# Issue 1: February 2024



St Alban (wrongly labelled in December)

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News and Views from the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames

# Aspects of Abingdon





Pictures - thanks to David Bevington and Rob Rutherford

## Waiting

Well past the shortest day, waiting for the earth's turning into light.

Waiting for longer days to push back the edge of darkness, waiting for the warming of our land to waken the sleeping earth.

Waiting for snowdrops to gleam beneath trees, for anemones to shine like stars in bare woodland still locked in winter, for leaves to unfold, for the slow greening of trees.

Waiting for the return of light, waiting for the unstoppable life force to bubble up, for the miracle of creation renewed, as winter yields to spring in the eternal cosmic dance.

Susan Gee 22 January 2024



Magdalen Bridge Oxford January 2024 – picture credit David Bevington

### Welcome AKMA!

We thought it would be a good idea to ask AKMA to introduce himself:

A long time ago, in a congregation far, far away, the parish rector took a young man aside and said, 'You know, the Diocese runs a series of vocational retreats that might interest you.' That was forty-three years, several theological colleges and universities, and a dozen or so parishes ago. Today I'm excited, very excited, to begin a new chapter of ministry at the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames.

Rather than giving a wearisome chronology of my posts and ministries, it seems better to describe myself to you by way of introduction. You've already seen that I'm tall, with spectacles and a beard,



and long grey-black hair. I will usually wear a hat whenever I'm outdoors, as part of my being on the old-fashioned side. I take great delight in life's follies and incongruities, so you may hear my hearty laugh around church (or even around town). I appreciate church music, but my heart belongs to rock'n'roll, soul, and other flavours of popular music. I collect and repair fountain pens, another source of old-fashioned joy to me, and I also collect a very specific, narrow genre of devotional holy cards. Warning: I will talk your ears off about these if you get me started.

I am not good at thinking and talking at the same time, so I tend to pause before starting, or even in the middle of sentences, when I'm trying to figure out what to say next. I'm completely rubbish with names, but I work hard on learning and remembering them as best I can. Please be patient with me — I'm trying hard to learn who everyone is, all at once.

You will often see me in the company of my lovely wife Margaret, who endures my oddities with boundless patience. We have three grown children (Nate, Josiah, and Pippa), who all live in the USA, and two grandchildren, Thomas and Lydia. Margaret teaches Christian ethics, mostly at Church of England theological colleges; I teach New Testament topics for Oriel College at Oxford. Margaret shares two small dogs with me, a Yorkie named Minke, and a Maltese/Lhasa Apso mix named Flora. They sometimes bark more than desirable, but they are very sweet and she loves them.

I would be very pleased to meet up with parishioners at some convenient café; I have been sampling the (many) local alternatives in preparation. You may see me at a table, with Margaret or alone, reading or typing or writing in a notebook with a fountain pen. That would be what people call 'peak AKMA': drinking coffee, writing in a notebook, staring thoughtfully into space, with a computer open for reference. If you see me, it would be a pleasure if you were to join me for a chat.

Grace and peace, AKMA

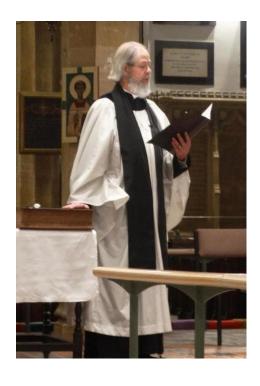
The Revd Dr A K M Adam

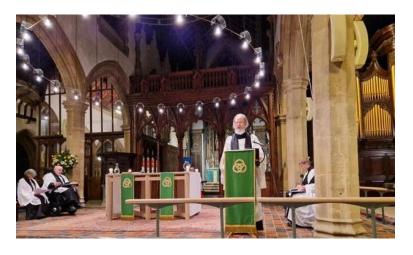
# Hot off the press!

Pictures from the Licensing Service for AKMA held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January.



AKMA with the clergy team, Bishop Gavin, Area Dean Rob and Archdeacon David





Top picture: David Bevington The others: Laura D'Silva

### Li Tim-Oi

Rosalind Rutherford

On St Paul's Day, the 25<sup>th</sup> January, St Martin in the Fields hosted a service to mark the anniversary of an event that took place eighty years ago on the other side of the world, just over the border from Japanese occupied China. The Bishop of Hong Kong, Bishop R.O. Hall and a young Chinese woman, an Anglican deacon who had been the only person able to minister to her parish since the Japanese invasion, had agreed to travel to meet each other. Their journeys took nearly a week, and Florence Li Tim-Oi, had to travel through Japanese lines, but they arrived within hours of each other. After two days of prayer and conversation, Florence Li Tim-Oi was ordained priest by Bishop Hall – as he said in a letter written two days later, "out of need and gift".

Li Tim-Oi was the first woman to be ordained priest in the Anglican Communion. It took another fifty years for women in England to be ordained into the priesthood. So this anniversary was worth celebrating with a congregation for whom the story of Florence Li Tim-Oi had long been a source of inspiration - those who had been, and still are, part of the struggle for women to be ordained deacons, priests, and then bishops.



This icon, by Revd Dr Ellen Francis Poisson OSH can be found at St Martin in the Fields

The anniversary was more than remembering an event that happened eighty years ago – it was also about the church, and particularly women, today. The liturgy included a lament for "the way your gospel has been used to demean women; the manner in which your church has contrived to exclude women,", and grief that "these attitudes are still experienced every day in your church worldwide." Many of those there, spoke afterwards of how moving and important it had been to name the discrimination that still exists, a theme taken up by Bishop Rose, Bishop of Dover, in her sermon.

But of course, there was thanksgiving and hope too. After the service, the trustees of the "Li Tim-Oi Foundation" talked about the charity, its work, and how small grants could make a huge difference. The Foundation was set up in memory of Li Tim-Oi by her sister, and supported by Canon Christopher Hall, the son of Bishop RO Hall. When Li Tim-Oi wanted to study for the ministry, her family could not afford the cost of the course in Guangzhou [then Canton]. Others, particularly members of her family church, provided the resources for her to do so.

So the purpose of the Foundation, set up in her name is to enable other Christian women to fulfil their vocations. They call themselves the Daughters of Li Tim-Oi. We were told inspirational stories of some of these women: a woman who saw her calling to give hope to young teenage girls forced to marry much older men and who were then abandoned to poverty and shame; a woman who needed a lap-top to study – all the men on the course had this but she did not; women who trained as community health workers and worked in villages amongst those who found it hard to get to clinics; women who were lay evangelists, but with little biblical education, who were supported through theological training, often in areas where women are still not expected to be educated to degree level; women whose lives were illustrations of the phrase "It takes one Woman".

A day of remembering with gratitude; of reconnecting with old friends and fellow campaigners but also a day of finding inspiration and support in the story of Dr Florence Li Tim-Oi.

The Li-TimOi foundation: https://www.ltof.org.uk/

The service can be listened to here: <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001vt95">https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001vt95</a>

# My family's Advent window.

South Avenue and Neighbourhood Advent Windows is organised by a team of neighbours who, a few years ago, when Helen and Douglas House was threatened with closure due to lack of staff, hatched a plan to raise money in aid of this local charity. Helen and Douglas House helps local families cope with the challenges of looking after a terminally ill baby or child who will die prematurely. The hospice is a homely place for local children, living with life limiting and terminal conditions, and their families. The staff provides care in a warm, loving environment. Helen House was founded by Sister Mary Frances. It was the world's first children's hospice, set up in 1982 next to All Saints Convent in Oxford. This was followed a few years later by the founding of Douglas House.

Many of the houses in the South Avenue Neighbourhood created a lighted window scene with a Christmas theme. We each give a donation to enter and there are also opportunities for giving in donation boxes around the roads for the many families who walk around with their families as the window displays grow in number through Advent.

The project raised over £500. More than 70 households took part.



# Together for Humanity

Tony Richmond

Lyn and I attended this event on Sunday afternoon 21 January (so we regrettably had to miss the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service at St Edmund's). Sponsored by Oxford's Civic Community and Faith Leaders' Group, it was held in Oxford Town Hall and attracted at least 600 people from Oxfordshire communities united in friendship and peace. It was a truly thrilling event, with Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Bahá'ís, Buddhists and others, of all colours and all shapes, old and young. We were encouraged to talk to at least two people we didn't know before, over tea and cake afterwards. As well as readings from the different faith communities, children from Christ Church Cathedral School sang a moving rendition of "Make me a channel of your peace".

Closing the event, Bishop Steven, co-chair of the Oxfordshire Civic, Community and Faith Leaders' Group, said: "When we leave tonight, I hope that we will want to tell the story of a wonderful gathering where people came together in a time of national and international sorrow."

### Christians in Business

Rob Rutherford

In the July 2023 edition (Issue 6 of that year) I wrote about vocations – and the fact that we are all called, young and old, to be like Christ in the World. There is a need for men and women with 'Christian Values' to work in the worlds of business, economics, technology etc as well as in the so called 'caring professions'. "We need people of integrity to be accountants who can spot the dodgy practice, to be business leaders who treat their staff well, provide satisfying employment, who take the environment seriously and who don't 'juice the profits' for their own benefit. We need regulators to be observant and rigorous in the setting of rules and we need politicians who can oversee a fair and just society". In other words, we need people with a vocation to 'do good'.

So what do we make of the story of 'Mr Bates versus the Post Office' otherwise known as the 'Horizon' scandal? In case you haven't been following the saga, more than 700 sub-postmasters were wrongly accused of stealing from the Post Office whereas a faulty IT system, said to be 'rock solid' was ultimately found to be unreliable. It has been called the widest miscarriage of justice in British legal history. Paula Vennells was the CEO of the Post Office at the time and she is also an Anglican Priest. So what do we make of that?

It is easy to blame the CEO but is that entirely fair? At some point, the top managers of the Post Office thought it best to protect the image of the organisation and the 'bottom line' rather than admit their own errors. So how can a business get it so wrong? Where does it get its ethical framework from? Is it taught? You can't do much better than 'treat people as you would like them to treat you' or 'love your neighbour as yourself.' - but there has to be more than that.

I can see that a business has to make a profit – otherwise why would you bother – but surely there are many aspects of its work that a purely financial audit will ignore. Back in the day, more years ago than I am happy to admit, I enquired about a job with a small organisation called 'Social Audit' whose central philosophy was that a business should be held to account for its treatment of employees, for its treatment of its customers and for its treatment of the environment. I pulled out when I realised that I didn't have the skills needed but it seems to me that the concept is vital.

Some argue that businesses should be freed from regulation but 'no business is an island'. They are embedded in society and this brings responsibilities. One of these is to pay tax transparently to that society – because they benefit from the education given to their workers and they rely on all the infrastructure that enables them to transfer goods and people etc. I'm sure you can think of other aspects of this.

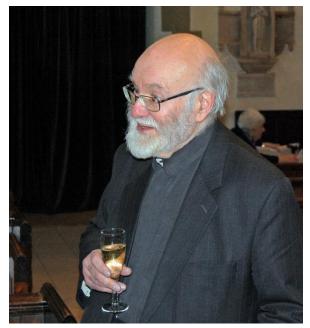
What other responsibilities are there? Milton Friedman has argued in an article in the NY Times that: "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits" What do you think of that? What about the obligation to speak the truth (Diesel-gate) or to guarantee that in your supply chain, workers are treated fairly? What about the obligation to treat the environment with respect (Water companies) and what about the ownership of the business (the partnership model can work – for example Waitrose or Richer Sounds). Is it acceptable to claim that your workers are self-employed? What about the ratio of executive pay to that of the average employee?

The church should engage the world of business in what is quaintly called the 'Public Square' but of course the Church has ethical problems of its own and it can only be heard if it puts its own house in order. The world of business recognises that bad decisions can lead to reputational damage but I hope that we would argue that good decisions are needed for no reason other than that they are good.

## A celebration!

On the Second Sunday in Advent in 1973, December 8<sup>th</sup>, John Barton was ordained Priest in Merton College by the then Bishop of Oxford, Kenneth Woollcombe. We celebrated this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the traditional manner after the service in St Helens on January 7<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Thank you Norman Dawson for these lovely photographs. Thank you, John, for your scholarship and your preaching!





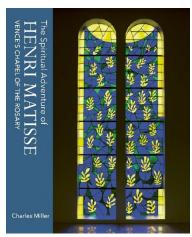


Witch-Hazel flowers at the Oxford Botanic Garden January 2024 – photo David Bevington

## Two books by people you might know!

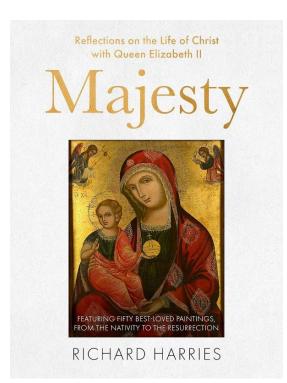
# The Spiritual Adventure of Henri Matisse: Vence's Chapel of the Rosary Charles Miller

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 postwar avant-garde form.



© Succession H. Matisse / DACS 2024 / photo by Francois Fernandez

## Majesty Richard Harries



An inspiring and collectible volume to mark the first anniversary of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Majesty is a beautifully presented anthology of Christian artworks and wisdom, interlaced with quotes from the Queen's Christmas broadcasts. Images and text are brought together by the expert commentary of former Bishop of Oxford and House of Lords life peer Richard Harries.

Written with a deep sense of respect and gratitude to Her Majesty, this book celebrates the Queen's spiritual legacy, spanning over eight decades. In a life given over to service, her steadfast faithfulness was rooted in her Christian faith, the beating heart of her spiritual life and reign as monarch.

From Caravaggio to Van Gogh, Raphael to Rembrandt, Majesty features high-quality images of 50 iconic paintings, from both the Royal Collection and museums around the globe, including The Met and MOMA in New York, the National Gallery and Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Vatican Museums in Rome, the Hermitage in St Petersburg, and many more.

## TrinityLearning Update



**New for 2023 was the Kingfisher School Christmas Service** - Deacon Selina, who volunteers with our TrinityLearning Kingfisher School singing group, decided she would like to offer the school a Christmas Service. Planning started last summer and we quickly realised that demand was high as nearly every class in the school asked to be involved. In total we ran the service 5 times to pupils from 11 different classes, some classes came to Trinity Church whilst others took part in the Service at school.

The service consisted of a simple retelling of the Christmas Story with songs adapted from nursery rhymes as well as some traditional Christmas favourites such as Little Donkey and Away in a Manger. We made a sensory pack for each child which included some pictures of a baby and a donkey, a bag of scented chamomile hay, a fleecy square (which felt like a sheep!) and a star. Children thoroughly enjoyed finding the things in their pack and holding them up as they sang along.



The commitment of the volunteers was reflected in the enthusiasm and involvement of the staff and children, many of whom had

clearly been practising their singing! We're already starting to tweak our plan for the 2024 service.

#### **Special Nomination:**

We were honoured to be nominated for the King's Award for Voluntary Service- the highest award available for voluntary organisations in the UK. We were nominated for the award back in December 2021 when it was then called the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

Once nominated, we were required to provide extensive evidence of our volunteer activities and beneficiaries, detailing all the work our many volunteers do, a description of the value they add to children's lives and some contextual information showing how this work ties in with Oxfordshire's Children and Young People's Plan. The evidence was then evaluated by a team of Deputy Lord Lieutenants of Oxfordshire before one of them came out to interview a selection of volunteers to find out more about their roles and about TrinityLearning as an organisation. Our initial expected wait of six months was extended due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II, the accession of King Charles III and the subsequent re-organisation and renaming of the Award.

In summer 2023, we heard that our Award journey was continuing and Katie Doney, Trinity Learning's Chair of Trustees, and Nicola Williams, Trinity Learning's Education Development Officer, were invited to a reception at Ditchley Park to celebrate the local organisations who had been nominated. Representatives from ten organisations from across Oxfordshire attended, along with the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Marjorie Glasgow, supported by the Vice Lord Lieutenant and ten Deputy Lord Lieutenants. The High Sherriff of Oxfordshire was also in attendance. Each organisation gave a short presentation about their work. Groups included Charlbury Community Centre, West Oxfordshire Wheelchair Dance, a Day Centre and a community bus project as well as South Oxfordshire Food and Education Alliance (SOFEA), and SeeSaw - whose excellent child bereavement services were signposted in our Bereavement Packs.

In November, the Awards were announced and we heard that that we would not be receiving the final award. However, the letter from the King's Award for Voluntary Service Committee chair highlighted just how much being nominated for the Award positively reflects on TrinityLearning volunteers and the support they provide to our local school communities:

The work your group does for the community was very much admired by the National Assessment Committee. However, I am sorry to say that following close deliberation it was not among those selected to receive the award this year. The King's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest accolade given to volunteer groups across the UK and the very fact that you were nominated independently for this honour shows how highly local people think of you. This is great recognition in itself and I hope that your volunteers will be able to take great pride in this. Our local and national assessors were impressed by your substantial achievements in supporting your local community. Please convey to your volunteers and staff our warm appreciation of all you do, and we wish you the very best in continuing your valuable work, now and in the future.

Of the Oxfordshire nominations, only SeeSaw received the final award and many counties had no award winners. Overall, whilst this was a long and rigorous process, we feel it has been really useful for TrinityLearning and has helped us to reflect on the wide-ranging and effective work TrinityLearning volunteers carry out and the role of TrinityLearning staff in supporting this work.

#### Thank you to Eve Newton!:

TrinityLearning would like to say a resounding thank you to Eve Newton, who stepped down as a Trustee at the AGM on 16<sup>th</sup> January. We are so pleased that she is continuing as a volunteer with the Kingfisher Singing Group.

#### Have you ever thought about becoming a Trustee?:

We are looking for a new trustee to join us at TrinityLearning to support our small, church-funded charity which works to improve the wellbeing of students and staff in local schools.

Trustees are essential to the running of TrinityLearning and work as a team to provide inclusive, strategic leadership and ensure proper governance for the charity. They meet around five times a year – both in person and online. There is lots of training and support available, so whether you are an experienced Trustee, or are thinking of becoming a Trustee for the first time, we would love to hear from you. We welcome applications from all ages (16+) and levels of experience.

If you would like an informal chat about this voluntary role please email Nicola, our Education Development Officer on <a href="mailto:nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com">nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com</a>

#### **Experience Easter**

It always seems bizarre to be talking about Easter straight after Christmas but we are now planning for Experience Easter 2024 which will offer schools the choice to visit Trinity Church for live workshops or to take part online. Experience Easter is a series of reflective workshops that allows Key Stage 2 children (7 to 11-year-olds) to access the Easter Story in a meaningful way. It is also an introduction to mindfulness, using stilling exercises and simple activities to allow the children to consider their emotions. After a successful return to live workshops last year, we plan to continue to offer these as well as updating our online offer.

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available for Experience Easter including home-based volunteering for craft preparation as well as in-person volunteering which consists of supporting school groups and storytelling during the live workshops. If you're interested in finding out more, please email Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

Compiled by Tony Richmond

A series of challenging talks on the environmental crisis facing us all, together with the prospect of a free lunch, drew audiences of up to 30 to St Nicolas Church during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

On Monday 22 January "EcoChurch - a way of mobilising congregations to care for creation", Father Paul Smith introduced Dal Warburton from Christ Church, who told us that so far only two Abingdon churches (the other is All Saints, Methodist) have awards from Eco-Church, a project of A Rocha, the charity which encourages congregations to be aware of their responsibility of stewardship of God's creation. Dal encouraged us to take part in a free online survey, with supporting resources, designed to equip your church to express your care for God's world in your worship and teaching; in how you look after your buildings and land; in how you engage with your local community and in global campaigns, and in the personal lifestyles of your congregation. Details of Ecochurch can be found here:

On Tuesday 23 January "Plastic pollution and what we can do about it." The Revd Andrew Gilmour from Christ Church, introduced Anne Smart from Abingdon Carbon Cutters, who painted a bleak picture: 2.5 billion single use coffee cups and 12 million tons of plastic dumped in the ocean every year, to the micro-plastic fibres we breathe in from our fleeces, whose effect on health is not known. Plastic Free Abingdon cleans up the river twice a year and the Town Council is planning a spring initiative to ban all unnecessary plastic from the Market Square. Anne gave examples of things we all can do to refuse, reduce, replace, refill and recycle to reduce plastic waste. Details <a href="here:">here:</a>

On Wednesday 24 January: "Reducing your transport footprint" began with a wonderful native American prayer from the Revd John Anderson. Then Robin Tucker took over and talked about Abingdon Liveable Streets, (details <a href="here:">here:</a>) a coalition of groups aiming to improve our walking and cycling routes so that people can travel without needing to use their cars and everyone can go to school or work safely. Robin extolled the benefits of walking, and quickly moved to cycling, illustrating the different ways that loads could be carried. He then moved to electric bikes and electric cars, explaining how to hire an electric car from <a href="www.co-wheels.org.uk">www.co-wheels.org.uk</a>. There were many questions from annoyed pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, all amicably settled by Robin, who agreed that in the end Abingdon needs better cycle and walking routes.

Thursday 25 January: "The effect of climate change on biodiversity." The Revd Rachel Hughes introduced Dr Martin Hodson who told us that for the first time, an international team of scientists is able to provide a detailed outline of planetary resilience by mapping out all nine boundary processes that define a safe operating space for humanity. Details <a href="here: Six of nine">here: Six of nine</a> planetary boundaries are already being crossed and pressure on all nine is increasing. Climate change has already been devastating for people and for nature. There are opportunities for hope, including sea grass meadows, mangroves and regenerative agriculture, but cutting carbon emissions remains the number one priority.

Friday 26 January: "For their futures: One Planet Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre (CEC) https://oneplanetabingdon.org and the work they are doing with young people". The Revd Keith Dunnett introduced Michelle Charlesworth who spoke passionately about the inspirational community hub run by volunteers, for the benefit of the people and the planet, building resilience in a climate emergency. She left us in no doubt that it is an emergency and that it is not enough to think we can leave it to future generations to sort out. Young people in Abingdon are confused and angry. They ask why the grown-ups are not doing more to ensure a liveable future. The CEC, under the County Hall Museum in the Market Place, Abingdon OX14 3HG, is open Thursday to Saturday and especially for young people on Sundays.

# Success Recognised Eluned Hallas

As many will know, St Nicolas' kitchen / toilet facilities are housed in a separate building at the north east corner of the garden. This building, on Church land, was gifted to the congregation in thanks for allowing access over our garden for the construction of the neighbouring 'TSB' building (now a coffee shop and flats). Built in the 1950's the building, with its fittings, was showing considerable signs of age, and with no equal access was certainly not fit for purpose in the C21. A number of architects and congregational groups had tried to address the problem over a number of years – but all 'fell by the wayside'.

Gwyneth & Colin changed all that, with characteristic directness they drew up plans for a complete remodelling of the interior, and found a builder willing to work to the plans. With DCC agreement we set to work to secure Diocesan and VWH planning approvals, and raise the funds not only for the internal refit (fully equal access, baby change facilities, a flower sink etc), but to also fit an access ramp, replace the roof (with improved insulation), the windows (now double glazed), and renew the electrics, hot water / heating etc. Within a few months of getting approval, the builders were in, and self-assembly kitchen units chosen and ordered. A team of enthusiastic handypersons, supervised by Colin, gathered to paint the walls and fit the interior once the building work was completed. I think all who have used the new facilities can confirm they are now fit for purpose, and we are already seeing the benefits in our outreach and worship.

As part of our Patronal Festival Evensong on 10 December, Venerable David Tyler, Archdeacon of Dorchester blessed the Annex, and then made Gwyneth & Colin members of The Fellowship of St Birinus, in recognition of their 'exceptional service'. A well-earned award.

The Fellowship of St Birinus was founded in 2009 by the Bishop of Dorchester (Bishop Colin) as a modest way in which to honour the people who have given exceptional service in some way or other to their church and community over a number of years. Gwyneth & Colin are the latest AoT Parishoners to have been so honoured.

(St Birinus was the first Bishop of Dorchester from the year 634 to 649 A. D)



## Events: February and March

Compiled by Louise Heffernan

#### Faith Forum.

Sunday 4th February in the Parish Centre. The focus of the spring Faith Forum talks will be the sacraments, and our first talk will be given by our new Associate Priest, Revd Dr Andrew 'AKMA' Adam, who will speak on 'what is a sacrament (and how many are there)?'. Please note that for this series Faith Forum will be held after the 10.30 service at St Helen's, and will begin with a light buffet lunch at 12.15 pm, with the talk beginning at 12.30. The talk will also be accessible via Zoom.

#### **Agnostics Anonymous**

The Parish Centre: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, 6pm – 7.30pm

John Barton will speak on "Do you have to Believe Everything in the Bible to be a Christian?" Keith Ward and John Kerr will also be there to field questions and add to the discussion. Everyone welcome.

For more information, contact Jill Gant 01235 528929.



#### ABINGDON MOTHERS' UNION

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. in St Helen's Parish Centre



All welcome



Also the Abingdon Mothers' Union are hosting a speaker from the Thames Valley Air Ambulance on 5<sup>th</sup> March

#### **Tuesday 5th March:**

Keith Ward will speak on "Is There a God?"

Tuesday 23rd April: John Kerr will speak on "Six Impossible Things Before Breakfast".

## **Come and Sing**



Come & Sing Bach's St John's Passion (first performed on Good Friday

1724

on Holy Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at Christ Church, Abingdon

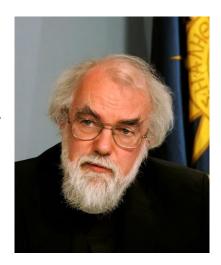
Registration 10.00, practice at 10.30. Concert 5pm

In aid of Abingdon Passion Play

#### The Bampton Lectures - University Church, Oxford.

This year the Bampton Lectures will be given by the Rt Revd Dr Rowan Williams PC, FBA, FRSL, FLSW. A former Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of Wales, Rowan Williams has written extensively on faith in the public square. In these lectures, Dr Williams will return to the theme of solidarity, exploring its roots in Catholic Social Thought and exploring how a solidarity-shaped ethic might serve to address some of the issues at the heart of our public life.

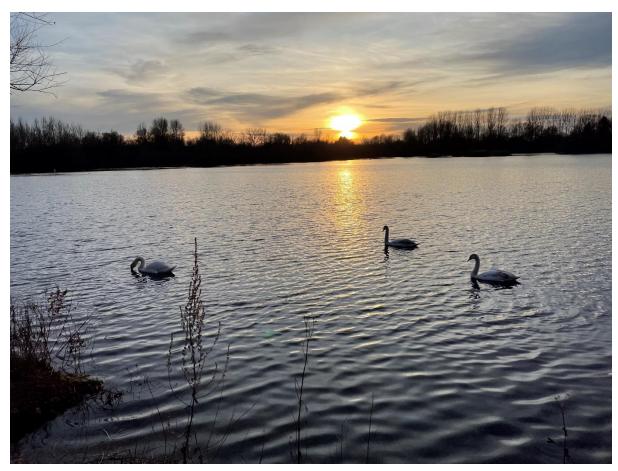
The lectures will take place on **Tuesday 27 February and Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 10am. Also streamed.** https://www.universitychurch.ox.ac.uk/content/bampton-lectures



### Date for your diary

#### Harmony in Springtime: 20th April, 5pm in St Michael's Church.

Harmony Inspires will perform a programme of a capella songs to celebrate springtime.



Swans at Radley Lakes: Louise Heffernan

### Here is the Little Door

Louise Heffernan

The Crown Singers gave a delightful concert in St Michael's Church on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup>, entitled 'Here is the Little Door', a celebration of Epiphany and Candlemas featuring music from early renaissance to the present day. The title piece was composed by Herbert Howells (1892 – 1983), based on a poem by Frances Chesterton describing the entry of the Magi into the stable in Bethlehem. What a difference entry through that 'little door' made to them and to all people. Most of the songs, like this one, were performed a capella. However the accompanied pieces, such as Edwards' 'Small Wonder the Star' featured soloists who sang very evocatively. Whether the songs were 16<sup>th</sup> century (William Byrd, Clemens non Papa) or modern (Alexander L'Estrange, Bob Chilcott and more), each was performed with strength, skill and beauty.

The Crown Singers are a choir from Wantage, led by their musical director, Paul Hedley, an experienced musician, singer and conductor. The audience was very appreciative of the lovely sound produced, and of the variety of pieces performed. How lucky we are to have such talent on our doorstep and a great venue where it can be enjoyed.

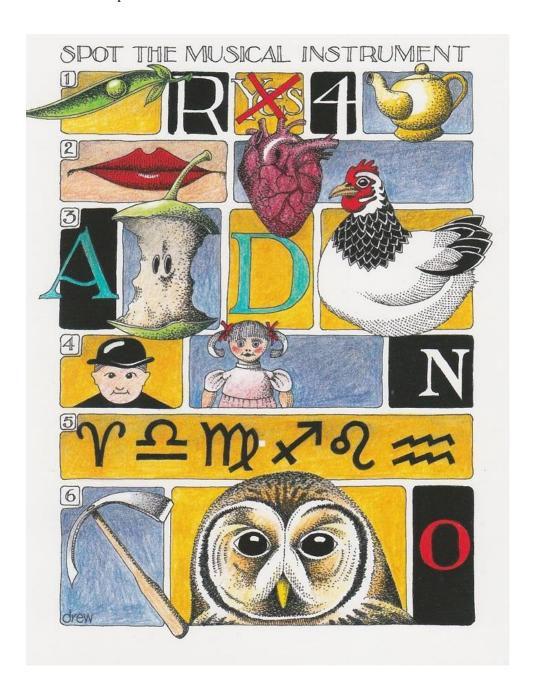


There are musical events being planned for all of our churches. Keep an eye open.

# Quiz!

RAR was given some Simon Drew postcards for a Christmas present. Here, with Simon Drew's permission is one of them. Here is his website: <a href="https://www.simondrew.co.uk/">https://www.simondrew.co.uk/</a>

The idea is that each line represents a musical instrument in a visual code.



Answers, we think, are on page 18.

# Abingdon Farmers' Market

Eileen Duckett

I love the Farmers' Market It's full of delicious food It is all such a temptation That I really can't be good.

I have to have a doughnut And choosing is quite fun With such lovely different flavours It's hard to choose just one.

The custard tarts are yummy It's a box of six of those And then samosas for our tea And meat which can be froze.

There is bread and cheese and honey And lots of veg to buy There's fish, beer and cider And sometimes there's a pie.

So I am glad it's only once a month That I am tempted I have to say Because if it was weekly I hate to think what I would weigh.

## Quiz Answers!



Piccolo (pick-owl-O)	9
Cymbals (symbols)	ς
Mandolin (Man-dolly-V)	$\tau$
Accordion (A core D hen)	ε
Mouth Organ	7
Piano Forte (pea-R-no-four-tea)	I

SimonDrew Quiz answers

### **Useful Weblinks:**

Services: for the latest news see the Parish Website:

https:abingdonparish.org.uk

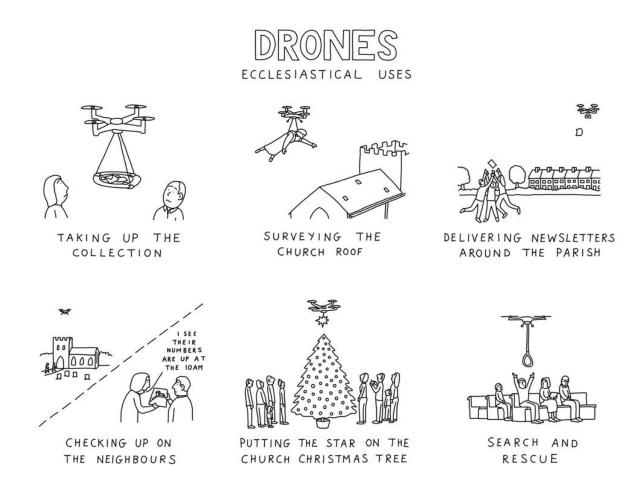
for Church of England links: services, daily readings etc

https://www.churchofengland.org/

**FOOD BANK.** The Abingdon Foodbank is still very busy and anxious to keep up the support. Northcourt Road (Christ Church) is open to receive donations on Tuesday and Friday mornings between 9.30 am and 1.00 pm. The foodbank also operates from Preston Road Community Centre. Donations are welcome there too between 12.00 and 2.30pm on Wednesdays. You can also donate money by sending a cheque made out to North Abingdon PCC Christ Church, clearly marked 'for Food Bank' or via the Foodbank website

<u>https://abingdon.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/</u> or the Parish office has details if you want to donate via online banking.

Finally, from Dave Walker:



CartoonChurch.com

Thanks to all contributors and to you, the readers.

The next issue will be published in March - ideas and contributions to <a href="mailto:Candle@abingdonparish.org.uk">Candle@abingdonparish.org.uk</a>