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From the Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells ☩

May 2021

North Somerset welcomes Syrian families

In the last few years Nailsea has played its part in welcoming Syrian families from war-torn areas and refugee camps.

Elaine Atkinson co-ordinates a team of volunteers brought together by Christians Together in Nailsea and District (CTNAD). They support refugees who have arrived in Nailsea with the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS).

She says, "We now have two families here and are keen to welcome others. We work closely with North Somerset Council who will welcome 12 more families to the county. The main obstacle to doing this is finding suitable private landlord rental accommodation."

Two families living in Nailsea have shared their stories about life here. One mother says, "As for moving to Britain, it was a little hesitant decision. People, home, country. Everything, will be different. The



English language was difficult for me. We found a voluntary job for my husband and my son started going to pre-school and found great friends. All the people were wonderful and accommodating and welcomed our presence with them. This was our first two years and it was difficult, different, and stressful, wonderful things happened, and difficult things too. Then everything became better and better. Language and self-confidence. We adapted to society."

If you are a landlord or looking to invest in a rental property, contact the Refugee Resettlement Team on 01934 427275 or email caroline.crossley@n-somerset.gov.uk. Find the full stories from the two Nailsea families at www.bathwells.anglican.org/north-somerset-welcomes-syrian-families/ ■

News in brief

Cartwheels and brussel sprouts aid fundraising effort

When Sophie and Izzy of St John's, Keynsham realised that not all children in Zambia go to school, they decided to fundraise to help build and furnish a new 3-classroom primary school at St Paul's church, Chipata.

After Sophie reached her £500 target for her fundraising raffle, her brother had to do his promised challenges of having a worm crawl on his face and eat three of his least favourite foods, including brussel sprouts. Izzy meanwhile did 100 cartwheels a day for seven days. In total £2,500 has been raised for the school which means it can be built later this year. Find out more at bathandwells.org.uk/parish-links/ ■



A time to celebrate together

Save the date

While we will not be able to host the Zambian bishops this summer, due to the restrictions of the Covid pandemic, we will still have the opportunity to celebrate our links with the Anglican church in Zambia, with our first Zambia Sunday on 4 July.

It will be an opportunity for us all to pray and learn more about each other together.

Find out more at: bathandwells.org.uk/Zambia-partnership/ ■

New website

Check out our new website at bathandwells.org.uk. Designed by ChurchEdit, it is part of a collaboration with 20 other dioceses to create a standardised website that will serve dioceses across the Church of England.

This new way of working is built on

collaboration, shared learning and good practice and will allow some of the costs of website build and development to be shared.

The user-focused website includes a documents section, to enable people to find essential downloads and other material quickly, and a more powerful search function.

Called to serve and care

By Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells

There are many things I shall miss when I retire. One is writing these brief articles for parish magazines. After some 41 years of writing articles and editorials you might think I would be pleased to stop. However, over the years this is one way I have been able to keep in touch with people and offer encouragement and support to all that is happening in the life of our churches and communities.

In the ordination service for bishops the liturgy begins with the words: 'Bishops are called to serve and care for the flock of Christ. Mindful of the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep, they are to love and pray for those committed to their charge, knowing their people, and being known by them.' These monthly articles are one way in which I seek to 'be known' across the diocese.

As I prepare to retire, I want to express my huge appreciation for the welcome I have received in all the parishes and places that I have visited. It has been an enormous privilege to join the churches of the

diocese to see what you are doing, to preach and to share in your worship. I am conscious that despite getting out and about across the whole diocese there are still some churches which I have not visited, and I am sorry about that.

Reading the ordination service, I see that as disciples we are all called to 'witness to the resurrection and to preach the good news of salvation in all the world.' That is a calling and a privilege which will not stop as I lay down the See of Bath and Wells. It is at the heart of what it is to be part of the Body of Christ. So, as I say my farewells, I send you my blessing. Please know that my prayers will continue to be with you.

Yours with the love of Christ,

+ Peter Bath and Wells



An absolute delight

Bishop Peter reflects on his time as Bishop of Bath and Wells as he prepares to retire early on medical grounds.



Only in Somerset: Bishop Peter on Glastonbury Festival's Pyramid Stage.

What moments stand out for you? It has been an absolute delight to visit so many churches to share in worship, preach and to see all that clergy and congregations are doing or planning. Every confirmation service has been a real joy and privilege and the Cathedral confirmations have been inspiring.

What will you miss most?

I shall hugely miss the visits to schools, colleges and universities. To see young people learning, exploring and thinking about the world we live in has been a joy. I shall also miss the

sitting down with Clergy, Readers and church leaders to talk and pray with them about the challenges and joys they are finding in ministry. Jane, our dog Juno and I will miss the glorious scenery and wonderful countryside.

What gives you hope for the future of the Church in Bath & Wells?

I can't think of a day when I haven't been encouraged and hopeful about the future of the Church here in the diocese. This past year has been difficult for everyone but I am confident that despite the issues we face that the diocese is in good heart and in good hands.

What will you take away from your time in Somerset?

I have wonderful memories of being the Bishop 'outside a church setting'. Going to the Bath and West Show, meeting our rural and farming community, or speaking at civic occasions. Speaking on Glastonbury Festival's Pyramid Stage will never leave me - it was both terrifying and uplifting.

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