



St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

11th February 2024
Sunday next before Lent

Regular Service Times

Sundays: Sung Mass, 9.30 am
Tuesdays Said Mass, 12.30 pm
Tuesdays: Silent Reflections, last Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm (except December)
Thursdays: Moving into Stillness, Taizé circle dancing with silent interludes, usually first Thursday of the month, 9.45 am to 10.45 am.

Contacts

Team Rector: The Revd Dr Charles Miller (520144)
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Bookings*: Miss Joyce Kelly (as above)

Parish Office: The Parish Centre Office is normally open from Monday to Thursday, **10 am to 1 pm.**

Administrator: During normal working hours phone or leave a message on:
Telephone (520144) *or*
Mobile (07395 943957)
e-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

Web site: <http://www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk>

If you would like to receive this pew leaflet electronically, please email pewleaflet@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk with the subject line SUBSCRIBE.

Items for inclusion in the next pew leaflet should be sent to David Duce by midday on Tuesday.
Telephone 522591
pewleaflet@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk

[*for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals please contact the Parish Office]

LENT AND OTHER NEWS

Dear Friends

This Sunday next before Lent turns our liturgical colour to green for one Sunday – the colour which reminds us of the sign of life in nature and God’s creation and also growth, life and hope. I suggest we hold onto these words as we enter Lent on Ash Wednesday this week when I hope you will attend one of the two celebrations of the Eucharist (morning or evening at St Helen’s, see precise details below). The Forty Days of Lent give us an opportunity to assess our spiritual lives and *grow* in faith; to draw closer to Christ as we meditate on his suffering and death. His passion offers us *hope* in our own struggles and suffering, and leads us to *new life* as we look forward to the joyful celebration of the resurrection at Easter.

Should anyone wish to discuss with me how they are keeping Lent; their lives of prayer and spirituality; please do be in touch: preferably by phone (01235 534654), or by e-mail, to make an appointment. I am very happy to offer you that invitation and opportunity during this holy season.

Lenten Reading

Our editor has pointed us towards some books that you may wish to consider reading. I have in the past fallen foul of thinking I can read a lot of holy books during Lent! I have obtained more than one, several in fact, ending up disappointed by not managing to read much at all.

So I have reduced my expectations this year and purchased one, small book! This is *Cries for a Lost Homeland: Reflections on Jesus’ sayings from the Cross*, by Bishop Guli Francis-Dehqani, Canterbury Press, £10.99.

You may recall that in a recent sermon I referred to Bishop Guli’s story as I had heard her speak on Radio 4’s *Desert Island Discs*. I was deeply moved by her personal story, her courage, and her entry into the Church of England. Bishop Guli is now Bishop of Chelmsford. Her book is centred on the passion of Jesus from the cross and the Seven Last Words which he spoke in the final hours of his passion. They are words which for me have always been both a source of challenge and inspiration. From the back of the book: *‘Born in Iran to a family who were part of the tiny Anglican Church established by missionaries, (Bishop) Guli Francis-Dehqani offers profound and moving reflections on Jesus’ seven sayings from the cross, drawing on the riches and beauty of her native Persian culture and her experience of exile to reveal that in Christ all our stories find a homecoming’*. So if you are interested in a short book for Lent which ‘shows you what it means to take up your cross and walk close to Christ’ (from Samuel Well’s foreword), this may be for you. And I shall let you know how I get on!

Stations of the Cross

We shall be walking the Stations of the Cross in church on some Tuesday evenings in Lent. Details of these evenings, are in our Lent Publicity leaflet available on our website and with some paper copies in church from this Sunday. In addition there may be a possible visit to walk Mother Maribel’s Stations at the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage, on a Tuesday afternoon, as we have done before. Watch out for an update on this.

His Majesty the King

Following the announcement of the King’s cancer diagnosis I commend him, the Queen, and all the royal family to your prayers at this time. The Church of England has published a simple prayer for our use which is printed below in our Worship section.

Fr AKMA

Finally I am pleased to announce that Fr AKMA will be preaching here and in St Nicolas on the morning of Lent 3, Sunday 3 March. This will be our first opportunity to welcome him to our Sunday worship. I hope many of us can be present for that occasion.

With love and prayers for a holy and hope-filled Lent

Fr Paul

FROM THE CHURCH WARDENS We are looking for volunteers to help us with tidying up the church on the **29 February and the 1 March** from 10.00 am. If you are able to help on either or both dates, please let Louise or Joyce know. Refreshments will be available.

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT ST HELEN’S CHURCH

St Helen’s will live-stream their 10.30 am Eucharist through Zoom. The Zoom link is available from the Parish Administrator. A recording of the sermon (audio and video) will be made available after the service on the St Helen’s web site (https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StH/StH_publications.html).

MORNING PRAYER is normally held at 9.10 am on weekdays at St Helen’s Church.

INTERMENT OF ASHES Adrienne’s ashes will be interred in the garden of remembrance on Tuesday 13 February, prior to the 12.30 pm Mass. The service starts in church at 12 noon. Anyone is welcome to attend this short liturgy in church, but the interment itself will take place privately outside, with family present only. Please do stay on for the Mass where prayers will continue.

ASH WEDNESDAY falls on Wednesday 14 February. There will be a corporate liturgy of the Eucharist with the imposition of ashes for Ash Wednesday at **St Helen's Church at 7.00 pm**. There will also be a service of Holy Communion with imposition of ashes at **St Helen's at 10.30 am**. There are no services at St Michael's or St Nicolas' for Ash Wednesday this year.

LENT AND HOLY WEEK PROGRAMME A list of services during Lent and Holy Week is now available through the web site and there will be some printed copies in church on Sunday. See our publications page:

https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StM_publications.html

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm (for about 40 minutes) on **20 February, 5 and 12 March**; these will be lay led. An additional walk might be possible on a Wednesday afternoon at St Mary's Convent in Wantage, which would be led by Fr Paul; further details will follow.

CHARLES MILLER'S NEW BOOK *The Spiritual Adventure of Henri Matisse: Vence's Chapel of the Rosary*, was due to be published by Unicorn Press on 31 January, though it now seems the publication date has been delayed to 29 February. It is available to pre-order. From the publisher's web site: "Henri Matisse described the Chapel of the Rosary, the chief labour of his final years, as the 'gathering together' of his lifetime's work. Although widely known as 'Matisse's Chapel', the building's remarkable 'modern' design and decoration emerged from a surprising friendship and artistic engagement with a group of Dominican sisters and brothers keen to see the Church embrace 'Modern Art' and modern artists. With the advantage of hitherto unexplored archive and printed materials this study highlights that mutual encounter and explores how their shared artistic adventure became for Matisse himself an opportunity to express his 'religious' vision of art and to rediscover his natal Catholic Faith in its post-war avant-garde form."

ARCHBISHOP STEPHEN COTTRELL has also written a new book in conjunction with illustrator Jacky Seymour *P is for Pilgrim – The Christian Faith - A Journey from A to Z*, published by Hodder & Stoughton. From the Church House Bookshop web site: "As you explore the Christian faith, you will soon encounter some challenging words: Trinity, Sacrament, Reconciliation, Sin, Incarnation, even the word 'Christ' itself. It isn't Jesus's surname! It is a title with a meaning and history. Sooner, or later, these words, and the ideas behind them, must be addressed and understood. It is simply not possible to be a Christian, without understanding sin and forgiveness, knowing what a sacrament is, or accepting Jesus as the Christ. This book is here to help. It explores and explains most of the key concepts and ideas that underpin the Christian faith." For more details see

<https://chbookshop.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9781399805278/p-is-for-pilgrim>

BAMPTON LECTURES The prestigious Bampton Lectures, founded by the will of the Revd John Bampton (1690-1751), first took place at the University Church in Oxford in 1780. This year's lectures will be on Tuesdays 27 February and 4 March, two per day at 10.00 am and 11.30 am. They will also be live-streamed on the University Church's YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCew-RHHZSldBM9yYyq6mkHg> and will be available to view afterwards. This year's lecturer is The Rt Revd Dr Rowan Williams and his topic is *Recognizing Strangers: Solidarity and Christian Ethics*. For further details, please see <https://www.universitychurch.ox.ac.uk/content/bampton-lectures>.

NEW WORSHIP AND MUSIC WEBINARS Part of the new series of free open access talks by the Institute of Sacred Music Oxford at St Stephen's House, Oxford, and in association with the Royal School of Church Music. **Tuesday evenings, 13 to 27 February**, 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, either in person or via Zoom. For further information and booking details, see <https://ismo.ssho.org.uk/events/>. The second session in the series is *Creating Educational Space for Choristers and Church Musicians* by Dr Tim Williams (St Wulfram's, Grantham / Harlaxton College).

CHURCH IN ABINGDON The CiA is holding its AGM on **Thursday 22 February** at 7.30 pm at the Salvation Army HQ in West St Helen Street. All welcome to come along and hear about the work of the CiA over the past year and give feedback on its future work in the coming year.

QUIET GARDEN DAY at Aston Tirrold Centre for Reflection on **Saturday 24 February 2024 10 am - 4 pm**. Leader: Joan Impey. Title: *Following God's Way: Sit-Walk-Stand*. Refreshments are provided, but please bring a packed lunch. A donation of £10 would be welcome. To attend it would be helpful to email: atquietgardendays@gmail.com in advance.

OXFORD CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH *A Day with the poet R. S. Thomas 'Somewhere between faith and doubt'* **16 March** from 10 am to 3.30 pm A Study Day led by Professor Tony Brown, director of the R. S. Thomas Centre, Bangor University. The event will be held at the *Church of St Michael at the North Gate, Oxford*. For further information and booking details (in-person and on-line options are available) see the OCSG web site <https://www.ocsg.uk.net/event/a-day-with-the-poet-r-s-thomas/>

CiA NEWS A printed copy of the February issue is on display on the notice board by the Welcome desk. It is also available to download from <https://www.church-in-abingdon.org.uk/#ReportsandNewsletters>

A CANDLE IN THE WINDOW The first edition in 2024 of the Parish Magazine will be available to download by Sunday 4 February from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php. Articles, events, pictures, poems, a puzzle and even a cartoon. *Rob Rutherford*

HEATING AND GAS BILL During the week 28 January to 3 February, the maximum temperature recorded on the data logger on the pillar by the crossing (North side) was 17.6°C and the minimum 12.5°C. The maximum was recorded during the Tuesday lunchtime Mass and the minimum in the early hours of Friday morning. During the previous week 20 to 27 January (10.00 am), the maximum temperature recorded on the data logger on the pillar by the crossing (North side) was 16.2°C and the minimum 10.1°C. The maximum was recorded on Thursday evening at 20.43, after the Dedication Festival on Thursday 25 January.

RETREATS

Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage, Retreats and Quiet Days calendar.

<https://csmv.co.uk/calendar-of-retreats/> The next conducted retreat is from Friday 16 to Sunday 18 February at St Mary's Convent, entitled *Care for Creation*.

Douai Abbey Spring/Summer Programme Come to Douai Abbey for a day or weekend of peaceful quiet and join the Benedictine community at their prayer and in their lovely surroundings. A series of workshops, reflections and retreats have been prepared for spring and summer.

https://mcusercontent.com/14501d5eebc3e98fa3015a290/files/68bd8063-03e7-e42c-58ff-a3916004481d/2024_Programme_Douai_Abbey.pdf

Community of St Clare, Freeland Drop-in Quiet Days The next Quiet Day is on **Saturday 18 March**, led by The Revd Philip Nixon. For more details and further dates see the *Drop-in Quiet Days* link at <http://www.oscfreeland.co.uk/>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

World Day of Prayer: The service this year will be held on **Friday 1 March** at 4 pm in *All Saints' Methodist Church in Appleford Drive, Abingdon*. The material has been prepared for us by the Christian women of Palestine under the title *I beg you, bear with one another in love*. All are welcome; light refreshments will be served after the service.

Come and Sing Bach St John Passion Saturday 30 March at Christ Church Northcourt Rd, OX14 1PL. Singing Workshop Tickets £20. Start time 10.30 am, registration from 10 am. Concert from 5 pm – 7 pm, tickets £12.

Please see website for tickets and further information

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/abingdonpassionplay1/1137048>

Award-winning Harmony InSpires ladies a capella choir will be returning to St Michael's Church to delight us with 'Harmony in Springtime', a concert of 4-part harmony in a wide variety of styles from musicals, pop classics and beautiful ballads. **Saturday 20 April at 5pm**, tickets: adults £12/accompanied children under 16 free, available online at <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/or> by card/cash on the door. Kindly sponsored by *Taylor Made Mobility*. Proceeds to St Michael's Church funds. Proceeds from refreshments and raffle on the day to *Harmony InSpires*. Free parking. A concert not to be missed!

Worship

This Week The celebrants and preachers on Sundays over coming weeks are: 11 February, Fr Paul / Mrs Beryl Clements; 18 February Fr Paul; 25 February Fr Paul / The Revd Professor John Barton.; 3 March, Fr Paul / Fr AKMA.

Sunday is the Sunday next before Lent. Wednesday is Ash Wednesday.

Commemorations this week include: Thursday: Sigfrid, bishop, 1045 and Thomas Bray, priest, founder of SPCK and SPG, 1730; Saturday: Janani Luwum, archbishop, martyr, 1977.

Lent Books Ash Wednesday falls on 14 February this year, so there is only this Sunday (the Sunday next before Lent) before the start of Lent. So perhaps now is a good time to think about reading matter for Lent. *The Church Times* has reviews of a set of Lent books available on-line

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2024/19-january/books-arts/book-reviews/lent-books-round-up>

Church House Bookshop has a similar list. The two books below are chosen just to give a flavour of the material on offer.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2024 is *Tarry Awhile: Wisdom from Black Spirituality for People of Faith*, by Selina Stone (SPCK).

The broadcaster and *Thought for the Day* presenter, Rob Marshall, is the author of *Transfiguration – 50 Pilgrim Steps*, 50 reflections from Ash Wednesday to Easter and beyond, inspired in part by the gospel reading for the Sunday next before Lent, Mark's account of the Transfiguration.

Ash Wednesday and Lent There are a number of theories about the origins of Lent. It is probably not wrong to say that in part this is linked to a period of fasting before baptism when the preferred time for baptism was administered at Easter. Whatever the origins may be, Lent is now the 40 day period starting on Ash Wednesday. How the 40 days are counted has also varied; nowadays the western tradition is to count continuously from Ash Wednesday until the end of Holy Week (excluding Sundays). We are familiar with Shrove Tuesday marking the last day before the Lenten

fast. In the Eastern Orthodox tradition, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday is known as Forgiveness Sunday, or Cheesefare Sunday, the latter title reflecting the last day on which dairy products could be eaten before the Lenten fast. The Orthodox tradition includes a ceremony of forgiveness after Vespers on the Sunday evening. *Common Worship* also provides *A Corporate Service for Penitence* though not exclusively linked to Lent, and perhaps not widely used.

A *Liturgy of Penitence* is though a key part of the *Liturgy of Ash Wednesday*. The introduction includes this invitation said by the celebrant:

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

The *Liturgy of Penitence* follows after the Gospel and Sermon and takes the form of a litany, followed by a period of silence, then a form of confession. There is an interesting note about this in *Common Worship Times and Seasons*: "The silence during the Liturgy of Penitence is an integral part of the rite and should not be omitted or reduced to a mere pause." As Perham and Stevenson wrote "where there are too many words, the first thing to go is silence." Gordon-Taylor and Jones wrote "The liturgy of Ash Wednesday should strike a balance between spoken text, visual symbol and silence." The Imposition of Ashes follows the confession, then this part of the liturgy concludes with a prayer of absolution.

Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda Janani Luwum was ordained in 1956, becoming Bishop of Northern Uganda in 1969 and Archbishop of Uganda in 1974. Idi Amin came to power in 1971 as a result of a military coup and his harsh rule was widely criticised by church leaders. Janani and other bishops wrote to Amin in 1977 condemning the virtual institution of state murder. Official sources said that the Archbishop and two government ministers died in a car crash two days later. The archbishop's body was dumped in a grave in a sealed coffin near his home village. The villagers were not satisfied with the sealed coffin, so it was opened and bullet wounds were discovered. It quickly emerged that the Archbishop and the ministers had died on the explicit instructions of the president. This set the stage for a campaign that removed Amin from power two years later.

Violence in Israel and Gaza This prayer is from the Church in Wales.

God of peace, be with all those who live in fear and danger. Heal those wounded by hate and conflict. Teach us to love our enemies and live together with understanding and compassion. Amen.

Ukraine From the Archbishop of Canterbury's web site (5 February 2024):

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has arrived in Ukraine at the start of a five-day visit as the country prepares to mark the second anniversary of the Russian full-scale invasion. Archbishop Justin, who previously visited Ukraine in December of [2022], will begin the visit by spending time with the congregation of Christ Church, Kyiv, the small Anglican church in the city. Speaking as he arrived in the country, Archbishop Justin said: "I am here to stand with our sisters and brothers in Christ in Ukraine. I want to pray with and for them, learn from them and to say loud and clear that, amid all that is going on in other places, the world will not forget Ukraine.

We are encouraged by Fr Paul to light a candle by the reserved sacrament and pray the prayer for Ukraine from Archbishops Justin and Stephen. The prayer, which can be used at any time, is reproduced below.

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

King Charles III Following the announcement of the King's cancer diagnosis, the Church of England issued the following prayer for the King:

Father of mercies, grant to Charles our King, comfort and sure confidence in you, and keep him in perpetual peace and safety, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please pray for:

- Steven and Gavin our bishops, Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury;
- King Charles, following his cancer diagnosis and for his treatment, and for the Queen and all the Royal Family as they support him;
- the peace of the world, especially in the Middle East and Ukraine;
- those who live locally with family members living in Gaza, and for the family of Layla Moran our member of parliament;
- the care of creation and all that God has given us;

- one another as we look towards Lent and meditating on the Our Lord's suffering and death;
- our parish and people;
- the suffering, especially those who are living with a cancer diagnosis, their families and friends;
- all who have recently departed, and all whose year's mind falls at this time;
- people living in Abbey Close, Abbott Road, Andersey Way and Anna Pavlova Close.

Eucharistic Lectionary

Sunday	2 Kings 2.1-12	Ps 50.1-6	2 Corinthians 4.3-6	Mark 9.2-9
Mon	James 1.1-11	Ps 119.65-72		Mark 8.11-13
Tues	James 1.12-18	Ps 94.12-18		Mark 8.14-21
Wed Ash Wednesday	Joel 2.1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58.1-12	Ps 51.1-18	2 Corinthians 5.20b-6.10	Mathew 6.1-6, 16-21 or John 8.1-11
Thur	Deuteronomy 30.15-end	Ps 1		Luke 9.22-25
Fri	Isaiah 58.1-9a	Ps 51.1-5, 17-18		Matthew 9.14-15
Sat	Isaiah 58.9b-end	Ps 86.1-7		Luke 5.27-32

Collect (Sunday next before Lent)

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion (Sunday next before Lent)

Holy God, we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ: may we who are partakers at his table reflect his life in word and deed, that all the world may know his power to change and save. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect (Ash Wednesday)

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

Some On-line Resources for Worship

A Church Near You Live Streamed events

https://www.achurchnearyou.com/live-stream/?tags=Live_stream&diocese=27

Parish Communications and Links

http://www.abingdonparish.org.uk/P_communications.html

St Michael's Prayer and Worship resources page

https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StM_worship_resources.html

Oxford Cathedral: Livestream events will appear on the cathedral's YouTube channel, see

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqz9I9-LbZJAPGtje0gQbbg>

The University Church of St Mary the Virgin (Oxford) live stream services on YouTube, see

<https://www.youtube.com/c/UniversityChurch/featured>

Community of the Resurrection: live streaming and recordings of the community's daily round of prayer and praise <https://www.facebook.com/Join-with-us-103095121647089>. Details of services can be found at the facebook page and also at the Community web site, <https://mirfield.org.uk/live-streaming/>. On Sundays Mass starts around 8.10 am, after Matins at 7.30 am.

Walsingham In addition to the daily live-streaming of Shrine Prayers at 6 pm (5pm on Saturdays). the Sunday Mass is live-streamed (usually at 7.30 am, but check the web site).

<https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/whatson-2/livestream/>