



CiA News – January 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

CiA - Christmas Carol singing

Over 100 people joined us in the Market Place on Saturday 14 December 2024 to sing Christmas Carols. Thanks to Sally Mears for leading us all again in song and to all those who helped with various activities of the day: the craft table, face painting, decorating Christmas tree biscuits, handing out leaflets and talking to passers-by, organizing/moving the chairs, musicians. It was a great day and we even saw the sun. Some great conversations were had among those singing and passers-by. It was definitely a day of good cheer.



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.



Lunchtime music hour at Abingdon Baptist Church

There is no music hour in January but we meet on Monday 10 February 2025, as we invite you to an hour of music with Paul Herrington as he brings a selection of music on piano, keyboard and organ from 12.30 pm in the church.

Why not buy your light lunch from our Cafe@35 to eat while you listen, or bring your own. There will be a retiring collection for Archway if you so wish.

Back to 35

A group for over 50s meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month at Abingdon Baptist Church from 10.30 to 11.30 am. Doors open at 10.00 am. A varied programme is on offer starting with a Beetle Drive on 16 January 2025. Admission only £1 for tea, coffee and cake. Limited parking at the church. All welcome.

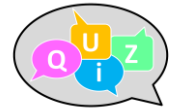
CiA - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

This year the theme adopted by the CiA for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 18- 25 January 2025, will be Serving Others in our Local Community.

- There will be no United Service, but **Midday Prayers** (St Nics) will take place from Monday 20 Jan 2024 to Friday 24 Jan 2025, 12 noon, with refreshments provided. Each day there will be talks by various local groups who work with the hungry, the fatherless, the lonely, the bereaved and refugees. They will tell us about the work they are doing and why, their connections with churches and other community groups, as well as shared witnesses from their users and volunteers.



- Monday 20 Jan – Serving the bereaved (AgeUK, Footprints, Local funeral director), led by Revd Paul Smith
 - Tuesday 21 Jan – Serving those who have had to flee their home country (HOST Abingdon, International Welcome Café, St Ethelwold), led by Revd Keith Dunnett
 - Wednesday 22 Jan – Serving homeless/abandoned children (Homes4Good), led by Revd Rachel Hughes
 - Thursday 23 Jan – Serving the hungry (North and South Foodbanks), led by Pastor Ellie Ball
 - Friday 24 Jan – Serving the lonely (Open Doors, Archway, Age UK, St Ethelwold), led by Revd Dr AKM Adam
- **The Inter-church quiz** will take place on Friday 24 Jan 2025, 7 for a 7.30 pm start, at Abingdon Baptist Church. Please enter your church team (up to six people) by Friday 17 January 2025 by contacting Ian Millgate at secretary@abingdonbaptist.org.uk or 01235 206583. A second team may be provisionally booked depending on space. Entry is £2 per person and all proceeds will go to Helen and Douglas House. Bring your own drinks and nibbles – teas and coffees provided.



TrinityLearning AGM



Join us for our AGM on Monday 20 January 2025 at 6 pm on Zoom. All volunteers, supporters, stakeholders and friends are warmly invited to join us, so if you are interested in finding out more about TrinityLearning and our recent work, please email Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com for a copy of the Annual Report and a zoom link.

Barn Dance

Come and join us for a Barn Dance at St Helen's Church (OX14) on Saturday 1 February 2025, 6.30 – 9.30 pm. Music by the Chameleons and there will be a Ploughman's supper. Tickets £15 Adults, £5 accompanied children under 16. Tickets are on sale at The Bookstore in Abingdon and can be purchased at: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-helens-church-abingdon> or by using the QR code. Book by 28 January 2025.



CiA - World Day of Prayer

This will be taking place on Friday 7 March 2025 at 2.30 pm at St Helen's Church. Please put the date in your diary. This year the service is prepared by the women of The Cook Islands.

Help us to 'grow' our volunteer gardeners' team



We are in the very early stages of planning a refurbishment to the Carswell School Sensory Garden, shown here during our last minor tidy up in 2023. The garden was originally designed by Rosemary Perrow in 2012 and has been used by many Carswell School pupils as well as being

appreciated by the local community. Now however, many of the original features have become overgrown and features such as seating are in need of replacement.

Refurbishing the garden to reflect the schools changing needs will be a major project and will require both short-term and long-term volunteer support. If you have experience in garden design or would be interested in volunteering for one-off gardening sessions or regular maintenance of the completed garden, please contact Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.



Abingdon Food Bank

A big thank you to everyone who supported us over Christmas, when we gave out 'hampers' to clients and to families referred by local schools. We do need your support as, sadly, demand continues to increase. We welcome gifts of cereal, soup, pasta, rice, tinned tomatoes, pasta sauce, tinned meat, tinned vegetables, tea/coffee/hot chocolate, tinned fruit, rice pudding, biscuits, UHT milk, squash. Also, toiletries, nappies and household cleaning items.

You can bring donations to Preston Road Community Centre (Wednesday) or Christ Church (Monday-Friday) or use collection baskets at Waitrose and Aldi. 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

The Community Fridge is in need of funding to continue its work (hire of hall, insurance, food safety training for volunteers, etc.). To donate, go to <https://chuffed.org/project/abingdon-community-fridge> or contact margaretdhancox@gmail.com. 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.

TrinityLearning – Experience Easter

We are starting to plan for Experience Easter 2025, which will offer schools the choice to visit Trinity Church for live workshops or to take part online. Experience Easter is a series of reflective workshops, specially developed to allow Key Stage 2 children (7 to 11-year-olds) to access the Easter Story in a meaningful way. We are looking for volunteers to help prepare simple craft packs as well as storytellers to help with the fully scripted live Experience Easter. TrinityLearning is committed to Safeguarding and all our volunteer opportunities are subject to safer recruitment procedures. If you would like to help, please email Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.

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 to join our friendly team as our volunteer numbers have dropped due to 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.

The Sanctuary

'The Sanctuary' is a weekly community day at the Salvation Army which is open to all every Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm. 'The Sanctuary' will be a place where anyone can come for support and friendship, and there will be activities for all to share– crafts, puzzles, gardening to name a few. If you would like to be involved in some way, please contact Alexandra Devine on 01235 523568.

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.