



St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

24th November 2024

Christ the King / Sunday Next before Advent

Regular Service Times

Sundays: Sung Mass, 9.30 am
Tuesdays: Said Mass, 12.30 pm
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 Vicar: The Revd Paul Smith (534654)
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Churchwardens: Miss Joyce Kelly (533555)
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Mrs Louise Heffernan (01235 525412)
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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 to 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]

Dear Friends

Today the church keeps the **Feast of Christ the King**. We recall the gentle rule of Christ whose kingship is one of servanthood and humility. It is the final Sunday in the liturgical year as we prepare for a new year beginning next week with the season of Advent. Here at St Michael's our tradition for many years has been to keep today as our Stewardship Sunday. We come to Mass, therefore, having prayerfully considered how we can financially support the life and witness of our church. We do this by making a Thanksgiving Offering to God in response to his generosity toward us and the faithful provision we receive from him. So I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the response you are able to make financially as well as express my gratitude for the ways in which you use the gifts God has given you for our community of faith.

As you will see elsewhere in this pewleaflet, next Saturday (30 November), at 5.30pm, there will be a service **Taizé Prayer** which will take place around the Labyrinth with only one or two instruments in addition to our God-given voices! Canon Richard Pyke and a small steering group have been working on re-establishing this evening service at St Helen's on the second Sunday of each month. In the current edition of the parish magazine he writes: *"By holding this prayer at St Michael's, we hope that it may provide an opportunity to not only remedy quite a long gap, but also encourage others by introducing them to this style of prayer, and particularly the Taizé songs that resonate especially with Advent."* So I commend this service to you on the eve of Advent Sunday, whether Taizé Prayer is something you are used to or have not experienced before, please do come along. It is an opportunity to spend time in contemplative prayer with song, readings, and silence as preparation for the season we are about to enter.

With love and every blessing, Father Paul

STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL Our annual renewal of stewardship offerings takes place at Mass this Sunday, on the Feast of Christ the King. Letters about stewardship renewal, copies of the budget that our treasurer presented on 27 October and Thanksgiving Offering cards have sent to those on our email list and printed copies are being distributed to those on our stewardship list who have not received an electronic copy. Printed copies are also available for anyone else wishing to have one. There is also an extra supply of cards and return envelopes for anyone unable to print at home. Stewardship Renewal is especially important this year, as it was last, in view of the financial challenges we face as a community, personally and globally. Thanksgiving Offering cards should be brought to church on **Sunday 24 November**, for presentation at the offertory, or if this is not possible they can be sent to our Stewardship Officer, or handed to a church warden.

TAIZÉ PRAYER Normally held at St Helen's Church in the evening of the 2nd Sunday of the month, Taizé Prayer will be held this month on Saturday evening, **30 November at 5.30 pm in St Michael's Church**. The 2nd Sunday of November was Remembrance Sunday and there was a Eucharist in St Helen's that Sunday evening and the December date would coincide with St Nicolas' Patronal Festival, hence the decision to change the date. Canon Richard Pyke wrote an article about the Taizé Prayer service in this month's issue of the parish magazine, *A Candle in the Window*.

FOODBANK CHRISTMAS EXTRAS LIST This year, the Foodbank Team are once again putting together some special extra bags for clients to receive the week before Christmas. Alongside their standard emergency food parcels, they are aiming to provide items to go towards some Christmas dinners and festive treats. Included on the Christmas list are: tinned ham, veg, cranberry sauce, gravy and stuffing, Christmas puddings, mince pies, custard, tinned fruit, trifle mix, crackers for cheese, shortbread, chocolate treats, nuts and assortment boxes. Ideally, the Foodbank would like these donations by the **first week of December**. There is collection box in church and also in local supermarkets.

Thank you for your support.

Louise Heffernan

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CHAIR'S CAROL SERVICE will be held at St Michael's on **Monday, 16 December from 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.** Councillor Alison Rooke, Chair of Oxfordshire County Council, and The Rt Revd Gavin Collins, Bishop of Dorchester, invite us to join them for this festive carol service. Seasonal refreshments will be served following the service.

Joyce is looking for stewards to help at this event. If you can help, please let **Joyce Kelly** know. Thank you.

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.

FAITH FORUM The next Faith Forum will be on **Sunday 1 December**, which will be the final Faith Forum of the current series on Ways of Engaging with the Bible. Our speaker will be Karen Laister from BRF Ministries (formerly Bible Reading Fellowship), who are based here in Abingdon. Karen will be speaking about using Bible Study notes,

either as individuals or in a small group, as a way of engaging with scripture. Faith Forum meets in the **Parish Centre**, with a light buffet lunch served from 12.30 pm and the talk beginning at 12.45 pm.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH Will you be on your own this Christmas? Peachcroft Christian Centre invite you to join them for lunch on Christmas Day. Enjoy a 2 course lunch, entertainment and the company of others all free of charge. If you or someone you know would like to come then please get in touch with Kay Davies via email:

christmaslunch24@peachcroftcc.org or phone 07787 629198.

NEWS FROM OUR PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER The safeguarding Basic Awareness training sessions that had to be postponed earlier in the year have been rearranged. The training can be done online at your convenience or if you would prefer a Face to Face discussion do come on either **25 November at 2 pm or 27 November at 7 pm** to the **Parish Centre**. All welcome. Any queries contact Pat Hudson 07787120045 or safeguarding@abingdonparish.org.uk. There will be a sign up sheet in each church to help indicate numbers or contact Pat directly but anybody interested is welcome to turn up.

SILENT REFLECTIONS will be held on **Tuesday 26 November at 7.30 pm**. Sue Scott will provide material for our reflections on the theme: *Joy and* and there will be the opportunity to walk the labyrinth. Final prayers will be at 8.30 pm and refreshments will be available. We meet initially in the church room. Parking permits are available for use in Park Road.

MOTHERS' UNION RISE UP Against Domestic Abuse This is the time of year when the Mothers' Union remember those caught up in domestic abuse and gender-based violence. We will be holding a reflective service on **Friday 29 November at 12 noon** in the *Parish Centre*. The Revd Rosalind Rutherford will lead our worship and all are welcome to join us. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, a Town Councillor who has a particular interest in domestic abuse is unable to come. There will be time for discussion whilst we enjoy lunch together. (Please bring your own packed lunch and wear something purple. Hot drinks will be provided.)

ST HELEN'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS MARKET will take place on **Saturday 30 November 2024 from 10 am to 1 pm**.

There will be lots to buy, including home baking, gifts, books, jewellery and preserves, a raffle, tombola and delicious refreshments on offer. The handbell ringers will be there and there may be some carol singing as well. All proceeds will go to church funds.

PRE-ADVENT QUIET DAY Ripon College, Cuddesdon, **10.00 am to 3.30 pm on Saturday 30 November** "Wilderness, Watching and Waiting" offers a serene, reflective day inspired by the spirit of Advent. This tranquil experience invites you to step into a peaceful space where poetry, music, and personal reflections guide your heart and mind. As you watch and wait in the stillness, you'll have opportunities to engage in creative activities, allowing for self-expression and contemplation. Whether through writing, drawing, or simply being, this day is a gentle pause to reconnect with yourself, your surroundings and the deeper meaning of the season. Let the quietness nurture your soul.

The day will be led by Revd Prebendary Jane Haslam, Associate Archdeacon of Dorchester who has a specific interest in Christian Spirituality, with a post graduate diploma in the subject from Sarum College. She is also trained Spiritual Director and has led several quiet days. The event is Free. For more details and booking, please see <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wilderness-watching-and-waiting-tickets-1043550396327>

AN ADVENT RETREAT WITH TWO POETS OF WALES R S Thomas and Gerard Manley Hopkins. A Retreat led by Revd Dr Carys Walsh at **St Michaels in the Northgate Oxford** on **30 November from 10.00 am to 3.30 pm**, organised by the Oxford Centre for Spiritual Growth. On-line attendance will be possible for those unable to attend in person. For more details and booking information see

<https://www.ocsg.uk.net/event/an-advent-retreat-with-welsh-poets-2/>

A CHILD IS BORN An informal Christmas concert for all ages by *Abingdon Chorale* in aid of The Abingdon Bridge (TAB) in St Michael's Church on **1 December 2024 at 4 pm**. Tickets £10 (£2.50 under 16s) from <https://bit.ly/AbChorale>

ADVENT LABYRINTH WALKS The church will be open on **Tuesday 3, 10 and 17 December** between 11 am and noon. There will an opportunity to walk the labyrinth or simply to enjoy the sacred space. Material for reflection will be available on a different Advent theme each week. A short prayer will be said at the beginning and end of each session, but feel free to come and go as you please. Parking permits are available for use in Park Road.

MOVING INTO STILLNESS circle dancing to Taizé music with silent interludes on **Thursday 5 December** in the church room from **9.45 – 10.45 am** before the regular circle dancing session at 11 am (now on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month only). Elizabeth Mitchell will be the teacher. No prior experience/partner needed. Tea and coffee will be provided.

ALBERT PARK SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERT at St Michael's, including carols and music by Bach, John Lennon, Mendelssohn and Vivaldi. **Friday 13 December at 7 pm**. Free admission, donations to *St Michael's Church* and *Crisis at Christmas*.

CiA NEWS A printed copy of the **November issue** is now on display on the notice board by the Welcome desk. This includes an announcement that the *Inter-church Quiz* during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2025 will be held on **Friday 24 January 2025** at Abingdon Baptist Church.

PATHWAYS Copies of the **Winter 2024** issue of the Diocesan magazine is now available on-line and printed copies should be in church. <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/pathways/>

A CANDLE IN THE WINDOW If you haven't yet looked at the excellent November edition of the Parish Magazine do download it from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php. (Earlier issues are also available via this link.) The December edition will be published on 8 December. Deadline for contributions 1 December. Thank you.

Rob Rutherford

Worship

November; 24 November Fr Paul/Beryl Clements; Celebrants and preachers in **December** are: 1, 8 December Fr Paul; 15 December The Revd Dr Jen Brown/ Beryl Clements; 22 December Fr Paul; The Revd Dr Jen Brown will celebrate and preach on Christmas Day and The Revd Elizabeth Birch will preside and preach on 29 December.

Sunday is the feast of Christ the King, and Saturday the feast of Andrew the Apostle. Friday is a Day of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Missionary Work of the Church.

Christ the King The festival of Christ the King is a very recent addition to church calendars, having been approved by Pope Pius XI in 1925. It was originally celebrated on the last Sunday of October, but now on the last Sunday before Advent, the last Sunday of the liturgical year in our calendar. It was not until 1997 that the festival was officially adopted by the Church of England though celebration had been commended prior to that and followed the practice of many other parts of the Anglican Communion.

There is a specific Prayer at the Preparation of the Table for this festival:

Blessed be God,
who enthrones us with Christ in the heavenly realms.
May we feed upon the bread of God
and drink the royal wine of heaven.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Extended Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer emphasises the relationship with creation:

... For with the oil of gladness you have anointed Christ the Lord, your only Son,
to be our great high priest and king of all creation.
As priest, he offered himself once for all upon the altar of the cross
and redeemed the human race by this perfect sacrifice of peace.
As king he claims dominion over all your creatures, that he may bring before your infinite majesty
a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace.
And so with angels and archangels ...

It might seem that there are parallels between the feast of the Ascension and Christ the King. This link is reflected in one of the alternative blessings for Christ the King which we will use on Sunday:

Christ our King, make you faithful and strong to do his will,
that you may reign with him in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty, ...

In the 1980 Alternative Services Book this was the blessing for the feast of the Ascension.

TARIRO It seems appropriate to include a few extracts from Fr Nicolas' report of his recent visit to Tariro projects in Zimbabwe in a week in which we are invited to pray and give thanks for the Missionary Work of the Church. Our thanksgiving should extend to the support we are able to give. This is the story of one of Tariro family.

Twelve years ago, I met Munyaradzi as a determined 10-year-old who took himself to school despite having no fees and often no food. Today, he's a third-year Social Studies student making a difference in his community! This is what Munya has to say:

"As part of my university degree, I'm doing a practical placement at a rehabilitation centre for drug users. At first, I was nervous, but I quickly connected with the patients and began to enjoy the work. I've learned that drug and substance abuse affects us all, either directly or indirectly. Factors like depression, stress, trauma, and anxiety are various triggers that contribute to this problem, which is exacerbated by Zimbabwe's high unemployment rate. Despite these challenges, there is hope. I have found that with appropriate treatment, individuals can recover and go on to lead fulfilling lives."

Munyaradzi's passion for addressing drug and substance abuse is inspiring. He's committed to making a difference and breaking the cycle of addiction. We're proud to support him on his journey.

Fr Nicolas writes about the future – looking forward.

Current financial challenges have made it difficult to plan for the future, however following some productive strategic discussions with our trustees in Zimbabwe, we've decided to move forward in faith. Here's an update on some of our new developments:

- We're welcoming three new young people to the TYP house in Harare!
- Seven more young children are joining our groups in Shurugwi, Rusape, and St Augustine's.
- We are helping the pig project at Tsvingwe High School to develop so that it will become self-supporting, and support some children.
- We are expanding our agricultural project at St Francis, Shurugwi to contribute to our children's costs there.

Fr Nicolas concludes his letter – God's providence:

We've experienced God's faithfulness in the past, and we trust that He will continue to honour our work and provide for our needs. Our flourishing pig project is a testament to this!

Once again, thank you, all of you for your support. I love this work in Zimbabwe and I am so grateful to you all for helping us to continue it. The fruits are the fulfilled young people we meet in Zimbabwe.

In 1898, Bishop Walter Frere, eminent scholar and liturgist, founder member of the Community of the Resurrection (to which Fr Nicolas belongs), published a book of intercessions and thanksgivings for each day of the week. One of the themes for Thursdays is creation and the thanksgivings conclude with this prayer based on psalm 145:

While all Thy works praise Thee, O Lord,
And Thy Saints give thanks unto Thee,
I too will be talking of Thy worship,
Thy glory, Thy praise, and wondrous works,
My mouth shall speak
The praise of the Lord,
And let all flesh give thanks
Unto His holy name
For ever and ever.

Prayer during the Season of Vacancy

Almighty God,
You have called us to follow in the way of Jesus.
By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,
we are equipped to build up his body
in this place.
In this season of vacancy,
strengthen us to be faithful to our calling,
raise up a faithful shepherd and pastor
to serve among us in this parish,
and grant that,
together with the one you choose and call,
we may together proclaim the good news
with courage and joy.
In the name of Christ, we pray, **Amen.**

Prayer for the Peace of the World (Church of England)

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:
kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth
that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward,
till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

Please pray for:

- Steven and Gavin our bishops in this diocese;
- Archbishop Justin and his family as he prepares to step down at Epiphany and for Stephen, Archbishop of York;
- the national church at this time;
- all victims of abuse, their families and friends;
- King Charles, Her Majesty Queen Camilla, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the royal family;

- our government, the opposition and all who serve in public office;
- the miracle of peace in the war torn places of this world;
- all those working to reduce the impact of Climate Change and for our own response in this parish;
- all Churchwardens of the parish, Fr Paul, Fr AKMA, the Revd Dr Jen Brown, and all our Honorary Assistant Clergy, and LLM's during the vacancy;
- the response to our Stewardship Sunday renewal today;
- the service of Taize Prayer here next Saturday evening;
- the suffering, especially those who are known to us and who are on our prayer list;
- all who have recently departed, and all whose year's mind falls at this time;
- people living in Reade Avenue, Regal Close, Reynolds Way and Riley Close.

Eucharistic Lectionary

Sun Christ the King	Daniel 7.9-10, 13-14	Ps 93	Revelation 1.4b-8	John 18.33-37
Mon	Revelation 14.1-5	Ps 24.1-6		Luke 21.1-4
Tues	Revelation 14.14-19	Ps 96		Luke 21.5-11
Wed	Revelation 15.1-4	Ps 98		Luke 21.12-19
Thur	Revelation 18.1-2, 21-23, 19.1-3, 9	Ps 100		Luke 21.20-28
Fri	Revelation 20.1-4, 11-21.2	Ps 84.1-6		Luke 21.29-33
Sat Andrew the Apostle	Isaiah 52.7-10	Ps 19.1-6	Romans 10.12-18	Matthew 4.18-22

Collect (Christ the King)

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Prayer after Communion (Christ the King)

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect (Sunday next before Advent)

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Collect (Andrew the Apostle)

Almighty God, who gave such grace to your apostle Saint Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ and brought his brother with him: call us by your holy word, and give us grace to follow you without delay and to tell the good news of your kingdom; 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.