abbey



Museum of the Moon by Luke Jerram, Dec 21

2021 - 2022

Annual Review

www.bathabbey.org



Welcome from the Rector



Welcome to this review of 2021/22, which has been a year of great challenge and great blessing, in equal measure at Bath Abbey.

Challenges have included ...

- Reopening after lockdown, ensuring that the Abbey is a safe place for all to come and worship;
- Shifting back to doing everything live and in person again, rather than by zoom and online;
- Reconnecting with our dispersed congregation, and helping regain the church-going habit;
- Welcoming back and recruiting staff and volunteers - without whom the Abbey grinds to a halt;
- Making ends meet, & somehow finishing in the black, despite immense financial challenges;
- Looking beyond the Abbey and its welter of internal needs, to serve a wide world of many hurts and fears

Blessings have also overflowed ...

- Welcoming back our normal worship services and glorious choirs (as well as Cath our splendid new Curate!) - with a full range of joyous & well attended services at Christmas and Easter once more;
- Our building reopening, wonderfully restored and enhanced by the Footprint Project (fully paid for at last, thanks to a final burst of generous giving from within and without) – crowned by a magnificent Grand Celebration Service and a Royal Visit (by HRH Prince Edward) too;
- Visitor numbers steadily building back – culminating in vast crowds for the Museum of the Moon, with excellent staff and volunteers to welcome and to guide every day;
- Expanding our welcome to school groups through our new Education

Centre, as well as new audiences through the Arts: in concerts and drama, art exhibitions and book signings

- Resuming our public engagement with thorny issues like Racism (focused by our Exhibition on Transatlantic Slavery), the Global Environmental Challenge (our focus at Harvest), and divisions over Gender & Sexuality (through study courses on Living in Love and Faith).

The Vision and calling of Bath Abbey is to Live and Tell the Good News of Jesus, with the City of Bath and its visitors. This Annual Review is again structured around the 6 key ways that we pursue that Vision:

1. **THANKSGIVING** : Worshipping and praying
 2. **TELLING** : Proclaiming the Gospel
 3. **TEACHING** : Growing as followers of Jesus
 4. **TENDING** : Caring as a church family
 5. **TRANSFORMING** : Pursuing justice & peace in society
 6. **TREASURING** : Sustaining and renewing creation
- St. Paul wrote to the Philippians “God is the one who began this good work in you, and I am certain that He won’t stop before it is complete on the day that Christ Jesus returns”.

Thank you so much for your own part, in serving the Vision of the Abbey together this last year – through times of challenge and blessing alike. May the Lord not stop bringing to rich completion all the good work He has begun!

More about the bigger Vision, underlying all we do and are at the Abbey, is available in the “2020 Vision” document on our website (linked under the “Congregation” tab)

Revd Canon Guy Bridgewater
Rector of Bath Abbey

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THANKSGIVING – Worshipping & Praying

Connecting with God in the Every Day

The Abbey congregation has had two main priorities in 2021, as we emerge gradually from the worst of the pandemic and its restrictions. The first is to refresh and raise the profile of Prayer at the Abbey; the second is to reconnect with one another across the church family (of which more elsewhere in this Review). Refreshing our own prayer life is obviously essential, if the Abbey is to fulfil its calling to be a “House of Prayer for All Nations”. A small start has been

made by running a Lent Course on refreshing personal prayer lives; and also launching a new monthly prayer meeting (on the last Saturday morning), that focuses on intercession for all taking place through the Abbey each month.

Further initiatives are agreed for training and commissioning an Abbey prayer ministry team, and for hosting seasons of 24/7 prayer, as well as providing regular opportunity for testimony to answered prayer (as pioneered at Easter, by some of our 19 adult candidates for Baptism and Confirmation).

The wider prayer ministry of the Abbey has of course been given high profile this year, by prayer stations and services focused upon the pandemic, and now upon the dreadful war in Ukraine.

Both crises have been literally “flagged” for prayer, atop our Church Tower. As we pray on into 2022 together, may all who encounter Bath Abbey discover that (in the words of King Solomon of old) : “He brought me into his banqueting house, and His banner over me is love”.

Revd Canon Guy Bridgewater
Rector of Bath Abbey





THANKSGIVING - Worshipping & Praying

Worship & Music

It has been an exciting and fulfilling year for the Abbey choirs and the music department. We sang a full Christmas and autumn programme with highlights being Rachmaninov's All Night Vigil, a Remembrance concert and singing to a packed Abbey for all the Christmas Concerts and services.

2022 began with an Epiphany concert featuring Britten's A Ceremony of Carols then a new CD recording called Caritas to be released later this year. We hosted the BBC for two

broadcasts, on Radio 3 Choral Evensong and Radio 4 Sunday Morning Worship. The former was the Girls and Lay Clerks and the latter was the Boys and Lay Clerks and was the first time for a generation that the boys had broadcast on their own. It was a delight to be able to sing a full Holy Week and Easter again after 2 previous years of pandemic disruption.

Highlights included Stainer's Crucifixion and Allegri's Miserere on Good Friday, and Pergolesi's Stabat Mater sung by soloists from our Girls choir on April 12th. On the last Friday of April, during Eastertide the Girls and Lay Clerks

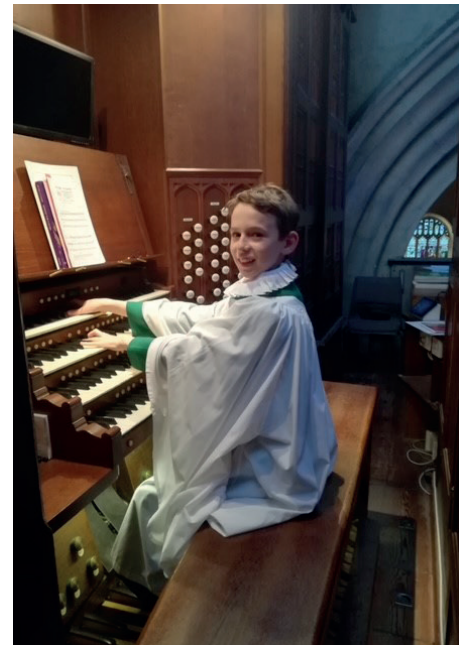
sang Messiah with solos sung by members of the choirs.

Our boys visited Wells Cathedral to sing a joint Evensong with the cathedral choir in March and they sang Stainer's Crucifixion on April 1st at Manvers St Baptist Church on April 1st. The Girls and Lay Clerks welcomed the Wells Cathedral choir to sing a joint Evensong at Bath on May 1st as we celebrated the 25th anniversary of our Girls Choir. In recent week the Boys and Lay Clerks have visited Southwell Minster for a weekend joining with the cathedral choir. The boys triumphed in football at both Wells and at Southwell!





THANKSGIVING - Worshipping & Praying



We have re-launched our Tuesdays@1 weekly organ recitals and have monthly evening concerts from May to October in our Evening Series. We continue to take great pride in our junior Melody Makers choir, who sang well at the Christmas Concert and more recently at the 9.30am service in the Abbey. Our newly founded Chamber Choir has sung many services at the Abbey and the Music Group is gaining strength again after a covid shutdown with regular rehearsals and leading worship at the Parish communion on Sundays.

Since the last APCM we have moved into our glorious new Song School. This has been transformational and helped the choirs flourish in recent months. We are grateful to those whose vision and perseverance enabled this project to happen. I'd like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to parents, volunteers and my colleagues who support the Abbey choirs and enable them to give of their best.

Huw Williams
Director of Music





TELLING - Telling the Good News of Jesus

Worship & Ministry

As we have come through the Pandemic and settled into some sort of normality, the primary means of telling the good news of Jesus Christ has been through worship, teaching and preaching. The ministry team, supported by Chaplains and stewards, continues to have extensive opportunities, both formal and informal, in person and online, to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Two weekly services are live-streamed, reaching 150-200 homes.

A working group with partners in the city has looked at the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade, in the Abbey's history, completing research on all the memorials which may have some link with the slave trade. A Zoom lecture with experts in the field, was hosted by the Abbey and the 'Bath Abbey and the Legacy of Slavery' exhibition addressed the stories behind a selection of memorials. Other events, services and exhibitions with partner churches and charities in the city have continued to support the telling of the story of Jesus through prayer and practical work in the city and further afield.





TELLING - Telling the Good News of Jesus

Luke Jerram's 'Museum of the Moon' exhibition was a highly successful adjunct to the Advent and Christmas season, giving a Christ-in-creation emphasis to the season and affording many opportunities for telling the story through worship, music and the arts.

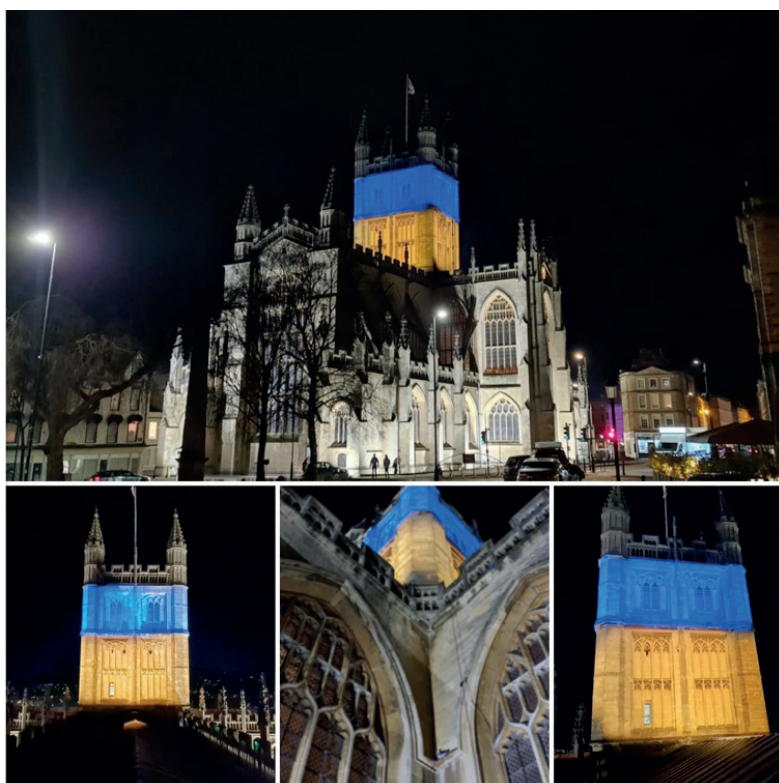
School children attended a refreshed Easter Experience, telling the story of Holy Week and Easter. There has been a strong focus on supporting the people of Ukraine since the outbreak of war, and praying for peace. This has included flying the flag of Ukraine, lighting the tower in the colours

of the flag, facilitating visitors' and congregational prayers and supporting those offering to take in refugees.

The Abbey has continued to support 5 other charities who are in their own way telling the story of Jesus: Wycliffe in bible translation and literacy training, RTU in child and family care, Tearfund in development work, Genesis in work with the vulnerable and A Rocha UK in creation care.

Revd Stephen Girling
Abbey Missioner

**"Two
weekly
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TEACHING - Interpreting

On 24 May 2021 the 'Monuments, The British Empire, and Slavery' exhibition launched. It was well-received by visitors and well-reviewed, described as "ground-breaking", "sensitive", and "eye-opening". The exhibition was extended until 30 September due to popular demand. We are very grateful for the way in which local people and volunteers have continued to support the Abbey's heritage interpretation in a variety

of ways, from participating in focus groups to leading the relaunched "Best of Bath Abbey" tours. In the coming year we can look forward to the new Discovery Centre, guidebook, signage, wayfinding, family activity booklets, and the first history of the Abbey's monuments.

Ollie Taylor
Head of Interpretation and Learning

*Sketch of King Osric giving the founding charter of Bath Monastery to Abbess Bertana
 by Ailsa Burrows*





TEACHING - Growing as Followers of Jesus

Learning Programme

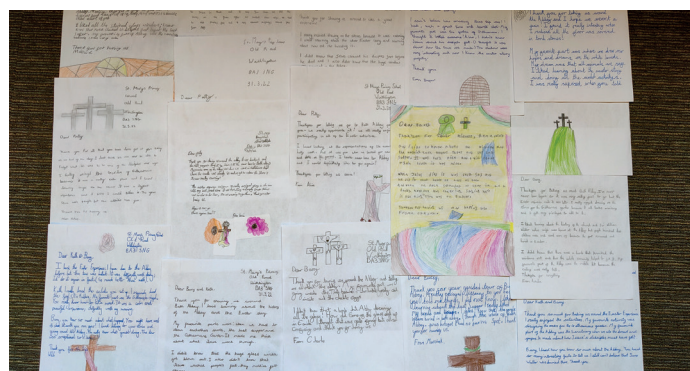
The learning programme is now in full swing with many different groups enjoying the exciting new Learning Centre in the vaults. So, far over 1200 family members have taken part in arts, crafts and storytelling under the moon.

The new schools programme has launched with information on the Abbey website and a wide range of curriculum-linked subjects including 'A Monk's Life'. The 'Easter Experience' reached 247 children from 8 Primary schools.

Feedback included "I enjoyed the last supper because it made me think about what the disciples must have felt like".

Finally, community groups including the Black Families Education Support Group and the Carers Centre have worked with artists to make beautiful, Abbey-inspired artwork.

Polly Andrews
Learning Officer





TEACHING - Archive

Polly Andrews, our Learning Officer and I, with colleagues from Bath Record Office and the Bath Preservation Trust led a successful and innovative digital volunteering project. Volunteers searched the Bath Chronicle, looking for keywords that would identify articles relating to Bath's colonial history. Since many of these articles contained problematic language, we felt that we and our volunteers needed specialist guidance to help us write descriptions of these articles. We were delighted that the National Archives awarded us money to commission this guidance, which will be published on a new website. We hope this website will develop into a hub that brings together further information about Bath's colonial past.

A small team of researchers has continued to study the colonial connections of our monuments.

Our secure, climate-controlled strongroom is finished and in use. For the first time, the Abbey can store its most important collections in suitable conditions.

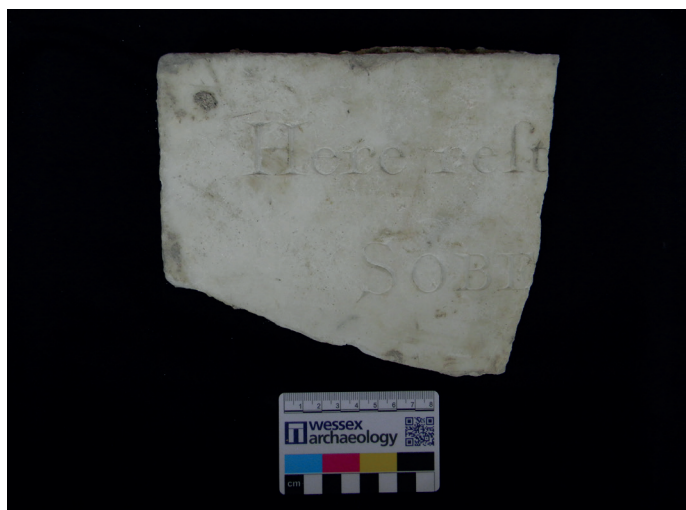
Our loyal team of volunteers continues to work on cataloguing the fragments of marble we discovered under the floor during the Footprint archaeological dig.

Behind the scenes, we are working hard to gather together and prepare the objects that will be displayed in our Discovery Centre.

The biggest challenge facing the archive is the transition to digital. Almost all the archives generated by the Abbey are now in digital form – and it is vital to collect and catalogue them, so we can leave a record of the last two momentous years.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the archive and research volunteers for their generosity, loyalty, enthusiasm, and encouragement. We couldn't do it without you!

Anna Riggs
Archivist





TEACHING – Growing as Followers of Jesus

Youth & Families Report

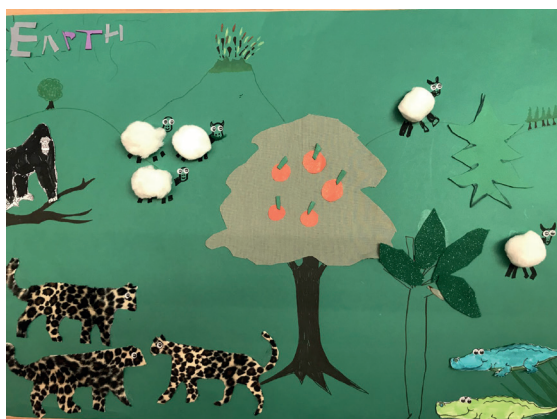
We re-launched Junior Church in our brand new Learning Centre in September 2021. It has been very exciting to welcome our families and children into a dedicated space where we are free to interact and engage through games, video, crafts and teaching and make as much noise as we like.

We have invested in new equipment

and resources, recruited some new leaders and have been utilising Urban Saints Energise teaching material.

It was a privilege to prepare 14 of our young people for Confirmation on Holy Saturday at a very moving service conducted by Bishop Ruth. The Anchor Girls and Boys Youth Groups continue to flourish.

Tim Norton
Youth and Families Minister



“We re-launched Junior Church in our brand new Learning Centre in September 2021”





TENDING - Caring as a Church Family

Pastoral Care

With a focus on consolidating the great pastoral work expressed by the whole church family during the pandemic, and a vision to explore new ways of working; Pastoral Care might be summed up as developmental and innovative.

On Dedication Sunday 2021, we commissioned the Pastoral Care Team and affirmed the new role of Lay Pastoral Lead to enhance pastoral care and communications. The ongoing support and care the team offers is remarkable, demonstrated through bereavement visits, home communions, hospital and care home visits.

This year we introduced Welcome Teas using our fantastic new hospitality spaces to enable new members to feel at home. I continue to be profoundly grateful to our Contact Group Leaders who demonstrate welcome through regular communications and friendship.

We have also seen Pastoral Care expanded to meet the deep needs of visitors. The Chaplaincy Team has grown considerably, and our work featured in the Diocesan Chaplaincy Booklet. As Clergy, it's our privilege to work in partnership with Chaplains, Stewards and Welcomers.

Revd Chantal Mason
Abbey Pastor





TENDING – Caring as a Church Family

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains of paramount importance at Bath Abbey and with the Church of England changes to safer recruitment in January 2022, it is now mandatory for all those connected with Bath Abbey to complete at least Basic Awareness training regardless of their Church role. In a very positive light, now the Covid 19 pandemic is nearly behind us we have been able to offer face to face training.

Furthermore, the Church of England requires that all DBS clearance checks must be renewed every three years rather than five years. During this reporting period, 62 DBS clearances or re-clearances were obtained, and 300 hours of Safeguarding training were completed online.

Natalie Cox-Mullings
Human Resources Officer

**“300 hours of
Safeguarding
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TRANSFORMING – Mission Support

Mission Support

Over these last two years, as much as we have been able to do so, we have continued to support mission partners, both close to home and further afield. Unfortunately, because of the consequences of the pandemic we have only been able to do this on a much reduced level by comparison with what has been possible in the past.

Having said that, we have in this past year started to build a stronger relationship with Tearfund whilst continuing to maintain connections with Wycliffe Bible Translators, Genesis Trust and Reaching the Unreached.

As always, we are very grateful for the generous response of the Abbey community to last year's Pentecost Appeal which was once again the main focus of our activity. We have also kept in contact with local partner organisations including Focus Counselling, Bath Youth for Christ and CAP. We held a very successful harvest supper and are grateful to all those who made this such an enjoyable evening.

The changing circumstances of the Abbey resulting from the pandemic has and will, for the near future at least, have a direct effect on the support that we can provide to other partner organisations. This is a sad and difficult situation in which we find ourselves. We are in an

environment now very different to how it has been and we have reviewed the areas of our activity. With a more continual emphasis throughout the year on mission support we hope to restore and maintain a focus on this important aspect of the Abbey life.

Finally, we are so grateful through this period to all those organisations who deliver the care and compassion to those who need it so much and for their patience and forbearance in their relationships with us. It has been very much appreciated.

James Playfair
Chair Mission Support Group





TREASURING – Financial Review

It's fair to say that we are glad to see the back of 2021! 2021 was another year dominated by the global COVID-19 pandemic. We were closed / in lockdown for the first 5 months of the year and did not reopen to visitors until May 2021. Initially we had to limit visitors and shoppers in order to comply with UK Gov Social Distancing requirements and so we were not able to fully re-open until July 2021. The pandemic impacted on us in the following ways:

- We lost 5 months of visitors / shoppers donations / income followed by 2 months of significantly reduced income
- COVID-19 anxiety led: to low footfall; the cancellation of the Christmas market; and volunteers delaying their return to the Abbey which led to increased staff costs
- Our Footprint Project became delayed further due to supply chain and sickness issues and we had to spend more on hand-sanitisation, signage and staffing,
- Fundraising has been adversely impacted as philanthropist support and focus has switched to frontline services and charities
- There were no overseas visitors

At the start of the pandemic we were faced with a £1.1m cash shortfall in funding our Footprint Project and we estimated that we would incur a seven figure trading deficit across 2020 and 2021. We are pleased and proud to report that whilst our unrestricted reserves have been heavily eroded, we incurred a trading deficit of around a quarter of what we projected for the 2 year period and in 2021 we actually produced a trading surplus of £84k.

Furthermore, with the help of the Diocese, our generous benefactors and successful grant applications we have raised enough cash to fill the Footprint Project funding gap and we have sufficient funds to get us through to get us through 2022 and beyond.

At the time of writing, it is great to see choirs and concerts returning to the Abbey, as well as graduations, exhibitions and especially our Easter Experience event which was particularly successful. We are also seeing new events such as the Museum of the Moon (a huge success!) Toppings book-signings and Shakespeare in the Abbey. Our new beautiful shop has reopened and is trading at record levels and our tours are up and running.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful Abbey Team of staff, volunteers, chaplains, clergy, churchwardens and PCC for their hard work and commitment over the last 2 years, who have collectively enabled the Abbey to get through probably the most difficult period of our generation. Thanks also to our benefactors, the Friends of Bath Abbey, BAMS, the Diocese of Bath & Wells, our professional partners and Emerys. What a great team! Thank you.

Frank Mowat
Executive Director

**“in 2021 we ... produced
a trading surplus of £84k”**



TREASURING - Sustaining & Renewing Creation

Footprint Project

After many years of hard work – both in preparation and in practice – we are now finally enjoying the new spaces created through the Abbey’s Footprint project. These new facilities have given us a steep learning curve on how we use and interact within these spaces. It has been a great opportunity to expand the Abbey’s mission and outreach, as well as exploring a different approach to hosting our events.

It has been one year now since we started welcoming choirs to the new Song School, which has been hugely positive. The Learning Centre has offered an attractive new space for a range of users, from schools and community groups to outside organisations and staff training, and our education programme is starting to build momentum.

There has been a huge amount of work throughout the year to develop our new Discovery Centre exhibition, which is due to open later this year. This space will provide a unique experience for our local visitors, students and communities, as well as our international visitors.





TREASURING - Sustaining & Renewing Creation



This is going to be a very exciting new facility and we look forward to sharing more information over the coming months.

We remain thankful for the commitment and dedication of our Abbey family, and the Footprint team, including consultants and contractors, who continue to work hard towards the completion of the project. We are almost there!

Nathan Ward
Footprint Project Director





TREASURING - Stewardship

Planned Giving

A regular financial contribution from members of the Abbey Community enables us to sustain the life and ministry of the Abbey.

The best way to give on a regular basis is to enrol in the Planned Giving Scheme and make payments through online banking or a bank standing order. This enables both the giver and Abbey to budget and reduces administration costs.

Where a giver can Gift Aid their donation, Planned

Giving makes it easier to make a tax reclaim. Over 180 members of the Abbey Community already participate in Planned Giving, we invite more to join. To find out more contact John Barnes email pgiving@bathabbey.org

**Income from Planned Giving:
2021 - £176,798**

John Barnes
Planned Giving Officer

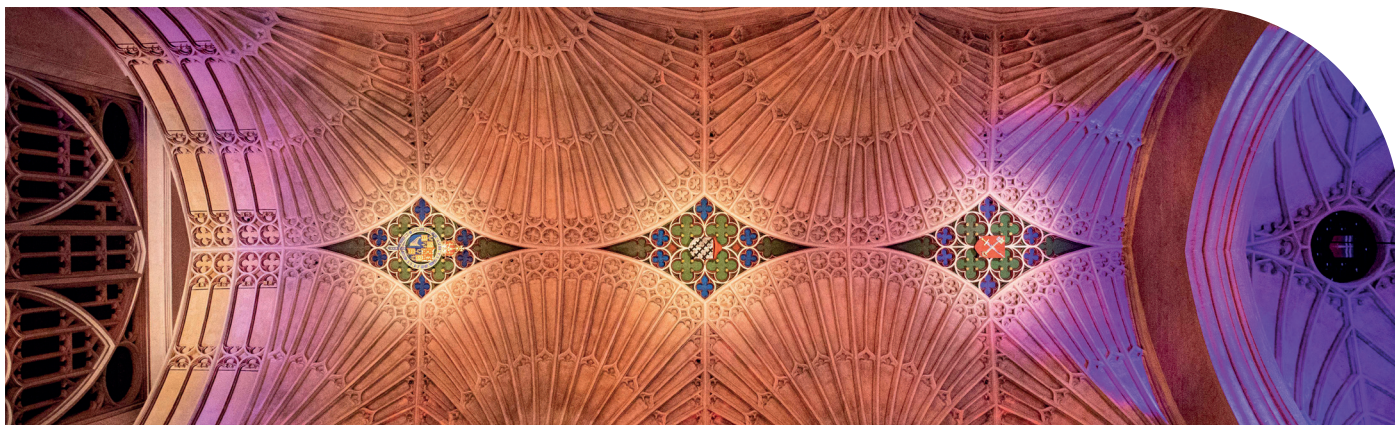
TREASURING – Volunteering

Our wonderful volunteers continue to be instrumental in making the Abbey the special place that it is. With the pandemic nearly behind us, it is great to see so many of our loyal volunteers finally returning after 2 years and refreshing to see lots of new faces too.

On the whole volunteers still gave us over 6,500 hours of their time in 2021 despite these challenging times of covid, embracing the changes, and adapting where it was needed. With the

completion of our Footprint Project providing us with the amazing new Learning space and Discovery Centre it has opened up some new and exciting opportunities, which we hope will attract more volunteers. We are all really grateful to our family of volunteers, without whom the Abbey would not be able to fully function. Thank you.

Natalie Cox-Mullings
Human Resources Officer



TREASURING – Visiting

Due to the third national lockdown, the Abbey was closed for visiting for 107 days, yet we still welcomed 233,495 visitors.

It was wonderful to open again in mid-May and relaunch the Tower Tours. We could only offer private tours until August and 2021 saw 51 marriage proposals (with only one 'no') We also launched our new Best of Bath Abbey tours in October half term and so far, 480 people have joined one.

After two different pop-up shops within the Abbey the shop finally moved back into the Jackson extension in November, after closing its doors on 4 January 2020. Despite being closed for a third of the year, shop sales were £187,597

The year ended with the installation of Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon. This was a huge success for both Visitor Services and the Shop. Our Moon Lates brought in 5,043 people across 9 nights.

Thanks to Simon at Bath Astronomers we were able to offer the magical Stargazing Tours which hopefully will continue into 2022. Over the period of The Museum of the Moon the shop sold 1934 moon related items, 948 of which were 'I Saw the Moon at Bath Abbey' magnets. On the whole, the 'Moon' bought us an extra 34,696 visitors and an added income of over £45K.

The coming year obviously marks the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We have wonderful plans which include showcasing relevant items from our archives and a range of Jubilee merchandise.

None of this could happen without a wonderful team of staff and volunteers, so thank you to all of you who contribute to that.

Donna Lodge & Francesca Morton
Shop Manager & Tours Manager





TREASURING – Message from the Church Wardens

A New Normal

What a long way we have come in a year. A New Normal has now been reached and 'Footprint' is almost complete. No more hoardings outside or inside the Abbey. The new shop is back in its place in the Jackson Extension and we have a warm Abbey. The underfloor heating is up and running (with some teething problems) and we have a flexible seating space in the nave.

The vision has been realised, with movable chairs and an adaptable space for visitors to circulate. The Discovery Centre plans and permissions are now complete and work will start in the vaults soon. Thanks to all those who

have worked tirelessly over the years to make it all happen.

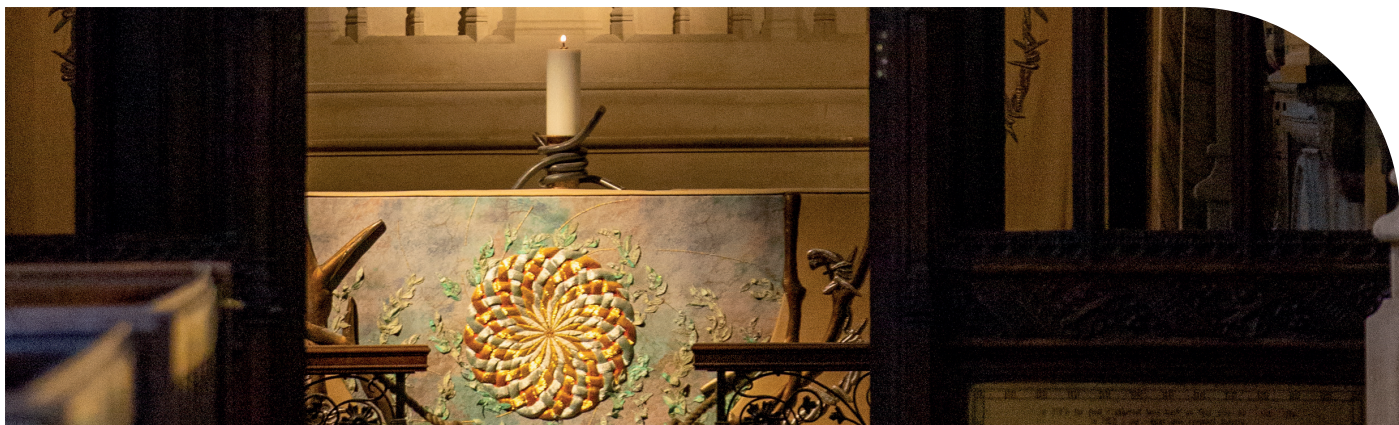
Our 'Footprint Celebration Service' took place on 17th October 2021, a very joyous occasion. With continuing pandemic precautions the full range of Sunday services began and we had a very busy Advent and Christmas Season with all our usual services and a large moon dominating the central crossing. Worship continues despite the 'Omicron variant' and regular congregation numbers are increasing as people feel comfortable to return to the Abbey. We had wonderful Easter services this year with a full church and the West Doors open to carry our worship out to the

crowd in Abbey Churchyard.

James Playfair has now completed seven years as Churchwarden and will be standing down at the APCM. Thank you James for your dedicated service and guidance through these difficult years of change. We all owe you a debt of gratitude. Thank you also to our Deputy Wardens and Worship Support team who keep our services running smoothly every Sunday. If you would like to join this team do speak to me as we always need more volunteers. There are some things that never change! Thank you.

Rose Amphlett
Churchwarden





TREASURING – Abbey Family Farewell

Remembering with love, members of the Abbey Church family who have died

As we reflect together on the past year, we remember all those we have loved who have died. May the memory of those who have died in faith, continue to inspire us that we may live well in the service of others. We will remember them with gratitude at our Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

At the second anniversary of the first lockdown 23rd March, we joined the National Day of Reflection led by Marie Curie. We held before God the millions of people who are grieving and remembered the family, friends, neighbours and colleagues we have lost over the last two years, especially thinking of those in Bath who have died.

Special prayers were offered for our NHS, for Care Home staff and the extraordinary work of Dorothy House Hospice carers. We thank God for their diligence, compassion and tireless commitment as they support our Church family.

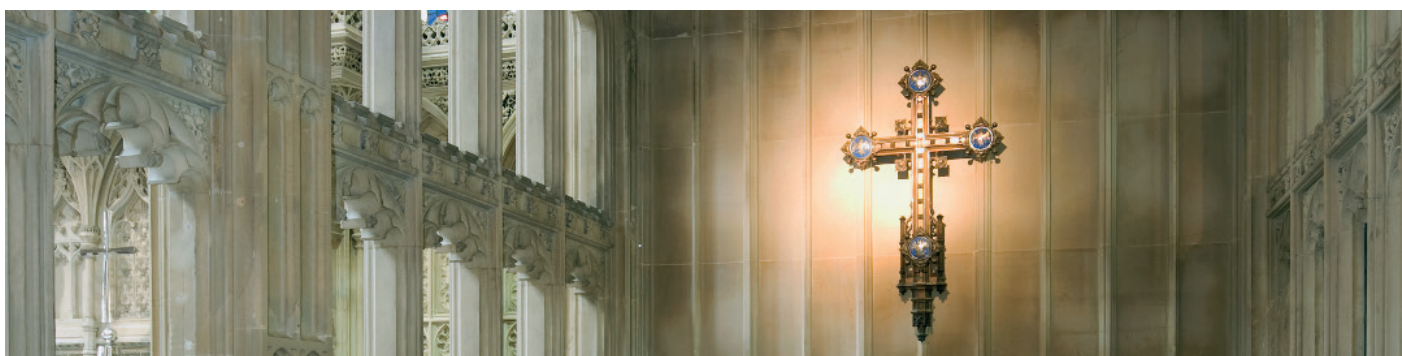


At our special *All Souls service* later in the Autumn we will remember all Church family members who have died during the past year.

Revd Chantal Mason & Revd Guy Bridgewater
Abbey Pastor & Rector of Bath Abbey



**“we remember
all those we
have loved who
have died”**



BathAbbey

www.bathabbey.org

