



CiA News – April 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

World Day of Prayer – 7 March 2025

Over 90 people came along to St Helen's Church on Friday 7 March 2025 to share in a service prepared by the women of The Cook Islands.

The service was led by Revd Ruth Pyke of St Helen's who was assisted by readers Sue Sheppy, Marion Haynes, Dorothy Field, Judith Penrose-Brown, Helen Appleyard, Margaret Hancox and Revd Richard Pyke. It was a lovely, peaceful service enjoyed by all.

People were welcomed by Barbara Deakin and Maureen Weston with the gift of a handmade flower reflective of a flower native to The Cook Islands. Thanks to Petronella Rasmussen for her help in making these. People loved these and were asking how to make them!

The altar was decorated with emblems of The Cook Islands – including models of Polynesian canoes, made by the children of Abingdon Baptist Church under the lead of Dorothy Field, coconuts and other fresh fruit eaten on the islands, coconut trees, a sea/sand/shells landscape, Polynesian flowers and a Bible open at the reading in Psalm 139:14.

Music was provided under the direction of Sally Mears and her choir with Malcolm Pearce on the piano, and Stephen Thomas managed all sound issues.

Sweets characteristic of The Cook Islands were prepared beforehand by members of the WDP committee and the ladies of St Helen's under Alexandra Green's lead organised these as well as other refreshments.

A collection raised £350.85 for the WDP, a registered charity.

Thanks to everyone involved and to St Helen's for providing the venue in making this such a successful event.



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.

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 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.



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 for tea, coffee and cake. A varied programme is on offer:

- 3 April – Seated exercises by Christine
- 17 April – Quiz and hot cross buns

Admission only £1. Limited parking at the church. All welcome.

Dorcus dress project

The Dorcus Dress Project is up and running on Thursday mornings from 9.30 to 11.30 am at Peachcroft Christian Centre, Lindsey Drive, Abingdon OX14 2RT.



The sewing sessions are a friendly and social time where people can either complete their own projects or learn new skills through pre-set topics. People may use our sewing equipment knowing there is technical advice at hand or bring their own sewing equipment. Each session includes:

- A space to complete your own project
- A 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 – being friends and knowing each other is important to us.

If you know of anyone who would benefit from learning a new skill, particularly if they are in financial hardship, do let them know.

For more details, go to <https://dorcusdressproject.org/sewing-sessions-uk/> or email dorcusdressproject@gmail.com to confirm dates. The sessions will be held until 10 July 2025, with a break 10 - 24 April. All welcome.

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.

Abingdon Food Bank – come and find out what we do

Would you like to know more about what we do?

Come to the Food Bank at Christ Church, Northcourt Road on Wednesday 9 April 2025 between 4 and 5 pm and 7.30 and 8.30 pm, when there will be a short talk and questions at 4.15 and 7.45 pm. All welcome.

Lunchtime music hour at Abingdon Baptist Church



On Monday 14 April 2025, we invite you to an hour of music with the Cairins family from 12.30 pm in the church. There will be a basket for donations to The Abingdon Bridge (TAB).

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

In May, we welcome the Eynsham Trio.

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 lawn of the Roysse Room (Abingdon Guildhall, OX14 3JD) on Bridge Street opposite Lewis Baker at 12 noon led by the local Salvation Army.

Christian Aid Market Place sale

As part of Christian Aid Week (11 – 17 May) the annual market place sale will take place in Abingdon Market Place on Saturday 10 May 2025 from 9 am to 12 noon with the sale of plants, books, CDs, DVDs, cakes and preserves. There will also be a street collection, as well as an online availability to make donations. For further information, contact Christine at christine@thehutts.co.uk.

Labyrinth Day retreat

This will be held on Saturday 10 May 2025 at St Michael and All Angels' Church (OX14 1DS) from 10.15 am to 4 pm. It will be led by Jim Bailey, a member of the Northumbria Community. He is a spiritual director, therapeutic art facilitator and retired church minister. Donations (suggested £15) on the day would be appreciated to help cover running costs. Further details / booking forms from Carol Bowman (carol@manxcat.me.uk) and Sue Sheppy (susan.sheppy@btinternet.com).



Dementia – turning understanding into action

Susan Williams, Secretary of Dementia Friendly Abingdon, will be giving a talk on dementia and the supportive strategies we can all take on Tuesday 13 May 2025 at 7.30 pm at St Helen's Church Parish Centre. All welcome. Admission free. Refreshments will be available.

Abingdon Compassionate Cafe

A comforting space for conversation, along with cake, tea, coffee, or soft drinks, at St Ethelwold's House, East St Helen Street, Abingdon, OX14 5EB.

The next meeting is on Friday 20 June 2025, 10 am to 12 noon, and then the Café will be held monthly on the first Saturday of the month, starting with Saturday 6 September 2025 from 2 pm to 4 pm. All welcome.

Abingdon Food Bank

Our up-to-date needs can be found on the BanktheFood app, which is easy to use.

We always need tinned meat/vegetables/fruit, pasta sauce, UHT milk, squash, toiletries, washing-up liquid and cleaning spray. You can bring donations to Preston Road Community Centre (Wednesday) or Christ Church (Monday-Friday), or use collection baskets at Waitrose, Aldi and most churches. Financial donations are also very helpful.

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

Abingdon Compassionate Cafe



**Friday 21st March 2025
at 10am to 12 noon**

Cake, Kindness and Compassion – a safe haven, to just be!

for a supportive gathering to talk openly,
or one-to-one about grief,
difficult diagnoses, or caring for a loved one
nearing the end of life.

Providing a comforting space for conversation,
along with cake, tea,
coffee, or soft drinks in the cosy St Ethelwold's House.

No agenda or advice, just a safe space for you to chat
with others in similar circumstances,
or to simply spend some time in a welcoming,
inclusive, peaceful space.

At St Ethelwold's House, Abingdon, OX14 5EB

Contact Fiona at email fiona@fionamaccelebrant.co.uk



in partnership with
Maggies Oxford, Sobell House, Oxford Samaritans,
Helen and Douglas House, Seesaw, Cruse
Bereavement Care.

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.