



St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

4th May 2025
3rd Sunday of Easter
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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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 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]

Eastertide and Pope Francis

When we get to Easter Day it is tempting to breathe a sigh of relief. Yet, in the same way that we observed the forty days of Lent, we should observe the fifty days of Eastertide. All our Alleluias are empty unless we live out in amazement – as Peter did – the joy and sheer surprise of Easter. That means the constant recall of Jesus' victory over death and sin; the hope that we shall come to share in the resurrection; and that the Peace of the Risen Christ is still possible in the days of great time of uncertainty for the world.

This Easter is marked for the world and the church by the death of Pope Francis. The Vatican announced that early on Easter Monday that the Pope had gone 'to his Father's house', only a day after he had blessed thousands and delivered his final Easter message. Everyone saw the power of God was made perfect in weakness in the last appearance and words of the Pope, struggling to breathe, but determined to speak of Easter hope.

We saw in Francis, not simply a faithful shepherd and pastor, but also a 'prophet to the poor'. This was demonstrated by resisting what was typical for Popes before him. He insisted in remaining in the small, three room dwelling, allocated to him during conclave which elected him in 2013, rather than the usual Papal apartments in the Vatican. This was not acceptable to many. He preferred to get on the bus, like everyone else. He washed and kissed the feet of the poor.

We saw in this Pope not simply an exemplary shepherd and universal pastor of the church, but a servant who also showed us how to be disciples. He was known for his sense of humour and joy. As he visibly dedicated himself to the poor, he showed us something of Jesus himself. Pope Francis leaves a challenging legacy: to the church, the world, and people of all faiths showing what it is to be someone of hope, peace and joy.

During this Eastertide, as we pray for the Roman Catholic Church, and for Pope Francis' successor, let us pray also that the qualities he showed so boldly and humbly are ones we ourselves can emulate to the glory of God. Christ has conquered death! Christ is risen! Alleluia!

With love and blessings,

Father Paul

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING will take place on **Thursday 8 May at 7pm at St Michaels**. The APCM will follow straight on from the AMoP. Some papers for the meeting and the Annual Report are available on our web site and a finance report will follow in due course. See the Publications page (link in the last section of this pew leaflet). Parking restrictions will be lifted for the evening.

SERVICE TIMES AT ST MICHAEL'S – Forthcoming festivals and change to weekday Mass

The weekday Mass reverted to **Thursday lunchtime** from **Thursday 1 May**.

Thursday 29 May	Ascension Day	Said Mass at St Michael's at 12.30 pm Corporate Communion at St Nicolas' Church at 7 pm
Sunday 8 June	Pentecost	Sung Mass at 9.30 am
Sunday 15 June	Trinity Sunday	Parish Communion at St Helen's at 10 am (no services at St Michaels' or St Nicolas')
Thursday 19 June	Corpus Christi	Sung Mass at 7 pm. Mass will NOT be said at 12.30 pm today.

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).

On Easter Day, **20 April**, there will be service of Readings and Music for Easter at St Helen's Church at **5.30 pm**.

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

LENT APPEAL Our Lent Appeal for our nominated charities The Abingdon Bridge (TAB) and TARIRO – Hope for Youth in Zimbabwe raised a **total of £1510**. There are two components to this – donations of £435 made to St Michael's Church in cash or by bank transfer and donations of £1075 made directly to the two charities that have been reported to us anonymously (this figure includes Gift Aid tax relief that the charities can claim). Our treasurer has made the appropriate payments to TAB and TARIRO and at the time of writing Fr Nicolas CR had replied "am delighted to hear this. Please do thank the people of St Michael's for their gifts." Sincere thanks to everyone who contributed so generously to this year's appeal.

TAB AND TARIRO This short extract from the latest **TAB** Newsletter was written by Holly, Head of Wellbeing and Innovation.

I was lucky enough to go on a two-day retreat for senior leaders and CEOs of small charities working with young people in Oxfordshire. It was very affirming that we are a strong and compassionate charity - the biggest takeaway for me was trying to have Youth Voice throughout our charity. We displayed this really well at our future directions conference and we are hoping to embed a lot more this year. Closing the proximity of

trustees/CEO and young people's voices! Youth ambassadors have also represented the charity very well at lots of funding presentations this quarter.

Elsewhere in the Newsletter Kev, Head of Community Engagement, reports that two of the Youth Ambassadors, have been invited to raise a flag on the county hall as part of the VE and VJ day commemorations.

TARIRO Fr Nicolas has recently returned from a visit to Zimbabwe on which he was accompanied by Fr Robert CR, himself a Zimbabwean who had not visited the country for many years. This is a short extract from an article Fr Robert wrote in the April 2025 issue of CR Review.

In Harare city some 15 almost-adults share a house and garden in a suburb where they themselves do the housekeeping and reach a common mind by discussion and voting. Each day they set off to university or technical college or A-level college. Presiding over them is a diminutive but authoritative nun. It's good early in life to learn the golden rule, 'Don't mess with nuns'.

CREAM TEA Our first Cream Tea of the season was a huge success. The sum of **£602.45 was raised for church funds**. It was lovely to see so many of you there, together with your family and friends. Many thanks to our cake/scone bakers and team of helpers for all your hard work. Special thanks to Glynne who provided us with beautiful piano music contributing to a wonderful afternoon enjoyed by all.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY On **Saturday 24 May, 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm**, we will be hosting our second Cream Tea of the summer season. Join us for an afternoon of live music. Tea/coffee with scone/cake £5. Proceeds to church funds. All welcome.

Please help. We would be grateful for donations of jars of jam, and home-baked cakes and scones for this event. If you are able to assist please contact Joyce, Louise, or Nicola. Thank you.

COTHILL HOUSE CHOIR concert, **Friday 16 May** at St Michael's Church. The programme will feature English, French and American songs, including music by King Henry V111, excerpts from the French film "Les Choristes", and iconic numbers from Leonard Bernstein's "West Side Story". The concert will **start at 7.30 p.m.**, and will last for approximately one hour. Entrance will be free, with donations towards St. Michael's church. Refreshments, provided by the school, will be served after the event.

FAITH FORUM will be taking place this **Sunday, 4 May**, in the Parish Centre. This will be the last in our series on Big Topics in Theology, with Dr Tobias Tanton of Harris Manchester College, Oxford, speaking on Salvation. A buffet lunch will be served from 12.30pm, with the talk beginning at 12.45pm. Please do join us if you can. For those unable to attend in person, you can join us on Zoom.

Recordings of earlier talks are available through the Faith Forum page on the parish web site:

https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_faith_forum.html

MOTHERS' UNION will meet on **Tuesday 6 May, 10.30 am** in the Parish Centre. The speaker will be from "Keystone Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub". They occupy one of the units in Bury Street and are part of the NHS Oxford Foundation Trust. Everyone is welcome to come and refreshments will be available from 10.15am.

LABYRINTH DAY RETREAT on **Saturday 10 May** at St Michael's, from **10.15 – 4 pm**. The day 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 of £15 would be appreciated towards running costs and can be paid on the day. Further details and booking forms from Carol Bowman (carol@manxcat.me.uk) and Sue Sheppy (susan.sheppy@btinternet.com).

DEMENTIA- TURNING UNDERSTANDING INTO ACTION *Supportive strategies we can all take.* **Tuesday 13 May at 7.30 pm** in the Parish Church Centre. Free admission. Speaker Susan Williams secretary of *Dementia Friendly Abingdon*.

OXFORD CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH **Saturday 17 May 2025, from 10 am - 3:30 pm** - *A Reflective Study Day* led by Professor Tim Kendall, Exeter University. Topic: *William Golding and the problem of Goodness*. Tickets are now available for sale on the following link:

<https://www.ocsg.uk.net/event/the-author-william-golding-the-problem-with-goodness/>. The event will be held at the Church of St Michael at the North Gate, Oxford.

ABINGDON SCHOOL MUSIC AWARD HOLDERS CONCERT will be held in St Michael's on **Thursday 22 May at 7.00 pm**. The concert will feature some of the school's most talented and dedicated musicians. Admission free. For more details see <https://abingdonschool.savoyssystems.co.uk/AbingdonSchool.dll/>. Pre-booking at no cost through the booking link on that web page is encouraged, but not essential.

CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT Howden, the local insurance brokers, have chosen The Abingdon Bridge (TAB) as their charity for a quiz night on **Thursday 22 May from 6 pm to 9 pm**. It will be held at the Loose Cannon Brewery, 6 Suffolk Way, Abingdon. Ticket price £5 (cash on arrival). For more information and to enter a team scan the QR code opposite.



CARING FOR CREATION: FROM PASSION TO ACTION **Saturday 24 May, Ripon College Cuddesdon** A CRES (Christian Rural and Environmental Studies) day with the Revd Dr Mike Perry (Bishop of Salisbury's Adviser on

Climate Justice and A Rocha UK Trustee) and Dr Elizabeth Perry (Programmes Director for the Anglican Alliance). For more information see <https://cres.org.uk/caring-for-creation-from-passion-to-action/>

AGNOSTICS ANONYMOUS The Next Meeting of the Agnostics Anonymous open discussion group will take place from **6 – 7.30 pm on Tuesday 27 May in the Parish Centre**. John Barton will give the opening talk 'Believing, Behaving, Belonging: which is the heart of Christianity'. John Kerr and Jennifer Brown will also answer questions and contribute to the discussion. **Free and everyone welcome**. For more information please contact Jill Gant (01235 528929).

QUIET GARDEN DAY at Aston Tirrold Centre for Reflection, Spring Lane, Oxon OX12 9EJ on **Saturday 7 June 2025 10 am - 4 pm**. Leader: Sue Sheppy. Theme: *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 would be welcome. To attend it would be helpful to email: atquietgardendays@gmail.com in advance. All are welcome.

WANTAGE ACADEMY BRASS will be joined by Caritas Children's Choir Wantage for a concert at St Michael's on **Saturday 5 July at 7 pm**, raising funds for The Abingdon Bridge (TAB), TARIRO and St Michael's Church. From the Caritas web site 'CARITAS Children's Choir is a charitable venture of the Wantage and Grove Christian Aid Group to raise money for Christian Aid projects. Established in September 2016, the choir is for children from the age of 7 upwards, to learn age appropriate music, in a fun and educational environment. FUN is a priority – but a high standard of performance is always pursued.' See <https://www.caritas-choir.co.uk/> More details will follow in due course.

CiA NEWS A printed copy of the **April issue** is now on display on the notice board by the Welcome desk.

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

A CANDLE IN THE WINDOW The May edition of the Parish Magazine will be available on **Sunday 11 May**.

Contributions by the end of **Sunday 4 May** if at all possible to candle@abingdonparish.org.uk The April issue of the parish magazine is now available to download from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php. (Earlier issues are also available via that link.)

Worship

May The celebrants and preachers in May are: 4 May Fr Paul/ Mrs Beryl Clements, 11 May Fr AKMA, 18 May Fr Paul/ The Revd Dr Jennifer Brown, 25 May The Revd Elizabeth Birch.

There is one commemoration in the calendar this week: Thursday 8 May, Julian of Norwich, spiritual writer, c. 1417.

Pope Francis as Fr Paul writes in his opening letter, Pope Francis died on Monday 21 April. The Anglican Communion's delegation to the Pope's funeral was led by the Most Revd Marinez Bassotto, the Archbishop of the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil. She serves on the Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion as the regional Primate for the Americas. Other members of the delegation included Stephen, Archbishop of York, Bishop Michael Innes, Bishop in Europe, and Philip Freier, co-chair of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission and former Archbishop of Melbourne.

There are links on the Prayer and Worship resources page on our web site to the full text of the Funeral Service and to a prayer sheet produced by The Roman Catholic Liturgy Office for England and Wales entitled *Prayers from the Tradition of the Church for use at the time of the Death of Pope Francis and in preparation for the Election of his Successor*. Collects for the election of a new pope and on the election of a new pope are included in the Season of Vacancy section below. The conclave for the election of a new pope starts on Tuesday 7 May. Only cardinals under the age of 80 can vote and the voting process continues until one candidate receives a 2/3 majority. Technically any baptised catholic man can be elected pope, though traditionally a cardinal is chosen. There are a few horror stories of elections in times gone by. Following the death of Pope Clement IV in 1268, when the electors had failed to elect a new pope for over two years, the local magistrate locked them in the episcopal palace, removed the roof (thus exposing the electors to the elements), and allowed the cardinals nothing but bread and water until they selected the next pope. This led to a reform which required the cardinals to meet in closed session and imposed strict rules to guide the process. Betting on the outcome and the duration of the new pope's reign in 1591 under penalty of excommunication. Other reforms have followed including a 'simple majority' condition if a 2/3 majority had not been achieved after 30 rounds of voting, though this was removed by Benedict XVI in 2007.

Eastertide The Extended Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer for the period before Ascension Day is:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,

almighty and eternal Father,
and in these days of Easter
to celebrate with joyful hearts
the memory of your wonderful works.
For by the mystery of his passion
Jesus Christ, your risen Son,
has conquered the powers of death and hell
and restored in men and women the image of your glory.
He has placed them once more in paradise
and opened to them the gate of life eternal.
And so, in the joy of this Passover,
earth and heaven resound with gladness,
while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation
sing for ever the hymn of your glory.

During Lent the word Alleluia does not appear in the liturgies but is restored with a flourish at the Liturgy of the Easter Vigil. St Augustine wrote this about the Alleluia.

The season before Easter signifies the tribulations in which we live now, while the time after Easter which we are celebrating at present signifies our happiness in the future ... This is why we dedicate the first season to fasting and prayer, but now the fast is over and we devote the present season to praise. This is the meaning of the Alleluia we sing.

This quotation is taken from a new book entitled *Light on Darkness – The Untold Story of the Liturgy* by Cosima Clara Gillhammer. I am very grateful to John Barton for drawing my attention to this. Cosima is a Career Development Fellow in English at Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford. It is a remarkable book written for a non-specialist audience exploring the development of Christian Liturgy which the author describes as an invitation to ‘a journey of discovery through a wealth of treasures that are almost limitless in their significance and inspiration’. The book draws on a broad range of sources including literary, musical and artistic. Chapters correspond to different themes for example Love, Hope, Joy, the latter starting with the Easter Vigil and the text of the Exultet, an ancient text beautifully sung by Jane Baun at our Easter Vigil this year.

Prayers during the Season of Vacancies

A prayer for the appointment of a new Team Rector:

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.**

It is also a Season of Vacancy with respect to the appointment of a new Archbishop of Canterbury. A prayer for the appointment of a new Archbishop from the web page for the Crown Nominations Commission process:

Heavenly Father, shepherd of your Church,
send us a faithful pastor to lead with wisdom, courage, and love,
proclaiming your Gospel, celebrating the sacraments,
and guiding your people in unity and truth.

Strengthen your Church, we pray, and direct us in your ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readers might also like to pray this collect from the Roman Missal for the election of a new pope.

O God, eternal shepherd,
who govern your flock with unfailing care,
grant in your boundless fatherly love
a pastor for your Church

who will please you by his holiness
and to us show watchful care.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

This collect on the Election of a new Pope is also from the Roman Missal.

O God, who in your providential design
willed that your Church be built
upon blessed Peter, whom you set over the other Apostles,
look with favour, we pray, on N. our Pope
and grant that he, whom you have made Peter's successor,
may be for your people a visible source and foundation
of unity in faith and of communion.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son ...

Prayer for the Peace of the World

From the *Church of England*, prayers for peace and hope:

O God, we pray for all the children of Abraham in Israel and Palestine and in every country of the world.
We pray for Muslims, Jews and Christians that we will draw on the best of our traditions to guide us away from
words and acts of division and discrimination so that everyone may be free to live in safety.
Protect the vulnerable, strengthen the fearful and comfort the grieving.
In Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

From the *Conference of European Churches*, a prayer for action and peace in Ukraine from the president, H.E.
Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain:

Merciful God,
comfort those who mourn,
heal those who suffer,
and guide leaders toward the path of just and enduring peace. Amen.

(For more information about the Conference of European Churches and their *Pathways to Peace* initiative, see
[https://ceceurope.org/.](https://ceceurope.org/))

Please pray for

- Steven and Gavin our bishops in this diocese;
- Stephen, Archbishop of York and for the appointment of a new Archbishop of Canterbury;
- Charles, our King, Queen Camilla and all the royal family;
- our government, the opposition and all who serve in public office;
- those elected to public office in the recent local elections;
- the war-torn regions of the world, including Ukraine, Sudan, Israel, Gaza and the wider Middle East; for the release of hostages and for the miracle of sustainable peace;
- 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 Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Thursday 8 May at St Michael's;
- that we may rejoice in the resurrection this Eastertide;
- our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers in Abingdon and throughout the world mourning the death of Pope Francis and for the election of his successor;
- all those who continue to live in doubt, that they may believe;
- 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: Blacknall Road, Bostock Road, Boxhill Walk and Brewers Court.

Eucharistic Lectionary

3rd Sunday of Easter	Acts 9.1-6	Ps 30	[Revelation 5.11-end]	John 21.1-9
Mon	Acts 6.8-15	Ps 119.17-24		John 6.22-29
Tues	Acts 7.51-8.1a	Ps 31.1-5, 16		John 6.30-35
Wed	Acts 8.1b-8	Ps 66.1-6		John 6.35-40
Thur	Acts 8.26-end	Ps 66.7-8, 14-end		John 6.44-51
Fri	Acts 9.1-20	Ps 117		John 6.52-59
Sat	Acts 9.31-42	Ps 116.10-15		John 6.60-69

Collect (3rd Sunday of Easter)

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

Prayer after Communion (3rd Sunday of Easter)

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread; open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

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

St Michael's Publications page https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StM_publications.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, 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/>