



CiA News – March 2025

This news sheet is available on the CiA website at www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk. Please take a look.

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON

Peachcroft Christmas Day Lunch 2024

Fifty-five 55 guests joined together for the Christmas Day lunch at Peachcroft Christian Centre. Taxis were provided for guests who needed transport.

Two local schools (St Edmunds and Our Lady's Abingdon) contributed again to the event by making Christmas cards, and table and tree decorations for the guests. As well as the homemade presents from the schools, guests received a Christmas card and a present. This year the present was a notebook, pen and chocolate. Santa even made an appearance and delivered the presents individually to each guest.

All the guests from 2023 were contacted to see if they would like to attend again, many accepted and enjoyed catching up with old friends from previous years. This year we were able to have a volunteer with the specific role of publicising the event. As well as building on existing connections they were able to make new connections and as a result we were able to reach more people than we have in the past.

Food is an important part of the day. On arrival, guests were served a non-alcoholic sparkling drink and shown to a seat. A full turkey dinner was served (with veggie options) including a special homemade stuffing. An optional glass of wine was served with the meal. Christmas pudding and other desserts followed. The meal ended with tea and coffee.

Live entertainment helps to create a warm atmosphere and we were supported by two fine musicians. Following feedback from guests last year, we didn't book any singers and kept to background instrumental music. As is becoming tradition the whole room joined in 'The Twelve days of Christmas' and the closing song of 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'.

The event is only possible due to the many volunteers (32 this year) who serve both before and during the event. Volunteers are safely recruited and safeguarding is taken seriously. Planning commenced in August 2024 having been commissioned by Peachcroft Christian Centre's trustees.

The Mayor of Abingdon, Gabby, visited the lunch. As well as chatting with guests, she and her consort helped serve. The joy of the day was evident, as the planned short visit lasted nearly 2 hours!

WHAT'S COMING UP

Abingdon Progressive Christianity Network Group

This group meets on the first Tuesday of each month. The meeting is held on Zoom and the link for joining the meeting is available from the convenor, Cliff Marshall, at cliff.marshall@pcnbritain.org.uk.

Back to 35

A group for over 50s meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month in the church sanctuary at Abingdon Baptist Church from 10.30 to 11.30 am. Doors open at 10.00 am. A varied programme is on offer:

- 6 March – Board games
- 20 March – The 1950s with Sonja Roberts from Hand On Oxfordshire Heritage
- 3 April – Seated exercises by Christine
- 17 April – Quiz and hot cross buns

Admission only £1 for tea, coffee and cake. Limited parking at the church. All welcome.

Lunchtime music hour at Abingdon Baptist Church

On Monday 10 March 2025, we invite you to an hour of music with Gill Carpin Gill Carpin playing on the piano and organ from 12.30 pm in the church. There will be a basket for donations to Abingdon Food Bank.

Why not buy your light lunch from our Cafe@35 to eat while you listen, or bring your own.

Stepping Stones Bereavement Group

A new series of ten monthly sessions for people going through bereavement is starting on Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 10.30 am in the Barn at Christ Church, Northcourt Road. This is an opportunity to meet and share in groups of three or four, in a safe space and where confidentiality is a priority. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided.

If you are interested in coming along and would like further information, please contact Sue at Sue.quantick@cca.uk.net.

Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross will be held at St Michael and All Angels Church on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm (for about 40 minutes) on 11 and 18 March 2025, and 1 and 8 April; these will be lay led. If you park in Park Road or Crescent, come in to get a parking permit, otherwise the parking is free in the surrounding streets.



Dorcus dress project

This project aims to offer a friendly and social time where you are welcome to complete your own sewing projects or learn new skills through pre-set topics. You may use our sewing equipment knowing there is technical advice at hand, or bring your own.

The co-ordinator, Maria, has over 30 years of experience teaching and working in the clothing and textiles industry.

Each session includes:

- a space to complete your own project
- teaching space where you are welcome to participate with the topic of the week
- a mid-session refreshment break where we gather and chat together



Sessions are free of charge, especially for those with no regular income. However, we do ask those who can afford it to help cover our costs. Each session costs us about £120.

The sewing sessions will be held at Peachcroft Christian Centre, Lindsey Drive, Abingdon OX14 2RT. The sessions will begin weekly on 20 March 2025 until 10 July 2025, with a break 10 - 24 April. All welcome.

For more information, visit our website <http://dorcusdressproject.org/sewing-sessions-uk/> or email dorcusdressproject@gmail.com. We are also looking for volunteers to help.

Open Air Service led by the Salvation Army Youth Chorus

We welcome members of all churches to join us on Sunday 23 March 2025, 2 pm, as we worship and witness alongside the Salvation Army youth choir, composed of young people from around the Thames Valley. You can stand with us or treat yourself to a coffee and sit outside one of the many coffee shops in Abingdon Market Place.

Agnostics Anonymous

The next meeting of the Agnostics Anonymous open discussion group will take place on Tuesday 25 March 2025 from 6 to 7.30 pm at St Helen's Parish Centre. John Kerr will give the introductory talk 'Prayer for

Agnostics'. John Barton and Jen Brown will answer questions and also contribute to the discussion. Free and everyone welcome. For more information, please contact Jill Gant on 01235 528929.

A young organists' showcase

A selection of music performed by young organists from the Abingdon and Oxford areas, played on the historic Harrison and Harrison organ of St Helen's Church, interspersed with seasonal choral items from the Helenstowe Consort, will take place at St Helen's Church on Saturday 5 April 2025, 7.30 - 9.00 pm. Tickets: £10 for Adults, free for accompanied under 16s. Tickets available from the Bookstore in Abingdon.

CiA - Good Friday Procession of Witness and Open Air Service

This will take place on Friday 18 April 2025, with the procession leaving Abingdon Library at 11.45 am for a service on the forecourt of Abingdon Town Council on Bridge Street opposite Lewis Baker at 12 noon (weather permitting). The service will be led by Helen Cameron of the Salvation Army and be accompanied by their band. All welcome.

Abingdon Food Bank

This Lent, how about listening to a weekly Biblical reflection from people who have experienced hunger? You can sign up to receive them at:

https://www.trussell.org.uk/support-us/churches/giveup10?mc_cid=6eee2c384b&mc_eid=12860ce6a1

As ever, we would appreciate gifts of corned beef, hotdogs, tinned tomatoes, tinned sweetcorn, pasta sauce, rice, hot chocolate, tinned fruit, rice pudding, UHT milk, squash and large nappies (size 5 and above). You can bring donations to Christ Church (Monday - Friday) or Preston Road Community Centre (Wednesday) or use collection baskets at Waitrose and Aldi. To keep up to date with our needs, please download the BanktheFood app.

Abingdon Community Fridge

Abingdon Community Fridge exists to prevent food waste and is open to everyone. It collects surplus food from local businesses and distributes to the community. Help to stop excess food being thrown out by coming to Hadland Road Community Centre, Abingdon OX14 3YH:

Mondays: 4 - 4.30 pm

Thursdays: 1 - 2 pm

Saturdays: 10.30 - 11.30 am

For more information, go to www.facebook.com/abingdoncommunityfridge.

Abingdon's International Welcome Café – Fridays, 1 – 2.30 pm, The Barn, Christ Church, Northcourt Road, OX14 1PL

This café was set up in response to the Homes for Ukraine scheme and to provide wider support of refugees through a collaborative partnership of Christ Church and Host Abingdon, the main partners, as well as many other churches in Abingdon as well as local groups and organisations, including the Food Bank. The café offers friendship, support, refreshments, toys and help with English run by a qualified TEFL teacher. For further information, please contact hello@hostabingdon.org.

Archway



The Archway Foundation, a locally founded registered charity 'serving those hurt by loneliness', offers a pathway of support including individual support via telephone or face-to-face, and small supportive social groups. By volunteering for an hour a fortnight as an Individual Support or once a month as a small group volunteer, or as a volunteer driver, you can make a huge difference to someone's week. We are especially keen to find volunteers to support our monthly Abingdon

group. Excellent training and support is given and any travel expenses reimbursed. If you think you could help, please get in touch. An application form can be found at www.archwayfoundation.org.uk, or a hard copy is available by calling 01865 790552.

Christian cards and books

Cards covering all events, including birthdays, anniversaries, get well, thinking of you, etc., which are regularly topped up, are available for purchase from 35 Ock Street, Abingdon Baptist Church. There is also a range of books for sale, regularly updated; books can also be ordered. Do come along and see what we have. Our stock is sourced from St Andrew's Christian Bookshop whose nearest outlet is Witney since they closed their shop in Oxford.

Moving into Stillness: Taizé circle dancing and stillness

Circle dancing takes place on the first Thursday of the month 9.45 - 10.45 am at St Michael and All Angels Church, before the regular circle dancing session, which is held on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 11 am to 12 noon. Contact Sue Sheppy (susan.sheppy@btinternet.com) for further information.

Silent Reflections

This will be held on the last Tuesday of every month (except for December) at St Michael and All Angels Church from 7.30 to 8.30 pm. Material will be available to support your prayer in the quiet of the sanctuary, and the opportunity is always available to walk the labyrinth. We begin in the church room, so please enter through the door on the south side of the church. If you park in Park Road or Crescent, come in to get a parking permit, otherwise the parking is free in the surrounding streets.

Upcoming free eco events

See www.oneplanetabingdon.org for full details

Volunteering Opportunities

Are you looking to give a few hours of help? If so, here are some ways of volunteering for local community groups.

Abingdon Baptist Church, 35 Ock Street



Looking for something new? Like meeting people? Have you considered volunteering?

Research shows that being a volunteer has lots of benefits. It can bring meaning and purpose to your life, while increasing your self-esteem and wellbeing. Volunteering can also relieve stress, and alleviate symptoms of depression, as well as having a positive impact on your community.

35 Ock Street and Café is a hugely valuable and important resource for the church in its mission to the community. Our team is made up of volunteers who have a passion for serving our community.

**We are looking for new people
numbers have dropped due to**



**to join our friendly team as our volunteer
changes in circumstances.**

If you think you could take on a **catering role** or **reception duties** and you want to learn more, why not drop us an email at office@35ockst.org.uk. We'd love to hear from you! Give as much time as you feel able - once a week, once a fortnight or even once a month. Training is given.

Current opening times: Monday – Thursday 10.30 am - 2.00 pm with light tasty lunches served between

12.00 pm and 1.30 pm; Fridays and Saturdays 10.30 am – 12.30 pm with refreshments only but, as a special, bacon baps are available.

The Abingdon Bridge



The Abingdon Bridge is a well-regarded registered Abingdon charity supported by both the National Lottery Community Fund and the BBC's Children in Need Fund, as well as funding from the CiA. TAB provides support to young people (aged 13-25 years) to enable them to have the resilience to help overcome life's challenges (<https://www.theabingdonbridge.org.uk>). TAB has a bank of volunteers that perform a vital role, often doing a slot once a week or fortnight or monthly. If you are interested or would like further information, please contact Sandy Kruger at sandy@theabingdonbridge.org.uk. Volunteers will be DBS checked.

Abingdon Street Pastors – helping to make the community a safe place

Street Pastors is a worldwide network of Christian volunteers from local churches who have concern for the community and provide help as needed in neutral and reassuring ways at the point of need. Abingdon Street Pastors has been part of the night-time economy in the town centre on Saturday nights since 2011, going out from about 10 pm till everyone is safely on their way home. We work in close collaboration with the police, the local council and other local groups and bodies. We would love to have more volunteers working with us – either as Street Pastors out on the street or as Prayer Pastors who stay and pray at our base during a shift. If you feel that this is something close to your heart and would like to give it a try, please contact the Coordinator Debra Mcknight at abingdon@streetpastors.org.uk.

Christian Forum

This Christian witness continues to be published monthly in the Abingdon Round & About magazine, distributed around Abingdon residents. If you would like to submit an article (300 words max) on any subject with a Christian message, please send to the CiA Administrator at dhmcknight@aol.com.

Church Twinning

Our committee would welcome new members from any of the interdenominational churches of the Church in Abingdon. Committee members enjoy meeting Christians from other countries as well as discussing ecumenism. We plan visits to Abingdon from a twin town annually, as well as arrange and take part in these visits. We also organize an away visit to a twin town each year. The twin towns are Argentan and Colmar (France), Lucca (Italy), Sint Niklaas (Belgium) and Schongau (Germany). There are only four committee meetings a year, plus an informal planning meeting for any visit here. If you are interested in this outreach, contact John Clare at johnclare.blunsdon@gmail.com.

To read more about the twinning visits, see the reports posted on the CiA website under 'CiA-supported task groups: additional information' (<https://www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk/>).

LAMPS Collective

LAMPS is a collective of Christian artists that produce fabulous live theatre and creative resources for the church (www.lampscollective.com). We are based in Abingdon and are thankful for the support of many local churches. Our aim is to create work that will inspire, challenge, entertain and provoke thought about the nature of God, life and the universe. LAMPS is an acronym which stands for Love, Action, Music, Poetry and Stories – all things close to our hearts! If you appreciate the Christian arts and have some time available we'd love to have you join our volunteer team. There are many ways to help, ranging from sharing skills like marketing, admin, IT, front of house, to helping steer the charity by sitting on our Board of Trustees. To find out more, contact Sam Pullen-Campbell on pullencampbells@outlook.com.

Trinity Learning

TrinityLearning is a tiny, church-funded Abingdon charity that aims to improve wellbeing in Abingdon's school communities. TrinityLearning works with volunteers from across Abingdon's church communities providing a wide range of volunteering opportunities.

Crafty volunteers needed - We are looking for confident crocheters and knitters to help make tiny toys for several of our packs. Our TrinityLearning Bereavement packs are designed for adults working with bereaved children and we send one bear out with each pack. The packs have been very well received by schools and we now also provide Family Change packs to help support adults working with children experiencing change due to divorce or separation. TrinityLearning will provide all the materials needed.



Thinking Books: Could you spare an afternoon per week to work with children to improve their understanding of others' emotions? Thinking Books is Trinity Learning's volunteer mentoring project. Trained volunteers meet children weekly in school for 10 sessions to discuss character's emotions using carefully chosen books. We provide full training and support volunteers through the application process and DBS checks as well as providing ongoing support and training throughout the project.

Please email Nicola nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com if you would like to know more about these or any of our volunteer opportunities.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CHURCHES: Please check church websites for up-to-date info

Abingdon Baptist Church www.abingdonbaptist.org.uk

Abingdon Community Church <https://abingdoncc.org.uk> / www.facebook.com/groups/AbingdonCC/

Abingdon Vineyard Church www.abingdonvineyard.org.uk

All Saints Methodist Church www.allsaintsabingdon.org.uk

Christ Church www.cca.uk.net/ and www.longfurlongchurch.org.uk

RCCG Light House Abingdon www.rccglighthouseabingdon.org

Peachcroft Christian Centre www.peachcroftcc.org/

Quakers www.abingdonquakers.org/

Salvation Army www.salvationarmy.org.uk/abingdon

Our Lady and St Edmund Roman Catholic Church www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/

St Helen's, St Michael's, St Nicolas' <https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StH> <https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM>
<https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StN>

Trinity Church www.trinityabingdon.org.uk

The CiA News is circulated by the Church in Abingdon to member churches within Abingdon to promote church activities and groups, news and any other information that may be of interest to CiA news readers. If you would like to submit news or receive the news by email, please contact the CiA Administrator (dhmcknight@aol.com). The deadline for publication is the 15th of the month previous to publication. For more information about the Church in Abingdon, go to www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk.