



CiA News – May 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 - Good Friday Procession of Witness and Open Air Service

Around 120 people joined in the procession of witness from Abingdon Library on Friday 18 April 2025 through the Market Place to the Roysse Room lawn for an open air Easter service, led by Abingdon & Oxford Salvation Army with involvement of leaders from other Abingdon churches.

The Salvation Army band provided the music accompaniment.
With thanks to all involved.



Experience Easter



This year's Experience Easter has been a joy to run. As many schools last year brought two or more year groups, overall numbers taking part this year have been lower. However, this has allowed us to tweak and develop the workshops to bring them to more diverse groups. This year's visitors have included two Beaver packs and four groups from Kingfisher School as well as classes from both church and state primary schools. Overall, around 360 children have taken part either online or 'live' in Trinity Church.

Experience Easter runs every year in the form of a series of six workshops which share the Easter story and provide opportunities for children to reflect and relate the story to their own experiences. In response to feedback received from our school communities, we run the event as both a 'live' one where children visit us in Trinity Church as well as online, delivered via our website.

Most of our live workshop visitors this year walked for up to half an hour to reach us. As children enter the church, they sit and pause in the entrance area to hear an introduction to the story and receive their

individual pack to take on the journey. We then open the doors to reveal the church, which is specially decorated for the event. Many children who visit have little experience of entering a church so we often hear a gasp of wonder as the doors are opened.

The children are led around the church to areas decorated to set the scene for different aspects of the Holy Week story. They hear a section of the story and take part in a reflective activity in each area.

Volunteers are integral to the preparation and delivery of Experience Easter. They have helped to update some of our online videos and this year has been an exceptional year for our craft preparation, so we are deeply grateful for the efforts of all our volunteers from across Abingdon. Volunteers have also helped with setting up, storytelling and general support for our in-church workshops. In all, around 25 volunteers were involved who between them contributed between 70 and 80 hours of volunteer time.



We received some really wonderful feedback from teaching staff who attended the live Experience Easter:

Really a great morning. Clearly well thought through with many hands-on activities which the children all enjoyed. It brought the Easter story to life.

Amazingly organized. Engaging and interactive. Inclusive and adapted to children's needs.

Very well prepared layout and resources. A thoughtful way to present a difficult story. Kind presenters with lots of patience.

Brilliantly set up to keep children wanting to know and understand more. Easy to understand and follow - perfectly done.

As Experience Easter continues to develop, we would like to say a huge thank you to our fabulous volunteers for their continued support and to Church in Abingdon (CiA) who provide grant funding to support Experience Easter each year. We are also grateful to the Gladiator Trust, who have provided additional funding for Experience Easter for the next two years.

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.

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://dorcadressproject.org/sewing-sessions-uk/> or email dorcadressproject@gmail.com to confirm dates. The sessions will be held until 10 July 2025. All welcome.

Marriage course

Would you appreciate an opportunity to refresh your marriage? Christ Church Abingdon (Northcourt Road) is running the marriage course on Wednesday evenings at 7.30 pm starting on 7 May 2025 for 7 weeks. For full details and to sign up, contact Andrew Gilmour at andrew.gilmour@cca.uk.net.

Christian Aid 80th anniversary - 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 (<https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2025/abingdons-envelope>). For

further information, contact Christine at christine@thehutts.co.uk.

We need:

- volunteers to help run the sale and collect money – even if you can just spare an hour or two
- gardeners – do you have any saleable garden plants (bedding plants, perennials, veg seedlings, house plants). We also need items to sell – i.e. plants, cakes and books.
- Home-made cakes and preserves to sell – with a list of any of the 14 allergens
- Books, CDs, vinyl records you no longer want that might sell



Please bring these items down to Abingdon Baptist Church before 10 May 2025 or to the Market Place on the day.

Right now, the world is experiencing a distressing surge in hunger. With your help, we're playing our part to raise much needed funds to push back against the inhumanity of poverty. Thank you for all you do, for your support, your prayers and for your giving. As always – Give – Act – Pray!

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).



Lunchtime music hour at Abingdon Baptist Church



Abingdon Baptist Church is open on Monday 12 May 2025 for an hour of music from 12.30 to 1.30 pm featuring The Eynsham Trio. Listen as you enjoy your lunch which can be bought from Cafe@35 or bring your own. All donations will go to Christian Aid. Open to all. Limited parking.

The next Music Hour is on 9 June 2025 and Linda King will entertain on the piano.

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.

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.

- 15 May - Old Gold music group
- 5 June - Talk on Christ's Hospital and Almshouses by Jackie Smith

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

TAB fundraising quiz



Howden’s have chosen TAB as their charity for a quiz night on 22 May 2025. It will be held at the Loose Cannon Brewery, 6 Suffolk Way, Abingdon. Contact Kirsty Darter for further info and if you would like to enter a team (kirsty@theabingdonbridge.org.uk; 01235 522375).

Agnostics Anonymous

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 27 May 2025, 6 – 7.30 pm, at St Helen’s Church Parish Centre. The topic for discussion is: Believing, behaving, belonging: which is the heart of Christianity? Everyone welcome. For more info, contact Jill Gant on 01235 528929.

Service of commemoration

A service of commemoration will take place on Saturday 31 May 2025 at 6.30 pm at Trinity Church, Conduit Road. This service will be to quietly give thanks for past members and for all those who would like to remember loved ones who have died and gone to their rest.

If you would like your loved ones name read out at this service, please contact the church office at trinity.abingdon@gmail.com / 01235 520282.

Parking restrictions will be lifted for this service.



Trinity Church 150th anniversary

There will be a service of celebration on Sunday 1 June 2025, 3 pm, at Trinity Church, Conduit Road. Three of Trinity’s previous ministers will be attending and taking part: Revds Ian Griffiths, Richard Bittleston and Malcolm Atherton. The service will be followed by tea in the Conduit Centre. All friends of Trinity past and present are warmly invited. Please RSVP by 25 May 2025 to the church office (trinity.abingdon@gmail.com / 01235 520282).

Quiet garden day

This will take place at Aston Tirrold Centre for Reflection, Spring Lane, Oxon OX12 9EJ on Saturday 7 June 2025, from 10 am to 4 pm. The leader will be Sue Sheppy and the theme will be Who am I?

On this Pentecost weekend, Sue will invite us to reflect on who we are, aided by the immersion of ourselves in the beauty and repose of a summer's day and by being open to the working of the Holy Spirit within our spirit.

Refreshments are provided, but please bring a packed lunch. A donation of £10 is suggested. All welcome. It would be helpful if you plan to attend if you could email www.atquietgardendays@gmail.com beforehand.



TrinityLearning volunteer celebration



We would like to invite all our volunteers and supporters, and those thinking of volunteering or supporting TrinityLearning, to come and celebrate TrinityLearning's work and find out more about our projects over a cup of tea and some delicious cake on 19 June 2025, 4 – 6 pm, in the Conduit Centre Hall at Trinity Church. RSVP to Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com. Come and join us!

TAB fundraising concert



Saturday 5 July 2025 - Wantage Academy Brass & Youth Brass Concert, St Michael's Church, Abingdon.

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:

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, Cruise
Bereavement Care.

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.

Circuit Administrator vacancy

We are seeking to recruit a part-time Circuit Administrator for the Wantage & Abingdon Methodist Circuit. The Circuit is located to the South, Southwest and Southeast of the historic city of Oxford. The Circuit delights in the worship of eight Methodist churches, each church faithfully seeking to serve their communities and glorify God.

We are looking for a person with excellent administration and communication skills. An ability to work as part of a team is essential and flexibility to work alongside the Circuit Leadership team and Circuit Stewards is required. Hours of work: 15 hours per week worked over three days flexibly within the week with a pattern of work to be agreed with your Line Manager (flexible between home and a Church-based office space based in Abingdon, Oxfordshire); some occasional evening work to attend Circuit meetings will be necessary. Rate of pay: £15.00 per hour

A full job description, terms and conditions, and a personal specification is available on request in our application pack.

A satisfactory enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service is mandatory.

For more information and an application pack, please contact: Neil Oastler, Circuit Steward at neiloastler@gmail.com.

Closing date for applications: 25 May 2025. Interviews to be held week commencing 2 June. Post to commence 1 September 2025.

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.

New Horizons group for the over 50s

This takes place every Wednesday at the Salvation Army base at 12 West St Helen Street, Abingdon. Coffee and chat from 10.30 am with a meal at 12 noon – please let us know a week ahead if you want a meal on oxford@salvationarmy.org.uk.

The meal is followed by an activity: a 'sing by heart' – a dementia friendly session – once a month, and a craft activity monthly.

Open Doors initiative

Open Doors runs most Mondays (except Bank Holidays) from 11 am until 2 pm at St Edmund's Parish Centre.

We welcome anyone who is on their own or would just like some company to join us for a chat and lunch or just pop in for a tea/coffee.

Open Doors sessions are informal and you are welcome to come along for all or part of the session. Lunch (a home-cooked main meal and dessert) is served around 12.15. There are usually about 20 guests at each session. Hope you can join us.

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 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 Kirsty Darter at kirsty@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 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.

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.

Thinking Books

We are now looking for volunteers for our Thinking Books project for the 2025-26 school year starting in September. Thinking Books is TrinityLearning's mentoring scheme for primary schools.

Our volunteer mentors go into schools regularly to meet children one-to-one or in small groups. They share reading of carefully selected books which start conversations about feelings and relationships.

Thinking Books volunteers commit to weekly one-hour sessions in a local primary school.

TrinityLearning is committed to Safeguarding. 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.

If you're interested or want to find out more, contact Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.



Volunteer crocheters

Our fabulous and ever-expanding group of knitters and crocheters have created over 60 tiny bears and rabbits over the past few years. These are added to two of our packs: bears in the Bereavement packs which support adults working with bereaved children; rabbits in our Thinking Books packs.

I have been asked to speak at the Abingdon Partnership Head teacher's meeting in May to share details of our Bereavement and Family Change packs with all the local Head teachers. We would really like to have extra packs made up ready in case there is a surge in demand following the meeting. If you have knitting or crocheting skills and would like to have a go, please get in touch. We provide the pattern and all the resources.

More information about TrinityLearning and our volunteer opportunities can be found on our website at <https://trinitylearning.org.uk/>. If you are interested in volunteering to crochet, knit or for any of our other volunteer opportunities, please email nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.

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. 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.