



St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

6 September 2026 – Festival of Creation in Christ / 14th Sunday after Trinity **Regular Service Times**

Sundays: Sung Mass, 9.30 am
Tuesdays: Silent Reflections, last Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm (except December)
Thursdays: Said Mass, 12.30 pm
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 Jennifer Brown
Email: rector@abingdonparish.org.uk

Team Vicar: (To join the parish after Christmas)

Churchwardens: Miss Joyce Kelly (01235 533555 / 07833 535768)
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Associate Priest The Revd Dr A. K. M. Adam (AKMA)
e-mail: akma@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

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 (01235 520144)
e-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

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

Items for inclusion in the next issue of 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]

We welcome The Revd Rosalind Rutherford to preside and preach at Mass today

Festival of Creation in Christ

The Mass on Sunday will be Mass for the new Festival of Creation in Christ. The new festival and liturgical material were given final approval by General Synod in July this year and the festival has been added to the calendar on the first Sunday in September. The Church of England provisions for the festival include morning and evening prayer and a full set of propers and readings for Holy Communion.

This festival is the result of a huge ecumenical effort over a period of time. As I wrote in the last issue, this all started with the invitation by the Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios to Christians to pray together on 1 September, marking the day, Creation Day (which is also the first day of the Orthodox Christian year). In 2023, various global Christian bodies began a dialogue about the roots of Creation Day and how it might enrich the calendars of other churches. This led to a series of theological dialogues in what came to be known as “The Assisi Process,” with the participation of 13 Christian world communions and various ecumenical bodies. For readers interested to know more about this, the web site <https://www.feastofcreation.com/> includes papers published by the Assisi Process, <https://www.feastofcreation.com/en/theological-resources>.

Different churches have very different processes for creating and approving new liturgical material and for making additions to calendars, some of which are quicker and more straightforward than others. It is thus a major achievement that the festival is being promoted across the Provinces of the Anglican Communion, included in the provisions of the Roman Catholic Church, commended by Methodists worldwide and incorporated in the Revised Common Lectionary. The feast of creation web site has links to liturgical material developed, or under development, in many denominations. It is fair to say that liturgical provision is an on-going activity.

The Church of England material is available in a second edition of *A Time for Creation – Liturgical Resources for Creation and the Environment* (Church House Publishing, July 2026) and online <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/time-creation>

The title of the festival changed quite late in the process from *Feast of Creation* to *Festival of Creation in Christ*. The paper presented to General Synod in July by the House of Bishops explained the name change, which aligned with emerging ecumenical consensus:

“It reminds us, together with the other churches seeking to bring it into existence, that we are not called to worship the created order or merely to offer lament for ecological crisis. Rather, the Festival is an opportunity to come before God to give thanks for the divine act of creation, to behold all things as made through Christ the Word, and to treating the world as gift, covenant, and responsibility. The new title connects the liturgical celebration of creation with the Church’s calling (expressed in the Fifth Mark of Mission) to ‘safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth’.”

A fuller account of the title can be found in the Assisi process papers summarised in these words:

“This feast invites us to contemplate the mystery of Creation first and foremost through Christological lens. [Yet], complementary perspectives are important to savour the broader richness of this foundational tenet of the Christian faith... This Christological dimension is only one facet of the mystery.” Ultimately, “Creation is a *multi-faceted mystery*; thus, the Feast of Creation is a *multi-faceted feast*.”

The Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer in the Church of England provision is:

... For by your word the heavens were made,
and all their host by the breath of your mouth.
You formed us in your image,
the crown of your creation,
and entrusted us with the works of your hands.

In your great goodness you sent your Son,
the firstborn of all creation,
who holds all things together in himself,
and through whom you make all things new.

You have given us the first-fruits of the Spirit,
as creation itself waits with eager longing
to obtain the glorious freedom of the children of God.

There is a Eucharistic Prayer (prayer 4) in *The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada* (1985) that presents a broad context.

Celebrant It is right to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord, our God, sustainer of the universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

People **Glory to you for ever and ever.**

Celebrant At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home; by your will they were created and have their being.

People **Glory to you for ever and ever.**

Celebrant From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill; you made us the stewards of creation.

People **Glory to you for ever and ever.**

Celebrant But we turn against you, and betray your trust; and we turn against one another. Again and again you call us to return. Through the prophets and sages you reveal your righteous law. In the fullness of time you sent your Son, born of a woman, to be our Saviour. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. By his death he opened to us the way of freedom and peace.

People **Glory to you for ever and ever**

...

The August episode of the BBC programme, *The Sky at Night*, had the intriguing title, *Big Black Holes and Little Red Dots*. Put very simply little red dots are a new phenomenon discovered in amazing images from the James Webb Space Telescope which might be black holes but because of their extreme age formed in some different way to known black holes. This is an active research topic and more evidence is needed. Professor Brian Cox comments at the end of the programme:

"I am often asked 'Isn't it terrible that you launched this telescope and you find things you can't understand'. Why did we launch the telescope, because ... we wanted to see structure formation that we didn't understand. ... It speaks to our fundamental attraction to the unknown ... the key to science is to stand on the edge of the known and gaze out into the unknown, not with fear, but with delight and excitement."

That must surely apply too to theological mystery, and this festival is an invitation to gaze into the Mysteries of Creator and Creation and related to that the Holy Mystery of the Eucharist. As I heard in a talk recently, "there can be no sacraments without creation".

David Duce

Faith Forum Our Autumn Faith Forum series begins in September and ties-in with Creationtide, offering an exploration of what is often termed eco-theology, that is, the theology that provides the rationale for creation care and informs our approach towards environmental action. Faith Forum meets in the Parish Centre Hall, with lunch from 12.15pm and talks beginning at 12.45pm. When possible, talks are also made available on Zoom. Dates for the Autumn Faith Forum talks are:

September 27: The goodness of creation (Margaret Adam)

October 25: A new or a renewed earth? (Jen Brown)

November 22: Creation care as act of praise (Hannah Mann, Diocese of Oxford)

The Revd Naomi Gardom We are delighted to announce that, subject to legalities, the Revd Naomi Gardom been appointed as the next Team Vicar in the Abingdon-on-Thames team. Naomi will join the team from the University Church in Oxford where she currently serving her curacy. Naomi's licensing will be on **Wednesday 6 January 2027 at 7.30 pm in St Helen's Church.**

Confirmation and admission to Holy Communion It has been over a year since we last had a confirmation service here in the parish, and I am aware that there may be both young people and adults in our churches who wish to be confirmed. This notice is to ask that if you or your child would be interested in confirmation, please speak to Revd Jen or Fr AKMA so that we can begin to plan confirmation classes. We can also offer preparation for admission to Holy Communion if there are any children who would like to begin receiving Holy Communion prior to confirmation.

Jennifer Brown

Sunday Worship at St Helen's Church St Helen's will live-stream their 10.30 am Eucharist through Zoom. The Zoom link can be found in the St Helen's Church newsletter (on-line) and on the Publications page at their web site. 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/StHpublications.html>).

The Mayor's Civic Service will be in St Helen's at 2 pm this Sunday, 6 September. There is no evening service in St Helen's Church this Sunday. The next Taizé Service in the calendar will be on Sunday 13 September at 5.30 pm.

Morning Prayer is normally held at 9.10 am on weekdays at St Helen's Church.

8 am Communion Service Rather than alternating monthly between St Helen's and St Nicolas', the 8 am BCP Holy Communion service will continue to be held at St Nicolas' each month. This is currently for a trial period until the end of the year (the Christmas Day service will be at St Helen's, as in past years), at which time we will review the situation to see how it is working.

Jennifer Brown, Team Rector

Abingdon Foodbank Most needed at present are biscuits, squash, cereal, tinned mac'n'cheese and UHT milk (whole or semi-skimmed) as well as empty egg boxes, carrier bags and wet cat or dog food. There is a collection box in church and goods donated there will be taken to the South Abingdon Foodbank.

There are collection points in local supermarkets and some other local businesses. The "Give Help" page has details of ways to donate and a link to the "BanktheFood app" which has frequently updated lists of most urgently needed items. <https://abingdon.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/>

Cream Tea The Cream Tea on Saturday 29 August raised around £400.

The next Cream Tea will take place on **Saturday 26 September between 2.30 pm and 4.30 pm**. Do please bring along your family and friends and promote wherever you can. It should be a lovely afternoon with some delicious cakes and piano music.

Louise

Save the Date The *Christmas Fair* will be on **Saturday 14 November**.

Piano Recital Huw Rhys James, the acclaimed Austria-based concert pianist, will perform works by Bach, Schumann and Debussy here on **6 September at 3 pm**. Huw's mother lives locally and Huw and family regularly attend St Michael's when in the UK and has given many concerts in St Michael's. The afternoon promises to be a real treat so please do put the date in your diary. Tickets £15. Refreshments available. (Help with poster/flyer distribution would also be much appreciated).

Ride & Stride The 2026 Ride + Stride in aid of the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (OHCT) takes place on **Saturday 12 September**. The event raises money for the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, and above all is great fun! 50% of the money raised by us goes to St Michael's Church and the other 50% to OHCT. Further details can be obtained on the OHCT website <https://ohct.org.uk/ride-and-stride/> and from our church coordinator, Louise Heffernan lheff@stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk There is a sign-up sheet at the back of the church for those willing to welcome on the day. A sponsorship form is also be available, perhaps for a stride rather than ride this year.

Quiet Garden Day at Aston Tirrold Centre for Reflection, Spring Lane, Aston Tirrold, OX11 9EJ on **Saturday 19 September 10 am - 4 pm**. Leader: Philip Mader-Grayson on the theme *Questioning Faith Matters - growing in maturity*. 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.

Raising Faith Thursdays, 7.30 - 9.30 pm starting **17 September** at **Peachcroft Christian Centre**. As Christian parents, grandparents and carers we want our children to grow up knowing God and developing a mature faith that will last, but sometimes we feel ill-equipped or just too busy to do much more than get them to church on a Sunday. Raising Faith is a series of six evening sessions, exploring a variety of ways to create strong and healthy foundations of faith in our children, using the opportunities that come up in the everyday ups and downs of family life.

Find out more and book a place here: <https://www.peachcroftcc.org/community/parenting-course>

Oxford Gospel Choir are singing at **St Helen's Church on Saturday 3 October at 7.30 pm** in aid of *Family of Hope*, a school in Uganda for children with special educational needs. Tickets £10 at the door.

United Prayer event, organised by the Church in Abingdon – **Thursday 8 October 2026, 7.30 pm, Abingdon Baptist Church** Please put this date in your diary. A chance for people from all the churches to come together to share what is going on in their churches and to prayer for the town and all the outreach work. Further details to follow. All welcome.

Community of St Mary the Virgin Wantage The Retreat and Quiet Day Programme through to February 2027 is available on the Community's web site: <https://csmv.co.uk/calendar-of-retreats/>

CiA News We are hoping to publish the September Issue of the Parish Magazine on 13 September. Contributions welcome by the end of **6 September** and ideas to the team as early as possible! Email candle@abingdonparish.org.uk The **July edition** of the Parish Magazine is available to download from https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_window.php

The August issue of CiA News is now available to download and there is a copy on the Notice Board by the welcome table. A digital copy is available to download from the parish web site: https://abingdonparish.org.uk/P_communications.html.

Worship

September The celebrants and preachers for September are: 6 September, The Revd Rosalind Rutherford; 13 September Fr AKMA; 20 September The Revd Dr Jane Baun; 27 September (Patronal Festival), Fr AKMA.

Tuesday 8 September is the Lesser Festival of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary and also the anniversary of the Accession of King Charles III (2022). Wednesday is the commemoration of Charles Fuge Lowder, priest, 1880.

The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary According to the scholars Bradshaw and Johnson, the feast appears to owe its origins in Jerusalem to the dedication of a church to Holy Mary next to the pool of Bethesda and near to the house of Anne, in which Mary was presumably born. The church may have been dedicated on 8 September 543 and the anniversary may be the origin of the feast, though there might already have been a commemoration that gave rise to the feast and the dedication of the church. The four feasts of Mary (birth, annunciation, presentation and dormition) have their origins in the Christian East. Hugh Wybrew wrote in *Orthodox Feasts of Christ and Mary*:

Mary's birth came as a climax of the work of God among his chosen people. From the beginning God had been working towards the incarnation of his Son in Jesus. ... If the texts glorify Mary they do so as Mother of the Messiah, of Jesus Christ. She is exalted, not for herself, but for her free and glad obedience to the saving will of God. ... [The texts of the feast] serve, too, to remind us that God works within human history only with human co-operation freely given. They remind us, finally, that the scope of God's salvation is not less than cosmic: it is not just humankind, but the whole of creation that is to be taken into God, to share his life.

This latter point is fundamental in present-day Orthodox writers on the environment such as Patriarch Bartholomew, and a link to the creationtide season. From a homily of Andrew of Crete:

Let the whole creation, therefore, sing praise and dance and unite in celebrating the glories of this day. Today let there be one common feast of all in heaven and earth. Let everything that is, in and above the earth, join together in rejoicing. For today a shrine is built for the creator of the universe. The creature is now ready as a divine dwelling for the creator.

In Times of Drought

Our Team Rector suggested including this prayer for rain from the Book of Common Prayer, which readers might like to use.

O God, heavenly Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all them that seek thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, all things necessary to their bodily sustenance: Send us, we beseech thee, in this our necessity, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth to our comfort, and to thy honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Common Worship Times & Seasons suggests that the section below may be inserted in the Common Worship litany.

Grant favourable weather, temperate rains and fruitful seasons,
that there may be food and drink for all creatures.

Hear us, good Lord.

Bestow your blessing upon the lands and waters, and all who work upon them,
to bring forth food and all things needful to your people.

Hear us, good Lord.

Prosper all who care for the earth, the water, and the air;
that the riches of your creation may abound from age to age.

Hear us, good Lord.

The Middle East This prayer for Iran appeared in diocesan e-News, and on the Church of England web site. It has also been reproduced in the March issue of *A Candle in the Window*. The prayer was written by the Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford. Bishop Guli was born in Iran. Her family left the country in the wake of the Iranian Revolution in 1980, when she was 13 years old, and to date she has been unable to return.

Ever-loving God,
who hears us in our anguish and distress,
and longs for us to be free.

We pray for the people of Iran and the wider Middle East,
at this time of fear and uncertainty.

Be near to those who are anxious;
bring comfort to all who are suffering.

Guide those with the power to make decisions,
and lead them in the ways of wisdom, compassion and moderation:
that people of goodwill would seek harmony and reconciliation.

Join us with our Christian brothers and sisters in all places,
in praying for peace with justice,
through him who is the prince of peace, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the Peace of the World

A prayer from the 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, ...

During another Season of Vacancies

The prayer below has been derived from a prayer composed by Fr Paul when the Revd Dr Jennifer Brown was appointed Team Rector.

Almighty God,
By the outpouring of your Holy Spirit,
You call each of us to walk in the way of Christ and to serve him, with diverse gifts, in the church and the world.
We praise you for calling Revd Naomi to be Team Vicar in our parish,
and ask you to bless her, Matthew and their family, in all their preparations over the coming months.
Grant her the needful gifts of grace to minister and serve among us,
and that as the whole people of God in this parish, we may work together for the coming of your kingdom,
to the glory of your Holy Name, Amen.

This prayer for the Diocese of Oxford during the Vacancy in See is taken from the Summer 2026 edition of the diocesan magazine, *Pathways*.

God of gentleness and love
Draw near to us as we draw near to you.
Dwell in every heart and conversation.
Fashion in us the likeness of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Help us to discern together all that you are calling us to be
and all that you are calling us to do.
Assist us, by your Spirit, to become a more contemplative,
more compassionate and more courageous church,
for the building of your kingdom and the glory of your Son.

Please pray for:

- Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury and Stephen, Archbishop of York;
- Bishop Gavin, Acting Bishop of Oxford, the Crown Nominations Commission, and the Archdeaconry of Dorchester team: David Tyler, Jane Haslam and Rob Glenny;
- His Majesty King Charles, Her Majesty Queen Camilla, and all the royal family;
- victims of the flooding in Nepal and Tibet, and those working to bring relief;
- students and staff at the start of a new academic year;
- the suffering, especially those who are known to us and who are on our prayer list;
- those recently departed and those whose year's mind falls at this time;
- people living in Crown Mews, Curtis Avenue, Curtyn Close and Cygnet Court.

Eucharistic Lectionary

Sunday 6 September Festival of Creation in Christ	Isaiah 55.12-end	Ps 26.1-8	Colossians 1.15-20	Matthew 8.23- 27
Monday	1 Corinthians 5.1-8	Ps 5.5-9a		Luke 6.6-11
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 6.1-11	Ps 149.1-5		Luke 6.12-19
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 7.25-31	Ps 45.11-end		Luke 6.20-26
Thursday	1 Corinthians 8.1-7, 11-end	Ps 139.1-9		Luke 6.27-38
Friday	1 Corinthians 9.16-19, 22-end	Ps 84.1-6		Luke 6.39-42
Saturday	1 Corinthians 10.14-22	Ps 116.10-end		Luke 6.43-end

Collect (Festival of Creation in Christ)

O God and Father of all that was, is and ever shall be, help us to be thankful for all that is made at the hands of your Son and through the wisdom of your Spirit, that we may care in heart and in deed for the life of our world, to the praise and glory of your holy name.

Post Communion (Festival of Creation in Christ)

God our Creator, by your gift the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise, and the bread of life at the heart of your Church: may we who have been nourished at your table on earth be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross and enjoy the delights of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect (14th Sunday after Trinity)

Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, ...

Collect (Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

Almighty and everlasting God, who stooped to raise fallen humanity through the child-bearing of blessed Mary: grant that we, who have seen your glory revealed in our human nature and your love made perfect in our weakness, may daily be renewed in your image and conformed to the pattern of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, ...

Some On-line Resources for Worship

A Church Near You Live Streamed events <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/live-stream/?tags=Livestream&diocese=27>

Parish Communications and Links <http://www.abingdonparish.org.uk/Pcommunications.html>

St Michael's Prayer and Worship resources page <https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StMworshipresources.html>

St Michael's Publications page <https://abingdonparish.org.uk/StM/StMpublications.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, see <https://mirfield.org.uk/live-streaming/> and YouTube page <https://www.youtube.com/@StreamingAtMirfield>. 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/>